

St John's Playtime Pre-School

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

Inspection date	17/10/2014
Previous inspection date	05/11/2013

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

- Teaching and learning are good as staff have a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how children learn. Good teaching strategies and well-planned, purposeful activities support children's individual needs. Consequently, children make good progress.
- Children form close relationships with their key persons, who are extremely attentive to their needs. This helps them make effective emotional attachments, gaining the confidence to play and learn with their peers.
- There are strong partnerships with parents, agencies and other early years professionals. As a result, information is shared, children settle quickly and are efficiently offered support and continuity of care.
- Children are protected from harm as staff demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children and ensure children's safety is robustly maintained.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The routine at mealtimes is not always efficiently organised. This means children's learning is not fully maximised at this time and occasionally children become bored and restless.
- The outdoor learning environment does not consistently support children's development in all areas of the educational programme.

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 playroom and the outside learning environment.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held meetings with the manager and the chairperson of the provision.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of practitioners working with children, the provider's self-evaluation form and improvement plans.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Lynn A Hartigan

Full report

Information about the setting

St John's Playtime Pre-School was registered in 1992 and is on the Early Years Register. It is situated within St. John's United Reform Church in Ipswich, Suffolk and is managed by a voluntary committee. The pre-school operates from playrooms on the first floor and there is lift access to ensure that it is accessible to all children. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The pre-school employs eight members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 12noon and 12.30pm until 3.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 46 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds. It supports 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.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the already good care practices by reviewing the organisation of mealtimes to reduce waiting times and maintain children's emotional well-being
- focus more precisely on the planning of activities outdoors to enrich children's learning opportunities in all areas of the educational programme.

Inspection judgements

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

All staff have a good understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are provided with an exciting educational programme that includes a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. This is because staff use their knowledge effectively to support children's continuous progress. Children are provided with a wide range of challenging and stimulating resources. These are easily accessible so that children can initiate their own games. For example, children delight in playing with large trays of compost, digging and using magnifiers to investigate further. Children who are fascinated with dinosaurs select these from the easily accessible trays that are clearly labelled and add the dinosaurs to the compost, losing themselves in their imaginary play. The provision offers lots of opportunities for role play; dressing-up props and different fabrics encourage children's imaginative play as they act out real-life situations. This is because staff support children's interests and promote the characteristics of effective learning with them. Children have immense fun using silky scarves as cloaks. Sensory play is promoted well and younger children and those who

require additional help watch in fascination as different materials are used to engage their interest. For example, staff float materials in the air and children giggle as they watch them land. They confidently dance to softly played music and use the different textured materials to express themselves and how they feel.

Children are supported well by staff who interact effectively with them. All staff members are softly spoken and give children lots of eye contact, getting down to their level to play and listen to what the children have to say. Children's language development is promoted to a good standard. The use of visual prompts and signing also helps children to communicate. Children participate in language and listening activities in small groups, where they have the opportunity to learn new words while having fun. For example, children take turns to choose an object from home and hide it in a 'mystery bag'. This is passed amongst the children to describe what they can feel. Staff encourage conversation and are skilful in the questions they ask, such as 'what does it feel like?' and 'what do you think it is?' Staff allow children time to think critically and respond. Children are excited to discover binoculars in the bag and talk about how these are used, learning new words, such as 'distance' and 'lens'. Staff also effectively encourage parents to be involved in their children's development. They are positively encouraged to share their child's progress at home by contributing to an achievements board within the playroom. Since the last inspection, the new manager has implemented an improved system to accurately record children's observations and assessments, which includes the required progress check for children between the age of two and three years. These are supported using samples of the children's work and photographs. Learning journals are displayed for children and their parents to access whenever they choose, and provide parents with useful information to confirm how their children are progressing to a good standard relative to their starting points. Staff have high expectations for all children in their care. Good support is offered to children who speak English as an additional language. Their home language is embraced within the pre-school. For example, staff display text in different languages. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive very good support to ensure they meet their full potential. Staff have well-established links with other agencies and professionals, to ensure a shared approach to care for children who attend more than one setting. This shared approach, along with carefully focused observations, means that children receive timely interventions and consistent support.

Children progress well and are effectively developing the skills they need for their future learning and eventual move to school. They cooperate together in group work. For example, they listen and help each other as they learn to take turns when choosing snack. Children use a quiet, comfortable room to enjoy stories and share books with their friends. They sit on cosy bean bags and cushions and select stories of their choice, developing a real love of books. They listen carefully at group story time and interact and predict the endings of stories. Children enjoy using a variety of resources to develop pre-writing skills. For example, they show sustained levels of concentration when working at the writing table. They use chunky crayons, chalks and pencils with ease. Children work together at the easel, producing artwork that is beautifully displayed within the setting. Children make good attempts at writing their name on their work and staff praise them for their efforts. Children's mathematical development is supported as they enjoy singing favourite number songs. Number lines are displayed, and water and sand play help children to understand about volume and capacity as they fill containers. Since the last inspection, the staff now

ensure children have daily opportunities to play outdoors. However, planning for outdoors does not consistently include all areas of the educational programme. This means that opportunities for learning are not maximised for those children who prefer outdoor activities.

