

St Joseph's Pre-school Playgroup

The Old School Building, Scratton Road, STANFORD-LE-HOPE, Essex, SS17 0PA

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| Inspection date | 27/11/2014 |
| Previous inspection date | 03/11/2011 |

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| The quality and standards of the early years provision | This inspection: | 3 |
| | Previous inspection: | 1 |
| 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 | | 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

- Staff have good knowledge of how children learn, which helps children to progress well towards the early learning goals.
- Staff support children to learn about the importance of safety and how to prevent accidents. Children gain an awareness of how to keep themselves safe.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Staff work closely with them to ensure that children's individual learning and care needs are consistently met.
- Training has a positive impact on children's learning because staff utilise the knowledge that they gain to enhance the quality of their teaching.

It is not yet good because

- Self-evaluation systems are not fully effective. Management do not ensure that staff records are easily accessible and available for Ofsted to look at on request. As a result, they cannot demonstrate that children are adequately safeguarded at all times.
- On occasions, staff do not provide children with sufficient resources, such as materials and clothing, to aid their play. Therefore, children's imaginations are not ignited to the very optimum.
- Staff do not always maximise opportunities to extend children's social skills during snack time by sitting at their eye level and engaging in conversations.

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 pre-school.
- The inspector observed children taking part in a range of activities and spoke with the staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the pre-school manager.
- The inspector checked evidence of Disclosure and Barring Service checks and some evidence of suitability of staff.
- The inspector looked at children's assessments, planning documents, policies and procedures.
- The inspector spoke to parents and has taken account of their views.

Inspector

Katherine Hurst

Full report

Information about the setting

St. Joseph's Pre-School was registered in 1998 and is on the Early Years Register. It operates from the parish hall in a converted school in Stanford-le-Hope, and is managed by an elected management committee made up of parents whose children attend the pre-school. The pre-school serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from one room and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The pre-school employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and two hold qualifications at level 4. The pre-school opens on a Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday during school term time only. Sessions are from 8.50am until 3.30pm and children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 38 children attending who are in the early years age group. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. They support a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure that staff employment records are easily accessible and available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

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

- enhance children's role play by providing materials and clothing to spark their imaginations
- maximise opportunities during snack time to enhance children's social skills to the optimum, for example, by sitting at their eye level and engaging in conversations
- establish effective systems for self-evaluation to ensure that any weaknesses are quickly identified and addressed.

Inspection judgements

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

Children are very happy at the pre-school. Staff's teaching is rooted in a good knowledge of how children learn. They provide an environment that promotes learning through play

and there is a good mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. However, on occasions, staff do not provide children with sufficient resources, such as materials and clothing, to aid their role play. Therefore, children's imaginations are not ignited to the very optimum. Staff communicate effectively with children and use open questions, giving them plenty of time to answer, which stimulates children's communication, thinking and understanding. They introduce new words to children during play, such as astronaut, which extends their vocabulary. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are learning to speak English as an additional language are well supported. Staff use sign language and gesturing with all children to enable them to communicate if they are unable to use spoken words. Consequently, staff support children to develop good communication skills.

Staff plan interesting activities that challenge children's critical thinking. For example, they provide 10 large bottles with varying amounts of green coloured liquid in them and a range of different sized and weighted balls. Children throw and roll the balls at the bottles trying to knock them over. Staff's gentle questioning encourages them to think about how they can make the bottles fall over depending on what ball they use. Consequently, they support children to gain an awareness of weight and volume. This helps to develop their mathematical knowledge. Staff support children well to enhance their literacy development. They provide regular activities with malleable resources, such as play dough, which supports children to strengthen the smaller muscles in their hands. This helps children to be able to hold a pen and learn to write. At circle time, staff further promote children's literacy understanding by showing each child's name card and asking them to identify the sounds and letters. As well as their own, children are able to recognise their friend's names. Therefore, children develop early reading skills from a young age and are well prepared for future learning in school.

Staff meet all of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They complete regular detailed and accurate assessments of children's learning and development, including the progress check for children between the ages of two and three years. Therefore, staff have an in-depth knowledge of children's individual needs. This ensures that they can provide support or intervention for children quickly, if required. Staff work very closely with parents and utilise knowledge of their children's abilities and interests to evaluate children's starting points at entry to the pre-school. Staff communicate with parents about children's learning needs and next steps during daily conversations and through a sharing book. This also gives parents ideas of how they can support children's learning at home. Parents are invited to contribute their own observations. Consequently, staff work effectively in partnership with parents and children's learning and development is well supported. Staff ensure that children make good progress towards the early learning goals given their starting points.

