

The Nursery at St Paul's

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	119622
Inspection date	21/06/2012
Inspector	Debbie Buckingham

Setting address	St. Pauls Church, Dock Street, London, E1 8JN
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Telephone number	020 7265 0098
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Email	
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Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic
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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.

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Description of the setting

The Nursery at St Paul's registered in 2001. It is managed by Selective Learning Ltd. It operates from a converted church in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. It has sole use of the premises and operates from four classrooms on the ground and first floor, with a kitchen and basement on the lower ground and offices on the second floors. Facilities include two baby rooms, a shared toddler and pre-school room with separate eating area and toilets, a communal play area, and an outdoor play area. The nursery serves the local community and caters for children from surrounding areas.

The nursery opens each weekday all year around, with the exception of a week over the Christmas period. It opens from 7am to 7pm and children attend a variety of sessions. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 65 children under the age of two may attend the nursery at any one time, with no more than 120 children in the early years group. There are currently 93 children aged from 6 months to five years on roll. The nursery is in receipt of funding to provide free early years education for children aged three and four years. The nursery supports children learning English as an additional language. The nursery employs 35 staff, who work directly with the children; of these, 29 hold an appropriate early years qualification, and three are working towards a higher level qualification. One member of staff holds an early years degree, and is the qualified Early Years Professional. One member of staff holds Qualified Teacher Status and is working towards her Early Years Professional Status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

This vibrant nursery warmly welcomes all families; babies and children really enjoy the time spent there, and make outstanding progress in their learning and development. Highly skilled staff plan exciting and engaging experiences which help all children and babies make some excellent progress in their learning. The self-evaluation process identifies further areas for development that the management have acted upon efficiently and robustly. The nursery has fully addressed all recommendations from the previous inspection and continues to demonstrate an exceptionally strong commitment to continuous improvement. The management maintains excellent links with outside professionals and promotes continuity of care, making learning for all children successful.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- encourage children to experiment more often with writing for themselves through making marks, personal writing symbols and conventional script.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Arrangements for safeguarding are excellent because staff have an excellent awareness of safeguarding procedures and undertake regular in-house training. The management undertakes rigorous vetting and recruitment procedures, including first class induction procedures to ensure that the staff team is cleared as suitable for work with children and babies. Very efficient monitoring of the implementation of policies and procedures ensures consistent implementation and regular reviews with staff and families. The environment is exceedingly safe owing to the robust and effective risk assessments and emergency drills. Children display an excellent awareness of how to keep themselves safe and both recognise and uphold safety issues. The nursery's collaborative work with key agencies is exemplary.

The manager is highly motivated in driving further improvements and in conveying her vision successfully through valuable staff meetings. Staff undertake extensive training to gain the appropriate skills and expertise to support babies' and children's learning and development; additionally, staff are highly motivated in continuing to gain qualifications, so continually gaining in knowledge of how best to support children. Morale is very high and belief in the nursery's success runs throughout all levels of staff resulting in low staff turnover. As a result, outcomes for babies' and children's achievements and well-being are exceptionally high. Rigorous and extensive monitoring, analysis and self-challenge, enable the nursery to devise well-targeted plans.

In order to ensure that everyone at the nursery promotes equality and diversity, the management undertakes comprehensive reviews in collaboration with staff and families. Staff have an excellent working relationship with the borough council and outside agencies, and expertly target areas for change, which demonstrates the management's determined drive for continuous improvement. Successful implementation of the recommendations from the previous inspection has improved outcomes for children and babies. As a result, staff now engage in reflective practice-planning that has increased their ability to reflect upon and evaluate their own teaching practice.

Staff use the spacious converted church to provide a warmly welcoming and well-organised environment with easily accessible resources that promote children's investigative play. The newly developed outdoor area successfully fosters children's exploration and physical well-being. The deployment of the high ratio of staff to children together with the newly appointed Early Years Professional is highly effective and results in children and babies feeling extremely safe and well cared for. Families with English as an additional language benefit from staff that help children settle into nursery exceptionally well.

Relationships with parents are excellent. They are heavily involved in decision-making on key matters affecting the nursery's practice and organisation through suggestions and Parents' Evening discussions. Suggestions from the parents led to the installation of an alarm system on the front door to avoid it being left open. Parents are informed daily of their child's activities and routines in useful discussion with their 'key person' and through daily contact sheets; this process successfully contributes to improvements in children's achievement, well-being and development. One parent comments that 'The short time that my child was here was an eye-opener as to how good settings can be; you have surpassed our expectations and I wish I could be sure of finding one as good where we're going'.

Partnerships are superb; there are well-established means of communication between most partners involved in children's learning, which successfully promote their care, development and welfare. Links with the local primary school are good overall and provide support in preparation for children's transition to school.

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

The children receive excellent levels of care in this warmly welcoming and inclusive environment. They make rapid progress in their learning in relation to their starting points. Staff demonstrate an exceptional understanding of babies' and children's development in the Early Years Foundation Stage; this knowledge helps them to provide experiences that cover all areas of learning successfully. In the newly developed outdoor area, children engage enthusiastically in exploring and investigating, for example, the glitter and water-filled bottles, and the den-making area. Staff support and extend children's play by providing re-cycled saucepans for musical exploration. Children eagerly explore water containers as they spray them into the air, with staff offering words to make sense of their exploration, for example 'wet' and 'watery'. A large climbing wall with low level handles and foot holes fosters children's co-ordination and balance. Inside a 'messy room' offers a wonderful space for children to engage freely in painting, making marks, and water and sand exploration.

Children eagerly show their drawings and give meaning to the marks they make. In the pre-school room children have built a large scale wall using wooden blocks and delight in climbing onto it and following one another using their physical skills and turn-taking abilities. Though some pre-school children's writing is displayed on the walls, there are fewer early writing opportunities for children to use marks in their play, in order to gain the best possible skills for their move to school. Toddlers excitedly investigate a range of insects on the floor and transport multicultural babies in buggies that help children value diversity. In the messy area, toddlers investigate glitter coloured corn flour, and explore water with spades, discussing textures and colours, which fosters children's language development and safe use of tools. They use an extensive range of resources in the babies' room to help them develop confidence in exploring their surroundings. They are beginning to make independent choices of resources from the treasure baskets, vocalising, and responding to adults positively. The innovative sensory room

provides all children with chances to engage in exploration and investigation using all their senses.

Children and babies appear extremely happy and secure and have a strong sense of belonging. Their behaviour is exemplary because they understand what is expected of them and staff use consistent methods of managing unwanted behaviour. Children's attitudes towards one another are superb; they show responsibility towards each other during activities and meal times and behave in ways that are safe for themselves and others. The staff organise the rooms safely providing an excellent mixture of child-led and adult-led activities to promote play, exploration and learning. Children work very well independently, with clearly labelled boxes of resources for them to access and investigate freely. Children feel very confident to confide in staff for support or seek help from a friend.

All children are showing an excellent awareness of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, with a variety of organic and freshly prepared meals available each day. Children adopt excellent personal hygiene routines. They wash their hands independently before and after meal times, and understand the importance of drinking water, helping themselves when thirsty. Posters help children to understand how to eat sensibly, what tools to use and what constitutes healthy foods in eating areas. Children benefit from regular exercise and fresh air in the newly developed outdoor play area.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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