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

Children arrive at pre-school keen and eager to participate, they settle quickly and happily leave their parents. This is as a result of an effective settling-in process. The manager and the child's key person offer to visit the child and their family at home. This provides opportunities to gather good information about the child's routines, likes and dislikes, and observe the child in their familiar surroundings. This also promotes continuity and consistency in care. Good information is provided for parents with regard to the role of the key person, and details of the key groups are displayed for parents. Children form close attachments to the caring staff. They confidently approach staff for help and cuddles. Children are comfortable with visitors to the pre-school and ask lots of questions. Children are effectively supported emotionally when it is time to move on to school. Teachers from the local primary schools are invited to visit children at pre-school, so that children can become familiar with them. The manager ensures opportunities are available, with parents' consent, to discuss children's progress and their unique needs in order to promote continuity in the child's learning. More focused activities are planned to ensure children are emotionally prepared, such as using items of school uniform and school books in their role play.

Children play in a stimulating, welcoming and clean learning environment. Overall, children's behaviour is good. This is because children understand the clear boundaries and expectations that are reinforced by the staff, who are positive role models. Since the last inspection all members of staff have completed training to refresh their knowledge on strategies to manage behaviour positively and ensure that the behaviour management policy is consistently implemented. Children are caring towards one another, they take turns but also know to use timers to ensure they share. Through everyday routines and play, children are learning ways to keep themselves safe. For example, children learn to use knives safely when cutting fruits independently at snack time. Children use stairs sensibly and with caution when they access the outdoor play environment. Children are supported by staff to develop their independent skills. For example, improvements have been made since the last inspection to enable children to take care of their personal needs. This is because they can now access the bathroom independently. Children know to wash their hands and they talk about germs. They independently choose when they want to eat snack and pour their own drinks. A lunch club is offered and children enjoy this time eating their packed lunch in the dinner room. This is regarded as a social occasion and staff sit with the children. However, lunchtime is not always efficiently organised and this means some children become bored as they spend sometime waiting for their friends to finish. In addition, learning opportunities are not maximised at this time.

Children are not able to flow freely from indoors to outdoors as the pre-school is positioned on the first floor of the church. However, children are encouraged and have

opportunities for fresh air and exercise daily and they are beginning to understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The outdoor environment offers many activities to support children's physical development. They have fun balancing on stilts and climbing, and demonstrate good control skills as they play bat and ball. Children have a good understanding of healthy eating. This is because they are offered a nutritious menu at snack time. They independently access drinking water both indoor and outdoors, to ensure they are not thirsty.

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

The committee chairperson, manager and staff team are all fully aware of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Detailed policies and procedures to promote children's safety, health and welfare are effectively implemented and regularly reviewed and updated. All documentation relating to safeguarding supports the efficient running of the pre-school. Thorough risk assessments are completed and routinely evaluated. For example, children are kept safe as appropriate steps are taken to ensure the security of the premises. Parents use an intercom system and are greeted by a staff member to prevent unauthorised access to the premises. All staff complete appropriate checks to ensure they are suitable to work with children. An effective induction programme is completed following recruitment, and this includes an induction process for students who attend a work placement at the pre-school. Staff are clear of their roles and supervise the children at all times, offering a good level of support. Children who require additional help receive one-to-one attention. All staff fully understand their responsibility to protect children from harm and give safeguarding high priority. They are fully supported by the committee, and all staff have completed safeguarding and first-aid training to ensure they know how to respond effectively to any incidents.

Following the last inspection, a new manager has brought about significant changes to the pre-school. She is fully supported by the committee and has established positive working relationships with them, to ensure that the changes made positively impact on the provision for children. Clear action plans are in place to highlight areas to improve, and this includes appropriate arrangements for the supervision and support for the staff. Since the last inspection, staff performance is effectively monitored and regular meetings provide opportunities to discuss possible training needs. Peer observations have been introduced to enhance teaching practice through honest and critical reflection. As a result, staff morale is high as they feel valued and are able to discuss their own professional development. The manager monitors all aspects of practice, including the quality of observations and the assessment system. All staff contribute and monitor the planning process to ensure children's next steps in learning are fully considered and they make good progress in their learning. As a result of this overview, individual groups of children or groups of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are tracked to ensure appropriate support is put in place.

Staff have established positive partnerships with parents. They are closely involved with their children's learning and positively encouraged to contribute to their learning records. Parents are welcomed into the pre-school to stay and play. A parent rota is supported well

and this offers parents first-hand opportunities to observe their children at play. Regular newsletters, notices and daily discussions ensure parents are kept up to date about what is happening at pre-school. Parents' evenings offer a more formal opportunity to discuss children's progress. Parents speak very positively of all aspects of the pre-school, which includes the friendly, supportive and approachable staff. Parents comment on how well their children settle, are happy and make good progress. Partnerships with external agencies have also been established and contribute to meeting the children's needs. For example, the manager attends meetings at the local children's centre, hosts meetings with other local early years settings to discuss good practice, and shares useful information with reception teachers at local schools. This means teachers are prepared, ready to support the children as they move to full-time education.

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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	962680
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	28
Number of children on roll	46
Name of provider	St John's Playtime Pre-School Committee
Date of previous inspection	05/11/2013
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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