

St Michael's Pre-School

St Michael's Church, Devon Road, Chester, CH2 2PX

Inspection date

01/10/2013

Previous inspection date

03/11/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

3

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 2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Practitioners consistently give the highest priority to the safety of the children and effectively support their growing understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy.
- Key person relationships with children and parents are strong, which ensures children settle well and are supported well in future transitions to school.
- Children are happy and enjoy their time in this calm and welcoming pre-school, they engage with knowledgeable staff, who support them in making good progress in their learning and development.
- Children develop good behaviour and confidence because staff give positive praise and are good role models.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to enhance the range of experiences offered to children to widen their knowledge of other cultures.

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 observed activities in the main rooms and the outdoor learning environment.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with the children, the provider's self-evaluation form and improvement plan.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day and from information included in the pre-school's own parent survey.

Inspector

Margaret Foster

Full Report

Information about the setting

St Michael's Pre-School was registered in 1975 and is on the Early Years Register. It operates from two rooms on the ground floor in St. Michaels church hall in Newton, Chester. The pre-school is owned and managed by a committee of church members. The pre-school serves the local area and is accessible to all children and has an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The pre-school has nine members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications, three hold qualifications at level 2, four at level 3, including one with Early Years Professional Status and one holds Qualified Teacher Status.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during term times. Sessions are from 9.15am until 12.15pm and during the summer months from 1pm until 4pm. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. There are currently 29 children in the early years age range on roll. It supports a number of children, who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school receives support from the local authority and an advisory teacher.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the range of experiences offered to children to broaden their knowledge of other cultures and understanding of the world.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff build good relationships with the children on entry to the pre-school. Therefore, children build strong attachments with their key person and make good progress in their learning. Parents support this relationship by the information they give to the pre-school about their child. Children's starting points are well assessed, laying a thorough foundation for their future learning. Communication with parents is a strength of the pre-school and is instrumental in supporting children's good progress. Children's induction process is sensitively managed, to ensure they settle well and become confident learners. A series of taster sessions, extending in length ensure children build in confidence and feel secure in the pre-school.

Children are happy to attend the pre-school, they know that they are safe, which gives

them the confidence to explore and experiment in the indoor and outdoor environments. Staff have a good understanding of how children learn and develop, and educational programmes draw on children's observed needs, as well as making use of topics, such as transport and road safety.

Resources are of good quality and reflect a diverse society and dual language books and labels in other languages are displayed in the pre-school. However, there is scope to develop the range of experiences offered to children to broaden their knowledge of different cultures, for example, by tasting different foods from other cultures and exploring clothing in role play.

Staff skilfully ask open-ended questions during circle time, encouraging children's thinking and giving them the time and confidence to respond. Staff seek information about what the children already know, in order to enhance their existing knowledge. Purposeful planning for children's physical development outdoors offers a range of experiences for children to play on vehicles, they gather speed and develop skills, such as steering, stopping and starting and linking ideas from the circle time about road safety. Children can manipulate play dough and use a range of cutters, rollers and are, therefore, developing fine motor skills.

Children confidently try out new ideas and problem solve. For example, two children play with large hollow blocks. They lay them flat like stepping stones, then step from one to another over a large area, learning to balance and stretch and develop a sense of direction. Children's independence is developed through the organisation of the pre-school into zones of learning, which they can access freely. Children are developing good communication skills because all practitioners use picture cards, to support their understanding and staff role model good sentence structure.

Comprehensive assessments are made of children's learning through tracking their progress in detail. This enables staff to see if progress is as expected, or above or below for their age and stage. Consequently, staff have a thorough knowledge of each child's development and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified early and support packages put in place to ensure that any gaps in their learning are addressed swiftly and effectively. This ensures that all children make good progress given their starting points and gain the necessary skills in readiness for school.

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

The pre-school operates an effective key person system whereby staff demonstrate a deeply embedded knowledge of the children and their routines, helping their emotional well-being and this in turn, has a positive impact on their learning. Children are supported through the strong attachments built with their key person in all aspects of their development; warm attachments help younger children's changing routines.

