

St John's Playtime Pre-school

St. Johns United Reformed Church, 3 Cowper Street, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP4 5JD

Inspection date	05/11/2013
Previous inspection date	14/10/2009

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		3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision requires improvement

- Children's communication and language skills are promoted well and as a result, they are becoming confident communicators.
- Staff support children to settle well, build close attachments and to feel confident and secure in transitions from home to the pre-school.
- The new manager and staff are committed to their roles and are working hard to put new initiatives in place to improve the practice.

It is not yet good because

- Arrangements for supervision, coaching and training of staff are not effective and as a result, not all staff have the training, support and understanding to consistently follow the behaviour management policy.
- Children's independent skills are not fully promoted to support them to gain an understanding of risk and to enable them to access all areas of the pre-school independently.
- Staff do not always use the information gained in the observation and assessment of children's development to monitor children's learning and to plan activities that challenge them.
- Opportunities for physical play and for children, who learn better outdoors are restricted as they do not have regular opportunities to play and explore the outdoors.

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 both the playrooms.
- The inspector held meetings with the managers of the pre-school, spoke to staff and interacted with the children.
The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of staff working within the pre-school, the provider's self-evaluation and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector also took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day of inspection.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector
Maira Oliver

Full report

Information about the setting

St John's Playtime Pre-school was registered in 1992 on the Early Years Register. It operates from two upstairs rooms within St. John's United Reform Church, situated in the North East area of Ipswich, Suffolk. It is managed by a voluntary committee made up of parents of some of the children, who attend the pre-school and serves the local area. The pre-school is on the first floor and there is lift access to ensure that it is accessible to all families. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 9am until 12 noon and from 12.30pm until 3.30pm. There is also a lunch club available to enable children to stay all day. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school also runs a holiday club for children in the early years age group, for four weeks in the summer holidays. There are currently 53 children attending, who are within the early years age group. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. 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 employs nine members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds a BA (Honours) degree in early childhood studies, three hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 4 and five hold early years qualifications at level 3.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure that all staff are consistent in their implementation of the behaviour policy and that children are respected, feel confident and secure their self-esteem
- ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the supervision of staff; with particular reference to enabling them to identify training needs and receive coaching and training to improve their personal effectiveness.

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

- improve the planning, observation and assessment process to consistently identify children's skills and areas for development and use the information gathered to provide appropriate challenge for all children
- improve access to physical activities both indoors and outdoors to provide children with more opportunities to practise and develop their physical skills and to extend their learning in the outdoors
- promote children's independence and support them to gain an understanding of risk through activities that encourage them to move freely in all areas and help in preparing their own snacks.

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

Staff understand how to promote children's learning and development and support the children to make progress. As a result, children develop the basic skills they need for school. Many of the children show enthusiasm for learning and are keen to take part in activities. The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff prioritise children's communication and language skills and work with small groups of children, with mixed abilities, daily. Children take turns to take part in activities where communication and interactions are the focus. As a result, staff have noticed that children are becoming confident communicators and are more able to express themselves.

Staff promote the children's use of literacy and children enjoy making patterns in the sand tray. They provide lots of opportunities for them to see and recognise their own names. For example, individual trays and coat pegs all have their names on and they find their own name card to post in the box when they come to snack time. Older, more able children use their name cards to copy as they write their own names on their pictures.

Parents are involved in their child's learning within the pre-school. For example, children choose books to take home to share with their parents. They take turns to take home Henry, the pre-school teddy bear. A book accompanies the bear and parents have written some valuable accounts of Henry's time in their home and some have included photographs. Children use their imaginations as they play together, feeding 'babies' in the role play area and making up stories about the knights on horseback. They are able to move the resources into other areas of the pre-school and add the knights and other figures to the play dough and coat the dough with the sand to make cakes. Children cooperate with each other as they use the play tools to mend the small partition fence around the climbing frame. Many know how to use each tool and make pretend holes with the drill and cut with the saw.

Staff support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those, who speak English as an additional language well. They work closely with parents and other agencies involved with the children to provide a consistent approach. Staff regularly use signing and gestures with all children to aid communication. They take an interest in each child's home language and find out a few important words to use with the children and ask parents to write 'welcome' in their language to display. Staff make regular observations and assessments of children's learning and development. They record them and share the records with parents during parents' evenings or on request to ensure they are involved. Children's next steps in their development are identified and usually added to the plans for the following week. Most children's records form an accurate picture of the child's development and progress. However, the information gathered through this process is not used as effectively to identify children's skills and areas for development or used to plan challenging activities for all children.

