

St Oswald's Pre-School

St. Oswalds Park, Wren Close, NEWTON AYCLIFFE, County Durham, DL5 4BG

Inspection date

17/06/2014

Previous inspection date

22/04/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

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	2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- All staff are knowledgeable on how children learn and know their key children well, which enables them to plan appropriate and challenging activities. This supports children as they make good progress in readiness for school.
- Staff are secure in their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding matters. As a result, children's safety, health and well-being are effectively supported.
- Highly effective partnerships with parents, carers and other professionals, ensures children have consistent support and early intervention to maximise learning opportunities for all children. Frequent communication and information sharing with parents and carers further supports children's learning at home.
- Leadership place a strong emphasis on continuous improvement with robust, self-evaluation systems, which are used effectively to support the team to make improvements across all areas.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to enhance opportunities for children to become even more aware of sounds in words, so they can begin to recognise which letters represent some of the sounds.
- Although systems for peer observations and peer support are in the early stages of development, there is scope to embed these opportunities to support staff's professional development, in order to raise children's attainment to the highest level.

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 throughout the pre-school in both indoor and outdoor environments.
- The inspector conducted a joint inspection with the supervisor.
- The inspector held a meeting with the leadership team and spoke to staff, parents, carers and children throughout the inspection when appropriate.
- The inspector looked at a selection of documentation, checked evidence of suitability and the provider's evidence of self-evaluation.

Inspector

Maria Hancock

Full report

Information about the setting

St Oswald's Pre-School has been registered for over 20 years and is one of two pre-schools run by Great Aycliffe Town Council. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. It is situated in a single storey building, in a public park, on the outskirts of Newton Aycliffe. The pre-school serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from three rooms and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday, from 8.45am until 3.30pm during school term time only. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 50 children on roll, 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.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance opportunities for children to become even more aware of sounds in words, so they can begin to recognise which letters represent some of the sounds
- embed the system for peer observations and peer support to provide even more opportunities to support staff's professional development, in order to raise children's attainment to the highest level.

Inspection judgements

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

Teaching is very good as staff demonstrate their detailed knowledge of how children learn and develop through good quality play experiences. Staff know children, which enable them to plan purposeful, inspiring and challenging activities to support individual children to make good progress in all areas of learning; this prepares them well in readiness for school. Ongoing precise assessments of children's progress from initial starting points enable staff to gain a clear understanding of their learning needs to plan next steps for each child. This is supported with regular information from home, through the 'Getting to know me' booklet, contact books and learning journals. Staff use their inspiring weekly team meetings, to share experiences and plan activities together. For example, the current focus is on outdoor sports, particularly the world cup. Key persons recognise that many children in their key groups would benefit from practising their ball skills, as this is highlighted as a next step in their learning. Staff observe and listen well to children, responding to their requests, encouraging them to follow their interests and become active learners. For example, children enjoy a drawing activity using stencils as they had

previously watched a member of staff making signs using stencils and wanted to have a go. Children are confident as they describe what they are doing, and show satisfaction when writing their own names. Children are very motivated and interested to play and explore purposeful exciting activities that support their individual next steps.

Children are happy as they arrive at nursery ready to learn. They move freely around the stimulating learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, where they practise and display the characteristics of learning. Children readily explore and become active learners and investigators and independently select resources from accessible storage. They play cooperatively as they construct dog houses and shops from large wooden blocks. Mathematics is a strength as staff provide good opportunities through every day play to improve children's skills in number, shape, space and measure. They skilfully encourage children to estimate how far they need to throw the beanbag to reach their favourite numbers and count each number as they jump in a game of hopscotch. Children learn about weight as they transport large blocks to other areas and fill containers with sand, describing them as 'heavy'. Children freely access a growing area, where they proudly grow and care for pots of flowers, herbs, potatoes and strawberries. They learn about nature and confidently tell the inspector that the strawberries are still green because they haven't finished growing yet. Staff are skilled in the importance of large physical play in preparing children to use fine motor skills to hold small tools, such as holding pencils to write. Consequently, many children have good pencil control, which will support their early writing. Children ride bikes confidently and practice kicking balls into goals, controlling their movements between markers. This effectively supports their growing physical skills.

