

# St Pauls Playgroup

St. Pauls Church, 75 Chain Lane, St. Helens, Merseyside, WA11 9QF

<b>Inspection date</b>	12/11/2014
Previous inspection date	17/01/2014

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	
	Previous inspection:	
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**

- Comprehensive policies for safeguarding children are understood and implemented by staff. Clear procedures ensure that the suitability of all staff including students is checked.
- Staff plan a warm and inviting play and learning environment for children. Children are motivated to make choices in their play and make steady progress in their learning.
- Partnership with parents and other local agencies ensures that staff have a good knowledge of the children attending the playgroup.

### **It is not yet good because**

- The quality of teaching is variable. This is because staff do not always implement planning effectively and not all activities are well-planned.
- Children's independence and self-care skills are not consistently well promoted, particularly at mealtimes or when they use the bathroom.

## 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.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the playgroup rooms and in the outdoor play area.
  - The inspector held meetings with the manager and deputy manager and had discussions with staff.
  - The inspector looked at children's work, records and planning documentation.
  - The inspector took account of the views of parents and children spoken to on the day and in feedback provided to the playgroup.
  - The inspector completed a joint observation with the deputy manager.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications, including first aid, of staff working with children and reviewed the provider's self-evaluation documentation.

## Inspector

Mary Wignall

## Full report

### Information about the setting

St. Pauls Playgroup was first opened in 1981 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is managed by St Pauls Playgroup Committee. It operates from the community rooms in St Pauls Church, in the area of Blackbrook, which is close to St Helens. The setting serves families in the local and wider community. It opens five mornings a week from 9am to 12noon, during term time. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The children have sole use of two large rooms, the outdoor play space and the associated facilities, during the hours of operation. The setting employs seven members of staff, one has Qualified Teacher Status and six hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and level 2. There are currently 31 children attending, who are all in the early years age range. The setting receives funding for the provision of 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 setting receives support from the local authority.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that staff have a clear understanding of how to guide children's learning in both child-initiated and adult-led play, in order to help all children make the most of their learning opportunities.

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

- extend and enhance the opportunities for children to further develop their independence and self-care skills, for example, by establishing routines that enable children to be more involved and share more responsibility in the playgroup especially at meal times and when using the bathroom.

## Inspection judgements

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

Children enjoy their time at the playgroup. Overall, the quality of teaching is sound as staff understand the importance of play in the way children learn. Children's prime areas of learning are promoted as staff plan short sessions for children to play together, listen to stories or share their views and plan daily opportunities for children's physical play both in and outdoors. Children spend the majority of their time in the playgroup directing their own play in child-initiated activities. Children's free choice of play is managed by staff being deployed to different areas to support children who choose to play there. At times,

staff have a clear understanding of their role in guiding children's learning in their choice of play. For instance, staff use effective teaching techniques when children choose to join a movement-to-music activity. They use children's names to retain their attention, they are good role models as they show children how they can move like tigers, elephants or kangaroos. They demonstrate how to make themselves big or small and encourage children to copy. They encourage children to listen to the next song and join in with the clapping and marching actions. Children learn how to express themselves and develop their speaking, listening and physical skills as they play. At other times staff are less confident and do not always implement planning effectively. This results in them not having high enough expectations of children. Staff do not always recognise how they can support children's free choice of play to extend and refine their skills. For instance, as some older children choose to paint, staff write the children's names on their work. They do not talk to children to develop their understanding, or give older or more capable children the opportunity to attempt to write their own name.

Staff make regular observations of children's learning. They gather information from parents as children start in the group and use this and their own observations to start planning for children's progress. They use their information to plan short adult-led activities for children in their key groups. These sessions are short and carefully planned with clear learning objectives for each child. However, plans are not always implemented consistently or effectively by all staff. This results in planned opportunities to extend children's learning being missed and some older children or more capable children not being fully engaged or suitably challenged. A progress check for children between the ages of two-and-three years is undertaken appropriately. Staff work closely with parents and other agencies to help children in need of additional support. They are committed to sharing information and they ensure that they implement individual plans, to help make sure that children benefit from a consistent approach and that their unique needs are fully understood.

Children are active and generally confident to make choices in their play. The wide range of resources and clear layout encourages children to make full use of the space. At times, children show persistence and resilience in their learning. For instance, they choose to use the computers and show developing mouse control and understanding as they select icons to play songs. A group of children play with large construction blocks. Some work together to make large tracks and three dimensional shapes. Other, younger children happily play alone making two dimensional shapes. They take time to position the block in the correct position before using the palm of their hand to connect the two pieces together, demonstrating good physical and problem solving skills. Children have some opportunity to see their name in print. They use name labels at the beginning of the session to mark their attendance and have laminated name cards as placemats at snack time. Some children choose to sit and look at books in the book areas. Staff read stories and encourage them to count the different items on the page. These activities help children to develop the skills and character to be active learners. They provide a secure foundation to support children's next stage of learning and prepare them for school.

