

St Philips Pre-School

St Philips Community School, Westbrook Centre, Westbrook, Warrington, Cheshire, WA5 8UE

Inspection date	12/09/2013
Previous inspection date	20/10/2008

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- Transition arrangements are very effective. Staff get to know children quickly by collecting good quality information from parents. As a result, children form strong attachments and settle quickly.
- Children behave well and are learning to be independent because the staff encourage cooperation, sharing and 'having a go'. For example, children try to spread butter on their toast, taking turns to pass the butter around.
- Staff are adept at supporting children's communication. They ask open-ended questions and give children time to think and respond. Interesting and lively discussions take place as a result.

It is not yet good because

- Confusion in establishing clear roles and responsibilities between the management team and the committee has resulted in some records, such as staff recruitment information, being unavailable for scrutiny. This means that a robust procedure, ensuring all staff are suitable cannot be verified.
- Appraisal methods are too informal. Prompt, formal induction is not in place and ongoing coaching of staff does not identify any specific targets to develop their good practice further, so that they provide children with the best possible care and learning.
- Outdoor play is timetabled and as a result, children sometimes have a limited amount of time to sustain their imaginary play in the very well-resourced garden.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including planning, observations and assessment records. She also looked at a range of policies, including information used to assess the suitability of staff, staff rotas, attendance registers and the setting's self-evaluation.
- The inspector observed activities and care practices in the playrooms and within the outside play area. She conducted joint observations with the manager, looking at the practice of staff.
- The inspector spoke with the children, parents and staff. She also held a meeting with the management team.

Inspector

Valerie Aspinall

Full Report

Information about the setting

St Philips Pre-School was registered on the Early Years Register in 2001. It is situated within St Philips Community School in Westbrook, Warrington. The pre-school operates from two rooms within the school building and is managed by a committee. The pre-school serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate childcare qualifications at level 3 and one at level 2. The pre-school is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 8.45am to 3.45pm, during term time. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently 26 children attending, who are in the early years age group. The pre-school provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children, who speak English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure that records are available to show how staff have been recruited. Specifically, information to prove suitability, such as interview information, references and induction records to ensure staff have the aptitude to work with young children
- implement effective methods of appraising staff, so that they can continue to develop their skills further, by setting specific targets to help them to support children's learning.

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

- extend the opportunities for children to play outdoors even further, so they can continue to explore, investigate and imagine, for sustained periods of time.

Inspection judgements

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

Children engage in active play with a wide range of resources that support all seven areas of learning. They build on a large scale outside in the garden, using replica bricks. Staff teach children about safety through play when they explain they need ear defenders to protect their ears when they pretend to drill the bricks. Children enjoy experimenting with sand, water, bark and logs by brushing, pouring, filling and transporting them in a variety of ways. These activities are highly effective in developing children's thinking and communication skills and staff are on hand to clarify their thoughts. As a result, children become absorbed in their play. Staff read stories to individual and groups of children and have interesting and lively conversations at circle time. They listen carefully to children and ask open-ended questions to help them to think and develop their communication skills. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities have effective targeted support in place. Staff confidently discuss individual children's learning requirements and the strategies in place to help them make the best possible progress, given their starting points. Children with English as an additional language are well supported as staff learn and use simple words in their home language.

Children are becoming active learners; they have opportunities to play indoors and outside and the learning opportunities are extensive. They hunt for interesting items using magnifying glasses and experiment with sounds when they are shown how different objects banged together make different sounds. Children use paint brushes to make marks with the water and pretend to 'paint' the wall. Staff use the opportunity to teach healthy messages when they pretend to be the dentist and examine children's teeth during a child-led role play game. These activities complement the areas of continuous provision, such as, construction, role play and creative areas. Children learn about numbers during the daily routine, for example, they count out how many plates are needed at snack time. The good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities results in children being engaged and busy in their play and provides them with useful skills for the future.

Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of how to promote the learning and development of young children. They regularly observe children's learning and assess and track their progress. Staff build the next steps for children's learning into activities they have shown an interest in, as well as through planned themes and seasonal activities. Parents are encouraged to share their children's experiences at home by writing in their home school book; as a result, staff talk to children about their home life, which helps them to feel valued. This two-way flow of information ensures that parents can fully support their child's learning at home. Staff have friendly, supportive relationships with parents and give them verbal feedback each day and termly summaries of the progress children are making. Information about the revised Early Years Foundation Stage is given to all parents when their children are enrolled. Parents have access to their children's learning files at all times and staff share these at regular parents' meetings.