Support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is consistently effective. The pre-school's special educational needs coordinator is very knowledgeable and passionate in her role, working closely with external agencies to ensure children's needs are met. Excellent teaching strategies are employed to meet children's specific needs and to promote all round development. For example, photographic timelines are introduced to support children to understand the daily routines. In addition, the introduction of Makaton sign language, which is consistently used across the pre-school, helps children understand what is required of them. Children learn to recognise the Makaton signs their names begin with. However, children have fewer opportunities to become aware of sounds in words in order to recognise which letters represent some of the sounds to support their developing literacy skills. All staff consistently use open-ended questions well as they engage children in sustained conversations to encourage children to share their thoughts and develop their critical thinking skills. Parents' involvement in their child's learning is a key strength. Parents spoken to at the inspection think highly of the pre-school and staff. They are kept well-informed of children's progress through daily conversations, the 'Home Link sheet' and daily diaries with open access to children's learning journals, which parents actively contribute to. Children's next steps are planned with parents this ensures children's progress is a shared approach as learning in pre-school is also supported at home. Overall, children are gaining the necessary skills to support their future learning.

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

Each child has an assigned key person, who is responsible for their development, routine care practices and liaison with parents. The key-person system is embedded well as all children demonstrate secure attachments with their key person and relate to them well. Children are confident to approach their staff when they need something or to invite them to play. Children are happy and feel secure as they cuddle up together in the cosy book corner for a story; this supports children's well-being and independence. Behaviour is very good as interesting and varied activities keep children interested. Staff are well-deployed and are consistent role models, which means children play together well and know the boundaries. Effective strategies are implemented to motivate children to do well; for example, children work hard to be the daily helper and relish playing the triangle at tidy up time. They quickly learn about sharing and turn-taking through the use of sand timers. For example, children are handed a sand timer to help them work out how they can all have a ride in the wooden truck in the outdoor area. One child is placed in charge of the timer to supervise the activity as children time each other to take turns. This helps children learn to respect and tolerate each other and play cooperatively.

Children demonstrate their broad range of independence skills. They competently select their own plates and cups, are skilled as they pour their own drinks of milk or water and choose two fruits from a wide selection available. This helps children understand and make healthy food choices. Children clear away their own used plates and cups into washing up bowls, further promoting independence and life skills. A water dispenser is available and children freely help themselves to cups to get a drink when they need one. Children freely choose outdoor play, which allows them to get plenty of fresh air and exercise as they take part in the many physical activities offered. They build balancing bridges that they walk along and build high towers and this enables children to manage their own risks in a safe environment.

Parent and key person relationships are good. Parents describe the pre-school as 'A lovely little setting, where children are really made to feel important and staff go above and beyond to support families'. The support for children going into full time school is excellent as effective relationships between the nursery and local schools are made when the pre-school invite school teachers in to meet and observe their new children. This helps children become familiar with their new teacher and prepares them emotionally for school. Pre-school staff prepare transition information for school staff to support continuity of care and learning.

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

Safeguarding arrangements are good. Staff understand their role in protecting children from harm and are aware of what to do should they have a concern about children's welfare. They attend training regularly to ensure their knowledge is kept up-to-date. Effective recruitment and induction of staff follows local authority procedures and ensures all those working with children are suitable to do so. Children are cared for in a safe and hygienic environment. Robust risk assessments are carried out to identify and minimise any hazards. Documentation and records are well-maintained and all required

documentation is in place, which firmly underpins children's safety and welfare.

The manager monitors the educational programme efficiently through a new computer system, which measures cohort data to provide information on children's learning, in different groups, such as age, boy, girls and for those with special educational needs and/disabilities. This gives an accurate understanding of children's progress and identifies any gaps. In addition, it enables early intervention and support for those children to ensure learning and development opportunities are maximised. Regular appraisals and supervision meetings ensure that staff are monitored and their individual training needs are addressed. The leadership team places a strong emphasis on continuous improvement and operates an effective development plan, which all staff use to evaluate practice and set targets for improvement and these are constantly monitored. This coincides with good information gathered from parents on children's starting points and from the progress and assessment sheets to further evaluate activities provided. The manager monitors, through observations to support staff with the delivery of good teaching. However, there is scope to embed the system to provide more opportunities for peer observations to support staff's professional development. This is in order to raise children's attainment to the highest level.

All recommendations from the previous inspection have been positively addressed. For example, the pre-school has developed ways to involve parents further in their child's learning, which effectively support children's progress. Partnerships with parents are very positive and they are very complimentary of staff and the service they provide. Partnerships with other professionals are established well and contribute to the progress children make. Staff also demonstrate a good understanding of the advantage of liaising with other providers to ensure children's learning and development is effectively supported.

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	314174
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	868191
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	50
Name of provider	Great Aycliffe Town Council
Date of previous inspection	22/04/2009
Telephone number	07974 704 213

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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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