

St. Vincents Nursery

St. Vincent's RC Infant's School, Orchard Road, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA15 8EY

Inspection date	13/02/2013
Previous inspection date	10/01/2007

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Monitoring of all aspects of practice to inform continuous improvement is rigorous, leading to exceptional practice. Leadership is inspirational and staff are highly enthusiastic about their work, which motivates children to learn.
- Staff have an outstanding knowledge of how children learn, and provide challenging, varied and imaginative educational activities, as a result of precise assessment and planning. All children make excellent progress, independent of their starting points.
- The nursery provides exemplary support to develop children's early numeracy, literacy and communication skills using different approaches based on individual needs.
- Children are highly confident and show an excellent level of independence for their age, as a result of staff practice and a carefully organised learning environment that enables them to select resources for themselves.
- The nursery is very successful in helping parents to be directly involved in their children's learning, and there are effective, well-established routes for frequent information exchange between parents and the nursery.
- Partnerships with other professionals are highly effective in providing for children's needs. Transitions in and out of the nursery are exceptionally well organised to promote continuity of care and learning.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector reviewed information available about the nursery, to prepare for the inspection.
A tour of the premises was made and the inspector had an initial meeting with the managers to establish a timetable for the day, which included time to discuss the leadership and management of the nursery.
- The inspector carried out observations on childcare staff and their interactions with children throughout the day and examined documentation related to children's welfare and learning.
- Some staff members were interviewed to ascertain their knowledge of areas, such as safeguarding and individual children's learning.
- A joint observation was made by the inspector and a room leader of a member of staff who was leading a small group activity for children.
- Parents were encouraged to share their views about their children's care and learning in the nursery.

Inspector

Jennifer Kennaugh

Full Report

Information about the setting

St Vincent's Nursery was re-registered in 2006 and is situated in purpose-built premises on the site of St Vincent's Catholic Primary School in Altrincham. It is registered on the Early Years Register and is run by a committee of governors of the school. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. Children have access to two playrooms and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play. Additionally, the nursery can access the school infant playground and playing field at selected times.

The nursery employs 14 members of staff. Of these, one has Early Years Professional Status and is a qualified teacher. Four members of staff have an honours degree in a relevant subject. One of these is a qualified teacher and one a qualified nurse. Six staff are qualified to level 3 and one of these holds qualified teacher status gained outside of the United Kingdom. Two staff are working towards gaining level 3 qualifications and one of these is qualified to level 2. There is also an assistant for the administration of the nursery.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday, for 48 weeks a year, from 8am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 84 children on roll, all of whom are between the ages of two and five years. The nursery currently provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children and can also provide this for two-year-olds. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and with special needs and/or disabilities. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- consistently provide mark-making resources in role play areas to further enhance children's progress in developing early writing skills.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Staff demonstrate exceptional knowledge of individual children and how to enhance their learning. They have a superb understanding of the requirements for learning and development in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, children make excellent progress, no matter what their starting points when they begin to attend. Staff are consistently enthusiastic and interested in children and how to best support their play in order to facilitate learning. The quality of staff talk with children is consistently high across a variety of situations, including small group times and when children have free choice of play activities. Consequently, this supports learning experiences for children through well-judged input. This includes suggesting resources that could be used to enhance play or by asking questions to stimulate critical thought and creativity. Equally, staff are also skilled at holding back and letting children learn through becoming absorbed in an activity. Staff demonstrate a very thorough knowledge of the behaviours children show when they are engaged in effective learning. They are encouraged to observe for these, in order to enhance their knowledge of the individual children in their key groups.

Staff make excellent use of observations to plan experiences for children that match their learning needs and therefore help them to progress. Learning is facilitated through a variety of means, including some one-to-one work, as children's needs dictate, which further extends the precise planning process. There are highly precise systems to monitor children's assessment. This includes viewing the progress of entire age groups of children across all areas of learning, to help decide how to implement the best possible learning experiences. For example, children who arrive showing lower attainment than expected in some aspects of development receive a variety of interventions to substantially narrow the gap between their progress and that of their peers. The precision of analysis of children's progress enables all children to receive learning experiences which match their needs and enhance their development. The approach also enables staff and managers to monitor children once concerns about their learning have been addressed, in order to maintain pace of development. All children receive consistently challenging learning experiences, no matter what their level of attainment or age, to maintain their development and motivation.

Managers and senior room staff monitor the quality of staff practice with children by observing staff interactions with children frequently. This is used continually to help staff keep up high standards of care and education. There are robust methods in place to monitor the breadth and depth of educational programmes provided and also the breadth and quality of staff's observations of children. This helps to maintain consistently outstanding and precise planning for children's learning. Additionally, the nursery undertakes termly moderation of assessment with the host school's Early Years Foundation Stage. This supports continuity of learning when children progress to full-time education.

