

St Michael's Pre-School Nursery

Recreation Centre, Recreation Field, The Green, Dalston, CARLISLE, CA5 7QB

Inspection date	05/11/2014
Previous inspection date	22/01/2014

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 is very good. Staff assess children's progress very effectively, so that they can plan the next steps in their learning. This means children make good progress in relation to their starting points.
- Staff recognise the uniqueness of each child. The successful key person system ensures that children's emotional well-being is established effectively, as they develop a strong sense of security and trusting relationships with staff.
- Staff understand the safeguarding and welfare requirements well, which means they can respond promptly to any concerns and keep children safe.
- Partnerships with parents are very successful and ensure that children have their individual needs met and get the support they need. Staff provide parents with feedback on a daily basis and encourage parents to share information from home.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not always extend children's already very good opportunities to increase their choice and decision making by enabling them to access the outdoor provision at all times. As a result, children cannot always choose which environment they wish to play in for themselves.
- Opportunities for staff to continue to help children extend their understanding of difference and diversity and to support their knowledge and understanding of the world around them are not always fully extended.

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 had a tour of the premises.
- The inspector observed children playing in the main playroom and the rear outdoor play area.
- The inspector held discussions with the chair of the committee, the manager, the staff and the children during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents of the early years children attending the setting who were spoken to on the day of the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, the planning documentation, and the systems for the monitoring of children's progress.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children, the policies and procedures for the setting, and the documented self-evaluation systems that support the service.

Inspector

Carys Millican

Full report

Information about the setting

St Michael's Pre-School Nursery opened in 2007 and is on the Early Years Register. It is managed by a voluntary management committee and operates from the local community recreation hall in Dalston, Cumbria. The pre-school serves the immediate locality and also the surrounding rural areas. It opens three days a week, Monday, Wednesday and Friday, from 9am until 3pm, term time only. Children attend for a variety of sessions. They are cared for in one large playroom with associated facilities and there are enclosed outdoor play areas available. There are currently 26 children in the early years age range on roll. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. They support children who speak English as an additional language. There are currently six staff employed at the nursery. Of these four staff work directly with the children, who all hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend further the already good opportunities available to children to make their own choices and decisions, for example, by enabling them to move freely between the main playroom and outside play area for themselves
- enhance opportunities for children to further extend their learning about difference and diversity, for example, by providing more resources, positive images, labels, words and artefacts to support all children's cultural background.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a superb knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They know how to effectively promote children's learning and development. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff understand exactly how children learn through their play, therefore, they provide a wide range of positive learning experiences for them. These experiences cover all areas of learning. Staff model play well. They show children how to use equipment and skilfully guide them when necessary to support their learning. Staff only intervene when asked to by the children. They deploy themselves well to ensure that they are close by to support children when required. Children listen closely as staff explain the fire drill to them and talk about how they need to be careful at the bonfire and firework display in the village. Staff are skilful in the way in which they use adult-led and child-initiated activities to question and challenge children's thinking. During play, they ask children open-ended questions, such as 'Can you remember?', 'What does it feel like?'

and 'What would you like me to do? Children settle quickly on arrival and they are enthusiastic in their play. They enjoy exploring and examining the different table-top activities set out for them. Children become completely absorbed in the activities that they choose to do. For example, children create a firework picture using glitter which they freely use to cover the black paper and glue. Staff do not intervene but allow children to use as much as they wish. Staff sit with the children and talk to them about the colours they have used and the children respond confidently to the staffs' questions. Children take the glitter to the modelling dough and sprinkle different colours over the large mounds of dough. As they do this staff ask them about the texture, for example, 'What has happened to the dough? Staff extend children's learning by introducing words such as, 'smooth and rough'. Children play with natural resources that are in baskets placed around the room and in trays on the tables. They enjoy threading conkers onto pipe cleaners carefully matching the number sign or the dots on each label. Older children work cooperatively together as they play, for example, they decide to make a fire engine using large blocks. They work together to problem solve and think how they can make it and once it has been built, the children dress up in firefighter suits and pretend to put out a fire. Children have enriching opportunities to extend their play and learning by taking part and they embrace all aspects of learning. Staff follow the children's interest very well. They know what the children have been doing over half term and provide additional resources for them to use to re-enact their recent experiences. For example, as staff knew about a child being involved in logging on a farm, they place a large card board box in an open space and set out the workbench close by. Several children join in sawing the sides of the cardboard box with toy saws. One child helped himself to a large wooden log that he tried to cut up with the toy saw. The child's key person recognised that his next step was to use real tools under supervision outside. Children gain independence and self-help skills. They learn to sit together patiently at circle and snack time, and learn to serve themselves and pour their own drinks. As a result, children are well prepared for the next stages of their learning and are effectively supported in their move on to school.