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

Children quickly form good attachments to their key person and feel secure in the environment, so they are keen to explore, knowing staff are close by to give support. Staff find opportunities to give children one-to-one attention during the busy day and encourage quieter children to join in group activities. As a result, children's emotional needs are very well met. Staff praise children's efforts and contributions to group discussion, they gently remind them to share with each other and to tidy up. Consequently, children are well behaved and cooperate with staff and each other during their play. For example, boys work well together to build a wall of bricks as they pretend to be bricklayers. Children are learning how to play safely. For example, they listen when staff explain why they should not climb up the front of the slide or run around with instruments in their mouth. Children are taught about personal hygiene, they independently wash their hands after using the toilet, while staff supervise, to ensure children, who need help with personal care are supported. Children's health is further promoted because they are offered nutritious, well-balanced snacks. They learn about healthy food choices through planned activities, such as food tasting and visits from a dentist.

The environment is bright and attractive, with the vast majority of resources stored at low-levels, so that all children can independently select the toys they want to play with. The playrooms are partitioned to create different areas and children can find a quiet corner to play or rest away from a larger group. The building's layout allows for children to move freely between the playrooms and the garden. They enjoy the outdoors because of the exceptional range of activities available to them, which are highly effective in promoting their imagination, exploration and physical skills. However, as the outdoors is only used at specific times, opportunities for children to become fully engrossed in their play are sometimes limited. Children are encouraged to become independent throughout the day. They put on their own coats and are encouraged to pour their own drinks and spread butter on their toast at snack time. Consequently, children are active and animated learners, who are developing skills that will help them make the transition to school at the appropriate time.

New children and their parents come to an open day before the start of the new school year. They meet their future key person and spend time playing while their parents are asked to fill in an 'all about me' sheet. This details their likes and dislikes and any specific needs they may have. In addition, parents compile a 'I'm Special' sheet with photographs of family members and special people or pets. Consequently, staff to get to know children quickly and provide appropriate care. For example, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities have detailed care plans in place.

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

The setting generally has appropriate policies and systems in place to meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and a clear knowledge of how to report concerns appropriately and managers record concerns in detail. Risk assessments are

completed for the premises, activities and outings, which helps to monitor and ensure children's safety. However, during the inspection, records were not available to prove that all measures possible have been taken to ensure all staff are suitable to work with children. While appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service checks are in place for all staff, other recruitment information, such as, suitable references, induction and interview records are unavailable. This is due to the confusion of roles and responsibilities between the management team and committee members, who oversee the setting. As a result, some records are not kept on site or have been misplaced.

Staff have a secure knowledge of the learning and development requirements, which enables them to support children in making good progress in their learning. They maintain clear records of observations undertaken on their key children, which are linked to the areas of learning and include the next steps planned for them. Children's achievements are tracked against the early learning goals to monitor their progress. The manager and her staff regularly monitor children's progress through weekly planning meetings, so can identify any specific areas of learning where they are not making good progress.

The manager of the pre-school sets high aspirations for quality and is actively working to develop this further. Priorities for improvement are identified through consultation with parents, children and staff. For example, the outdoor area has been extensively developed and now provides an excellent learning environment. The manager is aware of the impact of supporting the ongoing development of staff and as a result, training needs are discussed at meetings and staff feed information from training back to the team through focused improvement plans. However, regular formal appraisals are not implemented. Opportunities for staff, who are still in the process of gaining qualifications, to discuss their strengths and areas for development are missed. As a result, they are not effectively supported to develop their good levels of practice further, to help children make even better progress.

Effective observation and planning strategies means that, where required, children's needs for extra support are identified and staff consistently work to meet these and the interests of the children. Strong partnerships with parents contribute to a coordinated approach to children's care and learning. For example, staff encourage them to borrow from the range of 'chatterboxes' the pre-school has developed for parents to use at home. Parents contribute their skills and experience to children's learning. For example, parents, who are dentists, fire fighters and police pilots, visit the setting to teach children about different aspects of health and safety.

Information regarding the pre-school's policies, procedures and activities offered are shared with parents in a variety of ways, including a regular newsletter, notice board, home link books and daily discussions. The nursery has established very good relationships with other professionals, such as speech therapists and reception class teachers, which effectively supports children's transitions to school. As a result, children develop confidence and independence and are very well prepared for moving on.

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 action. 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	315248
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	931383
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	16
Number of children on roll	26
Name of provider	St Philips Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	20/10/2008
Telephone number	07960 428 892

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

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, which are usually the childminder's 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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