The teaching of early numeracy and literacy is a strength in the nursery. This is due to the use of frequent small group and sometimes one-to-one work to provide targeted activities based on children's observed progress. Staff deliver these learning experiences with exceptional skill and enthusiasm, and children are observed to be highly successful in their learning as a result of staff using a multi-sensory approach. The resources used for teaching early number skills are also made available for free play for children, to further extend their effectiveness. Routines in the day incorporate time for children to have quiet

time to select books and look at them on their own, or with staff support. This encourages children to develop the early basis for reading regularly.

Parents contribute directly to children's learning, through the use of activity booklets that are taken home, containing differentiated activities, provided as the child completes them. These support parents to help children link letters and sounds through everyday experiences, such as sticking pictures of objects beginning with a 'suh' sound next to the letter 'S'. Parents also write relevant observations about their children's learning in these to help inform the planning process for their child. All children, whatever their attainment, are very well-challenged due to staff selecting appropriate activities for these books. The books are well-used by parents, who praise the staff highly for their work in developing children's readiness for school in this respect, amongst many others. As a result, the nursery is highly successful in helping parents to engage with their children's learning.

Children with English as an additional language are very well-supported due to the large number of multi-lingual staff, who can develop children's home language as well as their English. They are also able to assess children's learning using their home language so that this is accurate, and not masked by early development in spoken English. Consequently, these children make excellent progress due to precise planning for their needs, including some one-to-one support, to narrow the gap in their capacity for spoken English. Bilingual staff also provide fully inclusive early teaching of other languages, such as Spanish to children across the nursery, to enrich their learning about other countries and cultures.

Children access a wide range of activities, freely chosen or led by adults, across the day. There are frequent opportunities for children to bake or prepare food each week, usually for snack times. They enjoy mixing rice cereal with melted chocolate and judging whether they have done this sufficiently well due to the colour of the cereal. Children have access to computers, to develop manipulative skills using a mouse and also to play games that reinforce their ability to match sounds and symbols. Staff have taken great care to provide a wide range of textures and colours in the environment, to provide opportunities to talk about these and develop the breadth of children's vocabulary. Children enjoy play with sand and water, learning about the characteristics of these materials and they collaborate with friends, developing their social and communication skills. Malleable materials like play dough provide further opportunities for children to develop manipulative skills to strengthen hands for early writing. Mark-making resources are always available and there are frequently adult-led activities in this area, as part of the emphasis on developing early literacy. However, children can also freely access ones such as painting which are open-ended. The home role play area is large, to enable children to develop their play in a group and there is a wealth of child-height text labelling the equipment. This helps to emphasise that text carries meaning. Occasional use is made of mark-making resources in this area, but it is not consistently provided, so the area does not always have the means for children to practise early writing skills, such as for shopping lists or on message boards.

The daily routine enables children to enjoy a range of outdoor play activities, such as tricycles and hoops, to develop their whole body control. The outdoor area is exceptionally well-equipped to support children's creative, social and physical play, along with activities to learn about the natural world, such as growing plants. There is a balance of open areas

such as for tricycles or running, along with semi-enclosed ones, which can be used for child-initiated play or adult-led activities, like listening to outdoor sounds. Care has been taken to incorporate features, such as meandering pathways, areas of decking and novelties such as large painted mushrooms. This helps to provide an environment that stimulates creative play, interactions with others and physical activity to challenge children when they are playing outdoors. Additionally, the nursery organises regular walks to a local pond, as part of encouraging children to exercise and to provide opportunities to learn about the natural world and the seasons. The nursery uses a sports coach to help children develop physical co-ordination through weekly ball game sessions, which also builds an early enjoyment of sport as part of a healthy lifestyle.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

The nursery operates a key person system in order to support children's emotional welfare and staff show an excellent knowledge of children in their key group. This is due to observations, information from parents and talking to children informally or during key group times. Consequently, children's learning is facilitated due to strong emotional security. Children are extremely confident and self-assured as a result of expert key person practice. Behaviour is excellent and children show exemplary self-control, including at small group times led by staff, such as ones to develop early literacy skills. Children use toys and simple implements like brushes or scissors safely, showing an excellent regard for their welfare and that of others. Resources outdoors, such as climbing frames with slides and platforms enable children to develop an understanding of risk through physical challenge combined with careful supervision. The nursery has a wealth of policies and procedures to protect children's welfare and support their physical and emotional well-being.

The resources indoors and outside are arranged to promote development of children's independence skills and enhance the opportunities to make their own choices about play. Children are encouraged to serve themselves at meal times, to further develop independence and manipulative skills. Staff are sensitive to the level of support needed by individual children for self-care and personal hygiene, providing a consistently high standard of care for children. Care plans for children with additional physical or personal hygiene needs are detailed. These are available to all staff so that the correct action can swiftly be taken in the event of difficulties, including informing parents or seeking emergency medical care.

