

St Matthews Pre-School Group

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	315246
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Inspector	Emily Wheeldon

Setting address	Stretton Road, Stretton, Warrington, Cheshire, WA4 4NT
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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

St Matthews Pre-School Group was registered in 1989 and is managed by a committee of parents. It operates from St Matthews Church Hall in Stretton, Warrington and is adjacent to the primary school. There is one main room and an enclosed outside area. A maximum of 20 children under eight years may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school currently cares for 35 children aged from two years to four years. Children attend for a minimum of two sessions and generally reside in the local area. The pre-school is open Monday from 11.30am to 3pm, Tuesday and Wednesday from 9.15am to 11.45am and 12.30pm to 3pm, Thursday and Friday from 9.15am to 12.15pm in term time. 'Rising Fives' sessions take place on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon. The pre-school is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

There are seven members of staff who work with the children on a part-time basis, including the business manager who manages the early years provision. Two members of staff hold a qualification at level 3 in early years and two members hold a qualification at level 2 in early years. One member of staff holds an honours degree in education. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children settle extremely well in this small, friendly and very inclusive setting. Highly dedicated and experienced staff plan a vast range of exciting activities which challenge children's thinking enabling them to make excellent progress. All required documentation is maintained to a high standard and policies are highly effective in practice to support excellent outcomes for children. Superb partnerships between external agencies, local schools and the pre-school mean that children receive excellent continuity of care. Partnerships with parents are outstanding and systems are taking shape to incorporate observations from home in to planning so that children are able to reach their full potential. Reflective practitioners successfully sustain consistently high standards by continually striving to improve outcomes for all children who attend.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extending systems for parents and carers to contribute to the ongoing observation and assessment process to inform future planning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are kept extremely safe and secure in this setting. Rigorous vetting and recruitment procedures are in place and stringent checks are carried out to safeguard children and their families. Staff are up-to-date with changes in legislation and have an excellent understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures. All the required documentation to support the welfare of children is in place, reviewed regularly and maintained to a high standard. Expert care is taken to ensure children are kept safe at all times. For example, staff conduct meticulous safety checks on the premises inside and out on a daily basis and supervise children extremely well.

Highly trained and experienced staff are deployed in a flexible way to meet the needs of children, parents and carers. Resources are vast and of a high standard. Dedicated staff and parents on the committee organise regular fundraising events to raise money for new equipment. For example, the outdoor area has undergone a major refurbishment and this has had a very positive impact on children's learning and development. Self-evaluation is robust and extensive action plans show that high expectations are established across all areas of practice. The setting has addressed previous recommendations very promptly and effectively. For example, planning is evaluated to clearly identify children's next steps in their learning. The setting has outstanding systems to ensure the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well met. Meticulous reports and individual education plans are drawn up with the support from outside agencies and parents. The setting places inclusion at the heart of everything it does. As a result, all groups of children make excellent progress.

The setting forms excellent relationships with parents and carers. For example, staff speak to parents on a daily basis and update them about activities their child have been doing. There is first rate continuity of care, such as when staff take action to support and reassure children and their parents during transition times. Information sharing about children's progress is excellent, though there is scope to further develop systems for obtaining information about children's learning at home. Staff are very proactive in making strong links with local schools and as a result, children excel in their learning.

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

Children are making rapid progress towards the early learning goals. Staff know the children very well and skilfully move them on in their learning. Observations and assessments are intrinsic in their practice and very effectively challenge new learning for every child in their care. Children are excellent communicators and enthusiastically talk about the features they can see on maps of the world with the inspector. They say, 'This is Tenerife. The blue part is the sea.' Exciting activities to develop children's skills in information and communication technology are on offer such as, interactive maths games on laptops. Younger children demonstrate

superb skills in numeracy as they select and drag numbers up to ten in sequence order across the computer screen. Such positive experiences mean that children develop excellent skills for the future.

At the start of the session children arrive eager to explore their surroundings and clearly show that they are 'school ready'. For example, they separate from their parents and carers with ease and take responsibility for hanging their coats on their peg. The greatest value is put on celebrating children's achievements in this exceptional setting. For example, wonderful touches include getting the children involved in making their own musical instruments for their end of year ceremony concert. Children feel very proud of their achievements and are very confident to start the next chapter in their lives in school. Age-appropriate strategies are used very effectively in respect of behaviour management and children are extremely polite and caring towards one another. For example, children put reassuring arms around friends and offer collage materials to add to their picture.

Children have an excellent understanding of keeping themselves safe as they remind one another about not running in the main room in case they slip over. They relish screwing small bolts into pieces of wood to create structures and demonstrate that they can handle tools safely. Children learn about safety outside the setting as staff regularly invite visitors from the local community, such as the fire brigade, who talk to the children about the dangers of fire. Imaginative ways to handle sensitive issues surrounding differences in society are expertly dealt with. For instance, staff show children a range of different sized and coloured apples and ask them to describe what they look like. The staff member cuts them in half and asks the children to describe what they see now and they say, 'They are all the same inside.' A wealth of opportunities for children to develop their imaginations are provided. For instance, the travel agents, in which children use real holiday brochures, maps and artefacts from around the world. Children gain an excellent understanding of the wider world and recently observed a visitor putting a sari on and got involved in henna painting.

Children demonstrate outstanding awareness of staying healthy. For example, children tell parents that hummus is a healthy alternative to biscuits and they would like them to buy hummus at home as they have it in pre-school. Additional highly nutritious foods provided by the setting include arrays of fresh fruit, breadsticks and raw vegetables. As a result, children are healthy and well nourished. Children demonstrate outstanding independence when they self serve food and drinks of water or milk. Children are given a wealth of opportunities to develop their physical skills and greatly benefit from fresh air.

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	1

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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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