The pre-school environment is well organised and well resourced. It is well set out and very welcoming and inviting. The staff observe the way children use each area and the layout of the room is continually evolving to ensure that children's learning opportunities are maximised. For example, staff explain how they noticed that children do not use the quiet book area as much as they used to. They are considering how they can make this area more attractive and inviting. Books, other reading materials, pencils and paper are placed in every play area and they relate to the area or to the activity. For example, cookery books placed in the kitchen role-play area encourage the children to use actual ingredients to pretend to bake. Real maps of the village are placed in the construction area to help children to recognise where they live, and the community building. Children's mathematical development is progressing well and during activities they confidently count, recognise numbers and talk about colours. Staff help children to begin to understand mathematical concepts. For example, practitioners talk to children about 'big', 'small', 'full' and 'empty'. This helps children to learn about volume and capacity while playing with the water. Children's communication and language skills are fostered well and staff introduce new vocabulary as they play. Children enjoy taking part in circle time sessions and join in with stories where staff keenly use a range of puppets and related objects. The staff extend children's learning further giving children first-hand learning experiences. For example, after reading the three little pigs, the staff ask the children to look around the

room for things to make a pretend fire for the wolf to land on. This ignites children's interest about the wolf burning himself and running out of the house.

Staff's planning, observation and assessment methods work well to support children's good progress. They work as a team to plan effectively for individual children's learning. The good use of observations and the staff's secure knowledge of children's next steps ensure that every opportunity is taken to support children across all areas of learning. Staff include children's interests in future plans and this helps to motivate them to learn. Parents are well informed about children's activities and progress. They attend stay and play sessions and observe at first hand how their children are progressing. Written 'wow' comments are used to share achievements at home, and these are placed on the board in the reception area. Parents access these regularly and add comments. Staff also encourage parents to attend regular parent meetings. The progress check for children between the ages of two and three years is completed by staff and shared with parents. As a result, children are supported in developing the required skills for the next steps in their learning, including school. Parents are encouraged to become involved in their child's learning at home and have frequent opportunities to look through their child's 'This is my life' book and learning journals. Staff gather a wide range of information from parents to gain an understanding about children's individual needs and interests. This information is used to establish children's starting points. Teaching is consistently very good and staff ensure that all children are challenged in their thinking and learning. As a result, they continue to make good progress. Children with English as an additional language and speech and language difficulties are very well supported. Staff work closely with parents and staff also use any guidance that has been given to parents to support their child in pre-school. As a result, children settle in easily and progress well.

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

Children are happy and contented. They are well looked after by a team of experienced, considerate, kind and caring early years professionals. Children settle in to the pre-school routines easily because they feel emotionally secure and their needs are effectively met. They form a close bond with their key person, who knows them well and considers their emotional well-being with the highest priority. Staff help children to get to know each other and to form friendships. Children sit together at mealtimes and follow each other around. They really enjoy interacting with staff and other children during group activities and one to one in the warm and welcoming environment. Staff have established good links with the local village school and help children become familiar with many aspects of school life. Children are supported well when they move onto school. Staff invite teachers to visit the children and arrange for children to visit their schools. Parents are very well informed about the process and feel supported at this time. As a result, children feel secure about the change. Staff share information with new teachers about children's progress and individual needs, so that these continue to be met. Staff prepare children with the self-help skills, independence and learning to effectively support them in their future learning.

Children's independence, choice and decision making is promoted well as children play indoors. For example, children are encouraged to be fully independent when dressing and

