

St George's Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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 George's Nursery School opened in 1994 and re-registered in 2011. It is one of four settings run by The Childcare Company and operates from converted premises close to Leicester city centre. All children share access to fully enclosed outdoor play areas. The nursery serves the local community and surrounding areas.

The nursery opens from Monday to Friday all year round, except for Bank Holidays and one week at Christmas. Sessions are from 7.45am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 90 children in the early years age range may attend at any one time. There are currently 72 children on roll who are within this age group. The nursery also runs a holiday club for children aged up to 10 years. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds and supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 19 members of childcare staff, the majority of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. It receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery and make satisfactory progress in their learning and development. They participate in a range of suitable activities and learning experiences, although the quality is variable and not all children are made to feel included. Children's welfare is satisfactorily promoted and they are cared for by staff who know them well. Sound partnerships have been developed with parents and carers. However, partnerships in the wider context are at an early stage of development. Self-evaluation is beginning to support the acting manager in reviewing the provision and enabling her to identify and prioritise improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- link the indoor and outdoor environments so that children can move freely between them wherever possible, offering them freedom to explore, use their senses and be physically active
- ensure that the diversity of individuals and communities is valued and respected; with particular regard to the use of children's first language within the environment, practitioner knowledge of each child and resourcing which reflects inclusive practice
- further develop working in partnership with other settings and professionals, and with individuals and groups, to support children's progress

- employ dynamic and flexible systems of physical organisation; with particular regard to the avoidance of lone working for staff and grouping of children at particular points during the day
- ensure flexibility in planning for the group, while keeping a focus on children's individual learning needs; with particular regard to staff maintaining an overview of the value of the activity for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The staff and acting manager demonstrate a secure understanding of the procedures to follow in order to safeguard children, and all have received child protection training. Robust recruitment procedures ensure that staff working with children are suitable to do so. Staff are appropriately qualified for their roles and undertake training to ensure they update their knowledge and practice. All necessary policies, records and documentation are in place to underpin children's safety and well-being. However, at times, staff are left isolated as the policy to leave the door open is not followed, nor are children given the opportunity to experience working together across age ranges.

Inclusive practice is mostly promoted effectively. However, for some children who speak English as an additional language, staff do not support their understanding and the environment does not reflect their first language or help them feel valued and welcome. Staff know individual children and their families well and parents comment on the positive relationships they enjoy with the nursery. Strategies are in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The acting manager has been in post for a short time and is covering maternity leave. She and the nursery team work well together. Generally, the level of enthusiasm shown for their work is evident and beneficial to the children. Practice within the baby room is particularly effective. However, this is not consistent throughout the nursery. Most rooms are decorated with children's work, and photographs displayed give them a sense of belonging. Resources are plentiful, although the effectiveness of their deployment inside and out is variable. The outside area does not provide children with an exciting environment within which to learn, and free-flow play is not a feature of the nursery. Some resources are stored at children's level to enable them to make independent choices in their play.

Currently most children do not attend other early years settings, so there has been no opportunity to liaise with these other settings. Children leaving the setting go on to a number of schools and currently links have not been secured with all of these to further enable smooth transitions for older children. However, there are links with some schools and other settings as well as liaison with professionals, such as the Area SENCO. Partnerships with parents and carers are effective, although for families with English as an additional language, information is not provided in a way that they can easily access. Parents share information about children and their learning and achievements at home, helping staff gain a more detailed picture of children's welfare and development. Parents are pleased with the service they receive. For example, one comments, 'I always recommend it to everyone. The staff here are fantastic'. Systems of self-evaluation are in place.

However, this does not reflect practice within the nursery. The acting manager uses information received at meetings with other managers in the nursery chain to assist her decision making. Support is also provided by the senior management team. In this way, the nursery prioritises improvements. Since the setting's re-registration, changes have been made to cosy corners and messy and creative areas.

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

Most staff understand the Statutory Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage and put this into practice to help children make satisfactory progress. For example, baby room staff support very young children to explore the texture of sand and make patterns with their fingers. Older children concentrate for long periods washing dolls in soapy water, taking care to ensure they wipe water away from the doll's eyes. Children enjoy taking part in the pretend picnic outdoors as a staff member skilfully encourages their participation. They enjoy role play, making arrangements for a child who pretends to be ill, showing excellent recall skills and care and concern for the child. However, these positive experiences are not consistent throughout the nursery. Some staff appear unmotivated and interact insufficiently with children to support them in their play and learning. Planning is led by children's interests and observations carried out inform what is offered the following day. However, the quality of whole group activities is sometimes compromised as staff focus on children's individual interests. Trackers completed quarterly help staff to identify children's next steps, although there is not a cohesive overview to ensure all groups of children make consistently good progress across all areas of learning.

Most children show they feel safe and secure in the nursery. Babies seek comfort from staff, with whom they have formed warm relationships. Children generally know how to behave and care for the environment and resources, but sometimes need reminders. Some staff offer praise and encouragement, which boosts children's self-esteem. Children's communication skills develop variably as, although some staff interact with them, respond to them and introduce new vocabulary, others are less effective. Some children who speak English as an additional language receive limited support. For example, laminated cards showing key words in languages spoken remain pinned to notice boards. Opportunities for children to explore number are limited to everyday activities, such as counting during singing, and using compare bears and a calculator to work out simple sums. Older babies solve simple problems as they fit different shapes into sorters and press buttons to hear noises. Children develop knowledge and understanding of the world as they learn about their immediate locality through walks and visitors to the setting. They appreciate the wider world and other cultures as they celebrate different festivals. For example, children enjoy listening to the steel drum player who visits during 'Caribbean Week'.

Children's physical development is satisfactorily promoted, although not all staff support children to develop these skills during outdoor play and they do not have opportunities to grow or care for living things. These activities lay foundations to

support children's future economic well-being. Children's welfare is satisfactorily promoted. Babies' individual routines are followed as they contentedly snuggle into staff for feeds and rest undisturbed in the sleep room. Effective hygiene measures reduce the risk of cross-infection. For example, children know that anti-bacterial soap helps keep them healthy. Allergies are recorded on children's placemats and they begin to understand how these affect others as they discuss this with staff during lunchtime. Meals and snacks are healthy and nutritious. Children learn about safety when they recognise that the floor is wet and needs mopping after water play.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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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