Children show a good level of self-care and are praised for washing their hands before snacks and after using the toilet. During snack time, children's independence is nurtured by having choices where they can sit and help themselves to the snacks they want to

choose. Children's dexterity is developing as they pour milk or water for themselves and staff encourage them in the development of social skills through the quality of their interactions. Children's confidence in selecting and making choices from the serving bowls is nurtured along with supporting language development skills. They are motivated, singing and joining in with action rhymes with enthusiasm and are keen to learn. Staff are good role models for children, interactions are purposeful and developmentally appropriate and their behaviour is good. Children are happy and enthusiastic to join in, they are well behaved and staff use positive praise to recognise their achievements.

Children are taught about healthy food and the importance of exercise. They learn to understand exercise and the effect on their bodies, enjoying space to run and climb in the outdoors. Trees in the grounds offer children good opportunities for climbing and building upper body strength. They know how high is safe to climb, so they are learning to manage and take calculated risks while closely supervised by staff. Children experience challenges on the large climbing frame and are ably supported by the staff, who build their confidence in the knowledge that they are safe. They are learning to negotiate spaces, levels and textures by the variety of natural materials available in the environment.

Good partnerships with parents and regular discussions to keep them well informed supports the transition process between the different age groups and informs the planning process in the pre-school. Comprehensive information about children's dietary and health needs are obtained from parents on entry to the pre-school. This supports children's well-being and safety. Relationships with other providers are well developed and therefore, children make successful transitions and children are well prepared for school. Teachers from the feeder schools visit the pre-school to meet the children to ensure their preparation for transition is as seamless as possible and their emotional needs are met.

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

The manager and deputy have a good understanding of their responsibility to deliver the learning and development, and safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. All staff demonstrate a high awareness of safeguarding policies and procedures, ensuring children's safety. Staff fully understand how to identify and manage any concerns they may have about a child's welfare, who to inform and the recording process. The security of children is highly prioritised by a senior member of staff manning the entry door. This prevents children leaving unsupervised and any unauthorised visitors entering. Risk assessments are detailed and completed daily in all the areas that children access, to ensure that they can play safely and freely. There are clear systems in place to ensure that children are always cared for by suitable adults; recruitment and induction are robust.

Supervision of practitioners is purposeful and training programmes are prioritised, so as to have the most benefit to children attending the pre-school. Staff meet regularly to review policies and key persons discuss children's observations and ensure that planning meets the needs of them and their next steps in their learning. The manager is knowledgeable about the process required to address underperformance and how to engage in sensitive

discussions with staff, to ensure that they understand the high expectations of them. The quality of teaching is monitored regularly by the manager and deputy manager to ensure that it is rooted in good knowledge that has a positive impact on children's development.

Monitoring of children's planning and learning journeys is completed fortnightly by the manager and deputy of the pre-school to ensure that the seven areas of learning are covered in planning and to measure their progress towards the early learning goals. Children's assessments are used effectively to measure progress from a baseline assessment on entry to the setting; a strength of this assessment is the identification of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Good relationships with partners and external agencies ensure that appropriate support for these children is accessed and gaps in knowledge and skills supported to ensure that all of them make good progress from their starting points.

Thorough action planning identifies areas for improvement and is linked to training for staff. For example, when staff observed that some children were unhappy when groups split and they had to leave something they enjoyed playing with, changes were made to routines so that children were together for longer periods and specific teaching times were shortened. Now, children's extended periods of play are supporting and enriching their development and allowing time to problem solve and try out different solutions. In addition, children's social skills are improving due to being able to mix with a wider age group of children, encouraging empathy with the younger children and extended the friendships being formed. Recommendations from the last inspection have been effectively addressed, which demonstrates a good commitment to continuous improvement. The pre-school uses the Ofsted self-evaluation tool to look at how the practice can be improved and contributors to this process include parents' views obtained through questionnaires, diaries and opportunities to comment verbally to staff. Relationships with parents are strong and well developed. Parents' comment about the positive impact coming to the pre-school has had on their child's development.

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	305327
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	818742
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	52
Number of children on roll	29
Name of provider	St Michael's Church Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	03/11/2010
Telephone number	01244 315129

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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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