

St Pauls Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 117231
Inspection date 25/04/2012
Inspector Sandra Croker

Setting address St. Pauls RC Primary School, Pemros Road, Plymouth,
Devon, PL5 1NE

Telephone number 01752 517473

Email

Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

St Pauls Playgroup registered in 1992 and is managed by a committee of parents. It operates from a hall in the grounds of St Pauls Roman Catholic Primary school. This is located in St Budeaux, a residential area of Plymouth, in Devon. The playgroup has the use of a hall, kitchen and toilets. There is an enclosed outdoor play area. The playgroup has use of the school hall.

St Pauls Playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The provision may care for 30 children under eight years at any one time, of these none may be under two years. There are currently 65 children from two to four years on roll. The playgroup provides funded early education for two, three and four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. St Pauls Playgroup supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

St Pauls Playgroup is open during school terms from Monday to Friday from 9am until 11.30am. It is open from Monday to Thursday from 12.30pm until 3pm. Children attend lunch club from 11.30am until 12.30pm. There are seven staff members employed to work with the children; of these, five have early years qualifications at level 3, and two have early years qualifications at level 4 or above. St Pauls Playgroup receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The playgroup is a safe inclusive environment where staff are fully aware of safety procedures and children's interests and capabilities. Children develop a strong sense of belonging and make good progress in their learning and development in overall challenging surroundings. Staff build trusting relationships with parents keeping them well informed about their children's development and the running of the playgroup. There are effective systems of self-evaluation and challenging but realistic targets are set for the future. Staff constantly reflect on how to make improvements for every child's benefit.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- enhance the use of visual signs, symbols, notices, numbers and words in the outdoor environment to support children to begin to read and write

- enhance resources in the outside play area that will help the children to use a range of tools safely and encounter creatures and plants

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Comprehensive policies and procedures support the daily running of the playgroup to provide a safe and secure environment. Staff are knowledgeable about safeguarding procedures and their role in protecting children and their welfare. Robust systems are in place for recruiting and checking the suitability of new staff. Staffing levels are planned in advance with the correct number of adults available to care for those children attending each day. Well qualified staff are deployed effectively across the playgroup so children remain safe and receive good support to learn. Robust risk assessments and written daily checks are conducted, both indoors and outdoors to minimise hazards to children and staff. The manager organises regular fire drills, keeping a record in good detail.

Training events are attended and planned regularly to keep staff up-to-date with current practice requirements. Staff have a clear understanding of the ethos and requirements of the early years framework. This is fully reflected in the overall stimulating and enabling environment, both indoors and out, which promotes children's independent learning. However, there are limited resources in the outside play area that will help children to use a range of tools safely and encounter creatures and plants.

Children's understanding of diversity and differences is promoted well through resources, activities and positive images including those from other cultures. Staff demonstrate they have valuable knowledge about children's welfare and family background. For example, they are fully aware of children's health, dietary and care requirements, such as their allergies. Children feel good about themselves as staff treat them with respect. They develop self-esteem and confidence as they voice their opinions and make choices and decisions. All children are highly valued as individuals. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities thrive because staff work closely with parents and outside agencies.

The playgroup has good links with the local schools. Parents have interactive access to their child's individual development records, and are provided with supportive up-to-date information about how the playgroup operates. Parents are kept well informed about their child's learning and development through daily feedback. Staff work effectively together to enhance their practice and to identify strengths and weaknesses. Staff have a determined drive to continuously develop the playgroup.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Staff record children's progress through assessments made from observations, work samples and photographs, in an individual 'Learning Journey'. Children's next steps are incorporated into planning through discussions between parents and staff so that all children make good progress.

Children demonstrate good levels of independence and happily tackle self-chosen and adult-led play. Children have a strong interest in the activities in the playgroup. However, there are not enough visual signs, symbols, notices, numbers and words in the outdoor environment to fully support children who are beginning to read and write. Children are constantly praised and their achievements valued, helping them to be kind, share toys and take turns. Children behave well. Input from other professionals has assisted staff to develop effective strategies, when managing children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Language development is a strong throughout the playgroup. Children's early language and communication development is being enhanced well through staff training and support from outside agencies. Staff members speak clearly to children and they extend their vocabulary at every opportunity. For example children play imaginatively with dolls, role playing bath-time. Older children ask staff questions confidently about the resources available as they open pretend soap boxes and shampoo bottles. Younger children use words and sentences to describe the things they do as they wrap their wet baby in a towel and feed them with a bottle of milk. Staff thoughtfully repeat these words and sentences to help the clarity of children's speech. Children think critically as they work out which top will fit the needs of their doll from a selection of sizes. Staff make the most of diversity to help children understand the society they live in. For example, a book about families from different cultures is introduced into children's play. Children explore images from different family situations and these also include images of people with disability.

Children are active learners. Younger children thoroughly enjoy walking bare-foot in the rice tray and older children focus intently on filling different sized containers with the scoops provided. Staff effectively join children to help them further develop this sensory experience. Children have good opportunities to make marks, give them meaning and distinguish between the different marks they make. For example, children draw pictures of their friends and staff encourage them to talk about these images. Staff thoughtfully encourage exploration of sounds, words and text by labelling the pictures with children's suggestions. Children continue making marks as they create patterns in the rice tray. Staff effectively extend older children to explore letter formation by helping them to trace letter shapes in the rice. Children have good opportunities to apply skills appropriate to their age in information and communication technology. Older children use computers to learn more about letters and sounds and younger children excitedly engage with toys generating interesting sound effects. Topics are chosen to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Staff take children to visit

the nearby primary school's hens where they effectively learn about the chicken's life cycle. Children excitedly find out about and work with numbers as they count the eggs that they find in the nests.

Good hygiene practices are well developed. Snacks are well balanced and nutritious. Staff thoughtfully help children identify the healthy foods in their lunch boxes. Children engage in a good range of physical activities, both indoors and out, increasing their understanding about the importance of regular exercise as part of keeping healthy. Children are confidently learning about how to keep themselves safe and take risks within safe surroundings.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met