

Inspection of St Paul's Pre-School

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

Inspection date: 5 September 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Parents and carers help children to follow the well-established routine for arriving at the pre-school. They share information from home that helps the pre-school to meet children's individual needs during the session. This helps children to feel secure in the company of the caring, friendly staff. Children find their printed name and add it to their key-person board. This supports children's early literacy. Staff promote children's independence. This is demonstrated particularly well at snack time when staff patiently show younger children how to spread butter on their toast. Older children have learned what to do. They carefully spread the butter to all the corners of the toast. The daily practise helps children to develop small-muscle control. They gain self-esteem from their increasing success.

Staff teach children to follow rules that promote their safety and encourage their exploration. Children ride toy vehicles and roam freely around the pre-school's outdoor area. They learn that they must not venture beyond the line of red cones that marks its boundary. Staff are vigilant in their supervision of children who are new to the setting. They position themselves around the space, so that children are always in sight. Staff continually communicate with each other, so that everyone knows how many children are outside.

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

- The longstanding pre-school is part of a supportive local community and church. The voluntary management committee (VMC) of the church provides pastoral and practical support for the team. The pre-school staff and the VMC are ambitious for every child's well-being and achievement. They work together to evaluate and develop the inclusive, welcoming provision in ways that benefit families and children.
- Staff understand how children learn. This enables them to offer a curriculum that supports children's good progress. Children become busily absorbed in varied activities, such as role play and construction. Staff sit companionably alongside them. They observe, play and talk with children. Children welcome staff's involvement and learn from their guidance.
- Staff know that talking with children helps to extend children's vocabulary and understanding. When children build towers, staff use phrases such as 'on top' to describe children's actions. This means that children hear and learn words that describe what they are doing. However, sometimes, staff ask too many questions, such as 'what is it?' that children cannot answer. This does not promote children's knowledge and conversation skills.
- Staff often sing with children. For example, when children play with small-world farm animals, staff sing 'Baa Baa Black Sheep'. This captures children's attention and they join in. Children, therefore, experience enjoyable opportunities to

practise the rhythm and rhyme of spoken English. Furthermore, the singing helps to prepare children for reading and writing words when the time comes.

- Staff and children follow consistent routines throughout the session. This promotes children's independence and self-control, because they know what they are expected to do. However, some routines take too long, especially for younger and new children. This is demonstrated at snack times. Children queue to wash hands, then sit waiting for everyone to be ready. As a result, children's attention and engagement in learning is reduced.
- Staff check children's progress and plan for their learning. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Staff work in partnership with parents. They seek timely advice from specialist professionals and incorporate this into achievable next steps for children. This helps everyone to measure and build on the progress of children with SEND.
- Staff keep required records and communicate well with parents. This helps to promote children's health and safety. Staff record and act on information about children's allergies to particular foods. For example, everyone knows which children must not drink cows' milk. Staff record accidents and injuries to children and share the information with parents. If children sustain a bump to the head, staff inform parents about the signs of head injury to be alert for.
- Staff complete training that keeps their knowledge of child protection matters up to date. They demonstrate a clear determination to report and act on any concerns about children's welfare. Staff know the procedure that they must follow if they observe colleagues behaving in an inappropriate way towards children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- help staff to model language even more effectively, so that children continuously hear new and familiar words in ways that promote their understanding and communication
- review the planning of some routines, so that children's learning is fully promoted throughout the session.

Setting details

Unique reference number	323098
Local authority	St Helens
Inspection number	10351098
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 3
Total number of places	41
Number of children on roll	21
Name of registered person	The Parochial Church Council Of The Ecclesiastical Parish of St Paul, Blackbrook, Parr
Registered person unique reference number	RP906078
Telephone number	01744 453181
Date of previous inspection	5 October 2018

Information about this early years setting

St Paul's Pre-School registered in 1981 and operates within St Paul's Church. The pre-school employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, one holds a qualification at level 5, one holds a qualification at level 3 and two members of staff hold qualifications at level 2. The pre-school opens from Monday to Friday, during school term time. Sessions are from 9am until midday. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Susan King

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the pre-school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the manager and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The manager and the inspector completed a learning walk of the pre-school. They discussed the curriculum.
- Staff spoke with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector observed and spoke with children.
- The inspector spoke with parents and took account of their views.
- The inspector sampled and evaluated relevant documents. She reviewed evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.

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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