

Inspection of St.Wulstan's Pre-School

St.Wulstan's RC School, Rushton Street, Great Harwood, Blackburn BB6 7JQ

Inspection date: 9 June 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children thrive in this warm and welcoming pre-school. They settle quickly after arrival and immediately become engrossed in their chosen activities. Young children independently select what they want to do and initiate their own learning. They concentrate on filling and emptying containers in the water tray and making marks for a purpose as they create pictures. Children are motivated and have a positive attitude towards learning.

Children behave well for their age. Staff use clear and consistent reminders that help children to learn how to share and take turns. Staff skilfully teach that some behaviours are unwanted. For example, staff explain to children that they may hurt themselves if they do not sit properly. Children understand the pre-school routine and what is expected of them. When staff shake a tambourine, children immediately know that it is time to tidy up and quickly begin helping each other put toys away. Staff praise children for their efforts. Children relish being placed on the 'silver star' for good behaviour or effort.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, staff worked hard to maintain communication with families. They distributed activity packs, carried out home visits and recorded special 'story time' videos for children to enjoy. This helped to reduce the risk of anxiety as children transitioned back into the setting after periods when the setting was only open to some children due to COVID-19 restrictions and national lockdowns. Children feel safe, settled and secure.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The Diocese of Salford has failed to notify Ofsted of a change to the nominated individual. However, during the inspection, strategic leads took swift and appropriate action to rectify this. Children are not at risk. This is because the manager, who has responsibility for the day-to-day management of the pre-school, has been suitably verified to carry out her role.
- Staff playfully interact with children and are enthusiastic in their approach. This captures children's interests and engages them purposefully in their learning. However, occasionally, staff do not always make the most of spontaneous opportunities to challenge and extend children's understanding even further. For example, when children find a spider in the garden, some staff do not embrace these moments to provide children with new information to deepen their knowledge further.
- Staff know the children well and recognise their individual uniqueness. Flexible settling-in arrangements help children to quickly adjust to pre-school life and become familiar with routines. However, while there are arrangements in place to gather pertinent information from parents about children's existing skills and

abilities, these are not always implemented robustly. This means that, occasionally, staff do not have the required information to enable them to plan purposefully for children's progress from the outset.

- Children are skilful communicators. They eagerly share toys with the inspector and question why she is visiting their pre-school. Staff ensure that they provide a running commentary as children play. This helps to ensure that children hear a rich variety of vocabulary to strengthen their communication and language skills. Furthermore, staff ask thought-provoking questions that encourage children to describe what they are doing and share their thoughts and ideas.
- Provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. Knowledgeable staff have worked tirelessly to develop relationships with outside agencies. This ensures that children are referred for extra support where needed in a swift and timely manner. Children are making good progress from their starting points. Their learning is closely monitored and continually shared with parents.
- Children thoroughly enjoy being imaginative. They work collaboratively to create a 'swimming pool' in the garden using crates and blocks. Children 'measure' staff and declare that they are too big to use the pool. Children spend time in the home corner, developing their ideas as they 'cook' dinner for their friends. They stir, pour and mix as they imitate cooking sequences, working alongside each other harmoniously.
- Staff are led by a dedicated and passionate manager who has a clear vision for further improvement. The hard-working team benefits from regular supervision meetings, observations of their practice and plentiful training opportunities. They are encouraged to engage in reflective practice through the use of discussions, evaluations and videos of their interactions with children. Children are very clearly at the heart of everything that the staff team do.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff have a thorough understanding of the possible signs and symptoms that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. They know who to contact if there are concerns about a child's welfare or the practice or conduct of a colleague. The manager ensures that all staff keep their training up-to-date. She tests staff's understanding through discussions and questionnaires. Robust recruitment systems are in place to ensure the suitability of all staff working with children. Staff complete continuous risk assessments of the premises to ensure that children are able to play in a safe and secure environment.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen staff's ability to successfully challenge and extend children's learning and understanding during child-led play
- refine the existing arrangements for gathering information about children's existing skills and abilities, so that staff can build consistently and coherently on what children already know and can do.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY372899
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10068929
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	25
Number of children on roll	26
Name of registered person	Diocese of Salford
Registered person unique reference number	RP528034
Telephone number	01254 884 533 ex 1
Date of previous inspection	11 June 2014

Information about this early years setting

St.Wulstan's Pre-School registered in 2008 and is managed by The Salford Roman Catholic Diocese. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday, from 8.45am to 3.45pm, term time only. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The pre-school employs four members of childcare staff; all staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Karen Cox

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- Discussions were held with the provider, the manager, parents and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- A learning walk was completed with the manager to discuss the curriculum intent and how the provision is organised.
- The manager and the inspector completed a joint evaluation of an activity.
- The inspector reviewed a variety of documents, including evidence of the suitability of staff, qualifications, first-aid certificates and policies and procedures.
- The inspector observed interactions between staff and children during activities and assessed the impact of teaching on children's learning.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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