The nursery provides very thorough information prior to the intake of new children to familiarise parents with the routine, care and education of the setting using individual meetings with parents. This includes detailed information about the revised Early Years Foundation Stage and the role that parents can play in supporting their children's learning. Parents complete an exceptionally comprehensive booklet prior to children joining the nursery so that staff have a wealth of information in order to support children's care and education in the early weeks of attending. Information is sought from settings that children attend before the nursery to promote continuity of care and education. Information exchange between the nursery and parents is an effective ongoing process, with parents receiving termly reports on children's progress. Parents provide termly

updates on children's interests and observed achievements at home and comment on the previous progress report. The developmental check when children are aged between two- and three-years-old is incorporated into the reporting cycle. Children in this age range receive three reports and assessments over the academic year, including the check which is in the term before they turn three. This approach enables the most up-to-date information to be available for any health visitor appointments that children may be invited to. Particular care is taken to help parents to record observations about children's achievement in learning sounds and letters, so that this can be incorporated into planning in the nursery. There is also a substantial amount of displayed information about safeguarding, developing children's learning and local resources for young children and parents to support families.

Parents are encouraged to contribute to the evaluation of the setting through a variety of routes. As a result, the nursery makes changes to practice, such as replacing some of the short interactive whiteboard sessions at the beginning of the late afternoon with 'keep fit' activities. There is a well-established policy of regularly asking children what they have enjoyed at nursery, in order to build on this to maintain their motivation to learn. It also supports children to recognise that their views are important, developing their sense of self-worth.

Transitions from the nursery to the host school are smoothly managed. This is due to exceptionally close partnership working, including passing on detailed information about children's progress and school staff observing children before they transfer. The nursery maintains close links with the school on a weekly basis, as pre-school age children attend hymn practice in the main school. There are also regular, jointly organised events for parents who have children attending either setting. A very small number of children do not transfer to the host school and again, detailed information is provided for their next setting to support continuity. Children who transfer to other settings before full-time education have similarly detailed information passed on. The nursery liaises with other settings that children attend, in order to exchange information about care and learning to support continuity. Exceptional efforts are made to ensure that children with special needs and/or disabilities receive the support they need to succeed when they transfer to full-time education.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

Risk assessments and safety checks are robust and regularly reviewed so children can move safely and freely in permitted areas. Highly comprehensive systems are in place for recruitment and induction of staff, along with induction of students and volunteers, in order to protect children. Staff receive regular, externally delivered training in safeguarding. Consequently, they have an excellent understanding of procedures to manage any concerns they may have about a child's welfare. Responsibilities of staff are clearly defined to ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of how to carry out their roles to a consistently high standard. All documentation related to the revised statutory requirements is meticulously completed to support the safe and effective running of the setting, including policy for the use of portable data devices with cameras on the

premises.

Staff demonstrate consistently outstanding knowledge and practice to facilitate children's development in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Consequently, all children's progress is excellent, no matter what level of attainment children have achieved prior to attending. The teaching of early literacy and numeracy is exceptionally strong as the setting recognises that achieving a firm early basis in these areas supports success in later education. Systems for monitoring educational programmes, individual planning and assessment are robust, so that children receive a rich and varied learning experience based on their individual needs. The highly precise ways for assessment of children's progress and monitoring the quality of this enable staff to rapidly implement interventions to enhance children's learning. This includes working with other agencies and professionals when needed. Partnership working with other professionals and settings to support children's individual needs is exemplary, including at transition times.

Well-established routes are in place to enable parents to update staff about their children's interests and to contribute directly to children's learning with the support of the nursery. This ensures that current information from parents is available to key persons for individual planning and assessment purposes, to further enhance children's learning. Regular and detailed updates on children's progress mean that parents are exceptionally well informed about their children's development.

The committee, the managers and staff work together to set highly purposeful and ambitious targets to maintain continuous improvement in practice and enhance outcomes for children. Systems for staff performance management and identifying training needs are highly effective in supporting staff to perform to the very best of their capabilities. The managers and all staff demonstrate inspiring enthusiasm in their work with children, which in turn motivates children to excel in their learning. The capacity for continuous improvement is excellent, due to outstanding teamwork by the managers, committee and staff, along with an emphasis on maintaining a highly qualified workforce.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement

and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.

Met The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.

Not Met The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children’s learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY343794
Local authority	Trafford
Inspection number	820777
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	45
Number of children on roll	84
Name of provider	St. Vincent's Infant's School Governing Body
Date of previous inspection	10/01/2007
Telephone number	0161 928 7581

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Type of provision

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Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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