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

Children are supported to form secure emotional attachments with their key person, other staff and their peers. On the whole, they are confident, happy and enjoy the company of their friends. Staff visit the children in their own homes before they start at the pre-school, so they can get to know the children and their families in their own environments. Children are then familiar with their key person and this ensures that transitions from home to the pre-school are as smooth as possible. Staff invite the parents to share family photographs and they make individual photograph albums for many of the children. Children share these with their friends and the staff to help them settle and provide them with a strong sense of belonging. Children are supported well with their transitions into school. A range of uniforms from local schools are provided for children to dress-up in and they talk about the schools as they share photographs. Teachers are invited in to meet the children and to look at their developmental records to help them to get to know the children, their abilities and interests before they start.

On the whole, the staff treat the children with respect and support them to manage their behaviour. They get down to the children's own level and calmly use clear explanations to help the children to understand simple pre-school rules and appropriate behaviour. For example, they talk to the children about sharing, taking turns and being kind to each other. Children are cared for in a very safe environment and are well supervised. However,

opportunities are often missed to teach children how to manage risks themselves and increase their independent skills. For example, they are told that only four children are allowed in the physical area with the climbing frame at any one time. This gives them a false sense that if there are only four children in the area, they will be safe. Children are not taught how to judge for themselves what the risks are and how to avoid them. They do not take part in preparing snacks if the fruit needs cutting and therefore, do not learn how to use knives safely. In addition, due to the design of the building, staff accompany children to the toilet and have not considered how they could make the area safer for children to access the toilets independently.

Children learn to keep themselves healthy as they take part in hand-washing routines before eating and talk about foods that are good for them during snack and mealtimes. They have access to an outdoor area and a range of equipment to support physical development. However, the outdoor area is not used if the ground is wet and this limits the opportunities for children, who learn better outdoors during the autumn and winter months. Children's access to the climbing frame is also limited when there are already four children on it or when there is no adult supervising. Children, who are less confident or do not yet have the skills and language to ask, miss opportunities to practise and develop their climbing and balancing skills.

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

Staff work as a close and supportive team under the guidance and support of the new manager. They are open to new ideas and are beginning to reflect on their practice and make changes to benefit the children. For example, the introduction of small group work to encourage children's communication skills has been successful. The manager is motivated and has a clear plan of action in place for improvement. For example, she intends to provide each member of staff with time to work on their key children's developmental records to ensure that planning meets the needs of all children. She has plans to conduct regular supervision for all staff to identify their strengths and areas they need to develop, to support their professional development. Historically, they have annual appraisals and any training they wish to attend is encouraged and supported. However, this inspection was carried out as a result of a recent complaint about the pre-school, received by Ofsted. The inspection has highlighted that existing systems for monitoring of staff are ineffective, resulting in inconsistent practice with regard to behaviour management. The complaint also highlighted that the manager, at the time, did not have sufficient knowledge and skills to deal with complaints effectively. The pre-school now has a new manager, who has a full understanding of all the policies and is confident to follow procedures effectively.

Staff have a suitable knowledge and understanding of how children learn and generally support them to make progress. They understand their responsibilities in meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are protected from abuse and neglect because the staff are secure in their knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. They have attended appropriate training in safeguarding and a clear set of policies and procedures

support their practice. Staff understand the need for confidentiality and follow the pre-school's policies. The premises are safe and secure and the main door is monitored to ensure children cannot leave unattended and unauthorised persons cannot gain access. Risk assessments are carried out and daily checks of the premises ensure that children are safe. Recruitment procedures are thorough and the provider understands about informing Ofsted of any changes.

Most parents speak highly of the staff and find them friendly and approachable. They state that they are kept well informed about their child's learning and development and are pleased with their progress. The pre-school builds close links with the local schools and other agencies involved with the children. They work closely with the local authority, valuing the support and the opportunity to try new ideas to improve the quality of the provision further.

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	251650
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	937938
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	53
Name of provider	St John's Playtime Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	14/10/2009
Telephone number	07895003974

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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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