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

The key-person system works well. Staff ensure that parents and children know who their key-person is and see them as a source of support and information. Parents provide information about their children's individual needs before they start. They share information on a daily basis with staff and meet their child's key-person regularly throughout the year. This helps to ensure that staff have a good knowledge of the children and are able to support their move to the playgroup appropriately. Staff are caring and have warm relationship with children. This means that generally children are confident in the playgroup. They form secure relationship with staff and other children. Staff share information with other agencies, such as schools and other professionals, and work in partnership with parents. This helps to ensure that all those working with children have a consistent understanding of children's needs.

At times, children show good levels of independence in the playgroup. They are confident to choose what they want to play with from the wide range of stimulating resources and activities on offer. However, staff do not consistently encourage children to use their developing independence to help further develop their self-care skills. For instance, at snack times some children are encouraged to pour their drinks and share responsibility for helping to prepare the table. Children are offered a healthy choice of milk or water to drink. However, some staff fill the large jugs too full of liquid to enable children to successfully pour their own drinks. Staff encourage children to develop their understanding of their personal needs as they remind children to use the bathroom. However, they do not make good use of the bathroom facilities available. This results in some children including those in need of being changed waiting until others have used the bathroom. Further, staff do not always offer children privacy at these times, to allow them to develop their confidence in doing things for themselves.

Children are well motivated to be active. They enjoy playing energetically and safely both in and outdoors. They play well together and are often successful in resolving minor disputes over toys for themselves. They listen carefully to staff who give clear explanations of why they should behave in certain ways. For instance, staff give time and clear explanations of why it is not safe to climb on the bikes during outdoor play. Children show understanding as they listen and adapt their behaviour appropriately. The key-person system including the use of a support key-person, helps to ensure that all children including those who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in the playgroup's activities.

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

The provider, managers and staff have a sound understanding of safeguarding issues. The playgroup has a range of safeguarding policies and procedures to help ensure that children are protected. The provider ensures that staff have regular training on safeguarding issues and ensures that local safeguarding procedures are known and understood by all staff and students. Consequently, managers and staff have a clear understanding of what to do if they have any concerns about a child's welfare. Staff are mindful of children's safety as they implement effective risk assessments to keep the premises safe and secure. The provider has sound recruitment procedures to ensure that

all staff are suitably vetted and qualified. Following the unexpected departure of previous managers, the provider has acted swiftly to appoint managers for the start of the autumn term. They have reorganised the management structure to give priority to the organisation of the nursery's policies and procedures, and to the quality of care and learning experiences for children.

Since the last inspection the nursery has worked closely with the local authority to effectively address the actions set. The nursery's medicine policy has been revised to ensure that information about children's individual medical needs is regularly updated. This helps to promote children's health by working in partnership with parents. The key-person system has been strengthened. Parents know who their child's key-person is and meet regularly to share information about their development. Sessions have been reorganised to enable children to be greeted by their key-person and quickly find activities of interest to them. The planned activities for children in their key groups are no longer first thing in the morning. These activities now take place after children have had time to play and are settled and more responsive to the adult-led activities. Staff share information gained on training to help improve the quality of teaching. For instance, a dance session has been introduced following training on healthy lifestyles. Further, staff use teaching techniques, such as using talk boxes to motivate children to express their ideas following more recent training on developing children's communication skills. This has led to some improvement in the quality of teaching. However, the quality of teaching remains variable. The provider and managers recognise the impact of recent changes on the staff team. They have worked hard to retain and recruit staff with relevant qualifications and experience. They have done this by improving the quality of supervision, support and training staff receive. The provider is currently supporting staff to achieve higher qualifications. As a result, staff are enthusiastic and motivated. However, the monthly supervision sessions and closer monitoring of the quality of planning and teaching are in their infancy. This means they are yet to have full impact on improving welfare and learning outcomes for children.

The nursery clearly values the support they receive from the local authority. They work closely to work through action plans to raise quality. The provider and managers have used tracking systems and evaluations of activities to help assess staff performance. They have developed a programme of training for staff, making good use of local authority training opportunities to support staff to develop their knowledge and skills. Partnership with other agencies are strong. Parents spoken to during the inspection value their time with their child's key-person and are pleased with the progress their children are making. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to help ensure that their child's unique needs are recognised and met.

### **The Childcare Register**

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	323098
<b>Local authority</b>	St. Helens
<b>Inspection number</b>	962700
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	41
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	31
<b>Name of provider</b>	St Paul's Playgroup Committee
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17/01/2014
<b>Telephone number</b>	01744 453181

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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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