undressing themselves in their outdoor clothing. They decide when they want their morning snack and set it out for themselves, successfully peeling oranges and bananas, pouring their drink and emptying the waste into the bin when they have finished. Children manage their own personal care needs, where appropriate. For example, staff take children through to the cloakroom where the children go to the toilet independently and wash their own hands thoroughly without needing to be prompted. Parents are encouraged to send in a healthy packed lunch when children stay during this time. Lunchtime provides a positive social occasion where children sit with friends and staff to eat. Children are very active throughout the day. Staff explain how the children enjoy playing outside and set out a small enclosed play area at the side of the hall with a range of activities. However, during the morning session the children do not access this area as the doors remain closed. After an initial tidy up where children learn to care for resources by putting them away, they go out as a group to play in the enclosed rear play area. Safety within the pre-school is given good consideration and effective steps are taken to minimise risks to children. Staff encourage children to be careful with delicate objects, such as the real china cups and saucers, screw top lids on glass jars containing pasta, used in the home corner. Children learn to keep themselves safe when going outside by holding a partner's hands. As they make a line, they are reminded to be careful and keep together. Children's physical skills and understanding of the world are promoted. They ride in cars, push wheelbarrows, weigh cones, dig in the soil, make mud pies in the mud kitchen, and pour water into the containers in the water wall and look for wild birds in the trees. Children are encouraged to celebrate their own and each other's cultural backgrounds. However, there is scope to further support children's awareness of each other's similarities and differences in the environment and to strengthen their understanding of diversity. For example, by providing more resources, visual positive images, displaying dual language words or pictures in the environment. This will support children who speak English as an additional language and raise children's awareness of the many different languages in the world.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is fostered. They are confident learners and their behaviour is very good. This is because staff set clear boundaries and children are totally engaged in all that they do. Staff use appropriate strategies to manage children's behaviour sensitively and in a manner appropriate to their age and understanding. Children develop kind and caring behaviours. For example, they hold hands and sit together at mealtimes. Staff provide very positive role models and speak to children respectfully. Children listen attentively to instructions and are reminded to share toys with younger children. They receive positive support and praise for their achievements. This helps to motivate children in their learning and boosts their confidence.

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

The manager and staff team demonstrate a good understanding of how to effectively safeguard the children in their care. They have a secure knowledge of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage which is fully demonstrated in their practice. All staff have attended relevant training and are fully aware of their role

and responsibilities to protect children from harm. They know who to report any concerns to and contact numbers are in place for support and guidance. A detailed set of policies and procedures are implemented to ensure a safe and secure environment for children. This is further promoted by the completion of written risk assessments for all areas the children use and for any outings undertaken. All the committee and staff members undergo suitability checks. This ensures that all persons associated with the pre-school are suitable. There is also an effective system in place that ensures staff remain suitable for their role. Robust recruitment procedures are in place and any visitors to the pre-school have their identity checked before entering the building. All of these procedures help to maintain the safety and well-being of the children. Policies are shared with parents, providing them with an insight into the nursery's role and responsibilities. The staff gather the required information from parents to promote children's health and well-being.

Robust monitoring systems are in place to ensure staff are challenged, supported and receive any extra training needed to enhance children's experiences and outcomes. Regular supervision, staff meetings, committee meetings, weekly planning meetings and informal discussions are held to support and develop staff practices. In addition, the completion of management and peer-on-peer observations means that positive staff practices are assured and any issues are efficiently recognised and addressed. For example, staff requested that they get more training on phonics. The manager suggested that they all take home a sound bag and literature, review the contents and read up on letters and sound. Each staff member has a turn at completing the sound of the week and feel they are now more confident on its delivery. There is a secure system for monitoring the educational programmes and the tracking of children's progress. This ensures children receive the best teaching and learning experiences and continue to make good progress in relation to their starting points. Recommendations from the last inspection have been positively addressed. There is an excellent ethos of self-evaluation and reflection on practice within the pre-school, which is complemented by active focused development plans and additional support from the local authority development workers. Staff training is well embedded and managed, ensuring that all staff have the skills to meet children's needs. Therefore, children's welfare is promoted well.

The strong partnership with parents contributes significantly to meeting children's learning and development needs and promotes their well-being. Therefore, parents are very confident to leave their children in the care of the pre-school staff. There is a good level of communication with parents. This ensures continuity of children's care, learning and development. The two-way sharing of written and verbal information enhances parents' experience and extends children's learning both at home and in the pre-school. Parents are kept well-informed through the use of a message book about their child's day. In addition, they have the opportunity to add comments to the children's progress books. Staff provide parents with information about all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This means, parents are clear about how their child is cared for and how their learning is promoted. Parents share their views about the pre-school through discussions and questionnaires. They are extremely complimentary and comment that they are pleased their children have settled in so quickly, and praise the staff for their support. They state that the work that staff do with their children is 'fantastic'. Staff work closely with other professionals to support children when the need arises. Good relationships are established with the nearest children's centre which has helped the pre-school to develop

effective links with other agencies. This has resulted in a complementary exchange of information amongst all professionals supporting the children.

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	EY361016
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	962833
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	26
Name of provider	St Michael's Pre-School Nursery Committee
Date of previous inspection	22/01/2014
Telephone number	07564335641

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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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Store St
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M1 2WD

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