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

There is a breach to the safeguarding and welfare requirements. The management team and committee do not ensure that staff employment records are easily accessible to demonstrate that staff are suitable to work with children. Therefore, staff are unable to provide evidence to show that children's well-being is consistently promoted. Children's

behaviour is good. Staff consistently reinforce positive behaviour, such as asking children to walk inside and to not throw toys. As a result, they help children to learn what is expected of them. Staff teach children about the importance of playing safely. They encourage them to think about hazards that could cause them harm and how to prevent accidents. Staff teach children about road safety by drawing a zebra crossing on the playground where children are riding their bikes. Children enjoy this game and staff engage in conversations with them about being careful when they are walking near cars and roads. Consequently, this helps to support children's well-being.

Staff are caring towards the children, who feel content in their care. Children have secure attachments with their key people and they enjoy interacting with them. Staff consistently praise children for their achievements, which boosts their self-esteem and makes them feel valued. Consequently, children are confident and are motivated to learn. Staff communicate well with the parents and gain information about children's individual care needs prior to them starting at the pre-school. Therefore, staff are able to ensure that children feel safe and secure in their care. Children are well supported by staff during their transitions to school and are emotionally well prepared for future learning. Staff consistently encourage children to be independent and to make choices. For example, children can choose whether they play inside or outside, they can go to the toilet by themselves and they put their own coats on for outdoor play. Therefore, staff support children to develop important skills that they will need in the future.

Staff contribute to children's healthy lifestyles. When children enrol at the pre-school, they provide parents with an information sheet about what to include in a healthy packed lunch. The food that staff provide at snack time is healthy and children have access to drinking water. At lunch time, staff sit with the children and engage in conversations about what they have been doing throughout the morning. However, this does not always happen at snack times. Therefore, the opportunities to extend their social skills are not always maximised. Staff teach children the importance of washing their hands correctly with soap and running water. They explain to them that germs are very small and that we cannot see them. As a result, they are supported to develop good hygiene habits. Staff encourage children to play outside in the fresh air. Staff provide lots of equipment that children can climb on and learn to move in a variety of ways. Consequently, staff maximise opportunities for children to exercise and develop their larger muscles.

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

There is a breach to the safeguarding and welfare requirements. The management team and committee do not have sufficient understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is because, although they ensure that all staff undergo Disclosure and Barring Service checks before they work with the children, they do not ensure that staff employment records are easily accessible. Therefore, during the inspection, the management team and committee were unable to demonstrate their safe recruitment processes, such as staff identify checks and references, to show that staff are suitable to work with children. As a result, the management team are unable to evidence that children's safety and welfare is consistently protected. The pre-school staff evaluate their practice as a team and identify

areas of teaching that need enhancing, in order to extend children's learning and development. Since the last inspection, staff have extended the support they provide to children who are learning to speak English as an additional language. However, the systems in place for self-evaluation are not fully successful as the weaknesses relating to the documentation that is required by the Early Years Foundation Stage have not been quickly identified and addressed.

Staff child protection knowledge is robust. They are aware of the signs and symptoms that would cause them to be concerned and who they must report their concerns to. Staff closely monitor aspects of children's well-being, for example, by making sure that they have suitable food in their packed lunches. Over half of the staff hold a current first-aid qualification and they deploy themselves throughout the pre-school. This ensures that children receive treatment quickly from an adult with appropriate knowledge. Staff complete daily checks of the indoor and outdoor environments prior to children arriving at the pre-school. When they take children for walks around the local area, a member of senior staff will walk the route beforehand to look for any potential hazards. Consequently, this helps to promote children's safety and welfare.

The management team monitor the learning and development requirements closely and ensure that these are consistently met. They supervise staff during regular meetings and complete peer observations to identify staff strengths and areas for improvement. Management provide support in a range of ways, such as offering training and a buddy system with a more experienced member of the team. One member of staff has attended training about how to promote children's mathematical development and has shared the information with her colleagues. As a result, teaching in this area of learning is a strength amongst the staff. Another member of staff has recently completed a six week training course called Communication counts. Information gathered at this course has been cascaded to the whole team and implemented into practice. Consequently, training has a positive impact on children's learning as staff utilise what they learn and provide good quality teaching. Staff work closely with other providers and professionals to ensure that's children's individual learning needs are met. They communicate about children's next steps and how they can support children's learning and development collaboratively. Partnerships with parents are strong and their feedback about how staff can improve is encouraged. Parents are extremely happy with the standard of teaching and care that staff provide. They say that they can notice the progress that their children are making and that the staff are providing children with a really good start. Parents are very keen to recommend the pre-school to their family and friends.

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

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| Unique reference number | 204386 |
| Local authority | Thurrock |
| Inspection number | 854337 |
| Type of provision | |
| Registration category | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| Age range of children | 0 - 5 |
| Total number of places | 26 |
| Number of children on roll | 38 |
| Name of provider | St Joseph's Pre School Playgroup (Thurrock) Committee |
| Date of previous inspection | 03/11/2011 |
| Telephone number | 07889 900510 |

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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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