



## St Georges Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	218234
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 January 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Christine Holmes
<b>Setting Address</b>	St Georges Church Hall, Bamford Street, Tamworth, Staffordshire, B77 2AS
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<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	ST GEORGE'S PRE SCHOOL
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St George's Pre-school opened in 1992. It operates from one main hall and small room within a church hall in a residential area, near to Tamworth town centre. The playgroup serves the local and surrounding area.

The group is registered to care for no more than 24 children at any one time. There are currently 30 children from two to four years on roll. This includes 12 funded three-year-olds and 2 funded 4-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The playgroup opens five days per week during school term times. Sessions last from 09:15 until 11.45.

There are two full time and three part time staff who work with the children. All the staff have early years qualifications to level 2 or 3 with exception of one who is currently undertaking training. One member of staff has a teaching qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children take part in a wide range of activities that help to develop their physical development. Outdoors they are able to use a good selection of large and small equipment including a climbing frame, see-saws, bikes and balls. Indoors children increase their skills using equipment such as balancing bars, scissors and paint brushes. In fine weather children enjoy table top activities outdoors and take part in fun filled games such as 'sack' and 'egg and spoon' races. Exciting plans are presently being put into place to further develop children's opportunities to enjoy fresh air and exercise. Parents and carers have been asked to ensure children have warm outdoor clothes so that they can play in the outdoor area all year round. Staff are receiving training in the nursery outdoor area to help them to introduce further stimulating and exciting play, such as activities to play on a windy day. This approach is helping children to develop a very positive attitude towards exercise and an awareness of healthy lifestyles.

Children learn the importance of personal hygiene through established daily routines and well-planned activities. For example, children are reminded of the importance of washing their hands before taking part in preparing the snack and all children go to the toilet to wash their hands before snack time and after outdoor play. They are supported very well to learn the skills of toileting and hand washing. Staff are always on hand to remind children to wash and dry their hands thoroughly to get rid of germs and to prevent their hands from getting sore. Independence is encouraged using appropriate resources such as a 'step up' to the toilet and hand wash basin. This helps to reduce cross contamination and helps children to take an active role in keeping themselves healthy.

Staff promote healthy eating. Children and parents are taking part in preparing healthy snacks such as date and apple spread for the children to eat with their crackers at snack time. All parents receive the recipe for each healthy snack as well as information about how to provide a balanced diet and the negative effects of a poor unhealthy diet on children's health. This approach is actively contributing towards helping children leading a healthy lifestyle.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children and parents receive a very warm welcome into the pre-school. Staff are on hand and eager to provide support and encouragement to both parents and children. As a result children become very settled and happy to join in with the morning circle time and parents are happy to stay to help settle their children when they first start at the group and to take part in activities such as preparing healthy snacks. There is a good amount of space available which is suitably organised to provide different areas of play for children to play and move safely, such as a

creative corner, a book corner and an area for physical play. There is a good range of resources and access has been improved to enable children to self-select which increases their independence and allows them to follow their own interests.

Children have regular opportunities to practise the fire drill so that they are confident about the evacuation procedures. Children know that one reason staff take the register is so that they can check that all the children are out of the building. They know that they have to leave the hall immediately and stand by the fence in the outdoor area. This helps children to develop their understanding of how to keep themselves safe. In most instances staff have good awareness of potential hazards and take suitable steps to reduce these to ensure children's safety, such as fitting a 'buffer' to the children's toilet to protect children from trapping their fingers in the closing door. However, some hazards, such as small stones and stagnant water in the garden have not been identified or minimised which potentially compromises children's safety.

Staff demonstrate clear commitment to act in the best interest of the children in the event of child abuse and they have a sound knowledge and understanding of the signs and symptoms that may alert child abuse. However, the written child protection policy and procedure for the group does not comply with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures. This means that the staff could follow incorrect procedures and that the information given to parents relating to child protection is incorrect. This potentially compromises children's welfare.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and enter the pre-school confidently benefiting from staff being enthusiastic and welcoming on arrival. Good support is given to children and parents who have just started to attend the group. All staff build warm and trusting relationships with the children. Their self-esteem is fostered well because staff show a genuine interest in the children, taking time to talk to them when they arrive and throughout the session, listening to what they say and valuing their contributions during group discussion time. This supports children's communication skills.

All children benefit from participating in a varied range of well-planned stimulating activities and experiences which are planned in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the foundations stage curriculum. This supports their learning and development in all areas. Imaginative topics such as 'weddings' provide children with a wealth of new experiences which helps them to develop their understanding of the world around them. Children eagerly engage in activities such as role play, play dough, sand looking at books and singing. Their key worker is generally on hand to support and encourage the children to try new skills, such as balancing on the balancing beams. Staff make notes of any progress or further opportunities each child needs to progress.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a strong knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They know, for example, that even from a simple activity such as making flowers with the children they are able to promote all six areas of learning. They

ensure through detailed planning that the environment provides continuous learning opportunities for all children with daily focused activities providing specific learning intentions to progress children through the stepping stones along towards the early learning goals. All staff follow the plans and have a clear understanding of what children are expected to learn. Plans actively promote inclusion for all children and they are evaluated to monitor their effectiveness. Activities are often repeated to include part-time children and staff seize opportunities to consolidate children's learning. For example, a hairdressing activity was repeated because it had proved to be very popular and to ensure all children were included. This gave children the opportunity to initiate their own play using the skills and understanding they had previously developed. Staff work well as a team, they are enthusiastic, committed and use a variety of methods to introduce new skills and knowledge. For example, much hard work was undertaken to make a range of imaginative costumes for the children to wear to dance for parents in celebration of 'Mardi Grad' for Pancake Day. The concept of 'weddings' is currently being introduced to the children. A wide range of activities which support children's learning such as writing invitations, making lists for wedding presents, making flowers and looking at and talking about wedding photos will lead to the children visiting the local church to rein act a wedding with the wedding reception to follow at the pre-school hall. This approach is very effective in helping children to develop and progress.

Staff record detailed observations which are then transferred to children's assessment records. There is an informal system in place to use this information to plan for children's next steps in learning. However, the informal system is not fully effective in identifying children's next steps in all the six areas of learning or to ensure children are sufficiently challenged, particularly in areas such as using number for a purpose and to solve problems and recognising the sounds that letters make. Therefore, potentially children are not making as much progress as they could in all areas.

Children are supported very well to become excited and motivated to learn. 'This is fun' one child said very excited about going outside to feel the snow and ice after talking about the weather in circle time. Children's independence and self-esteem are effectively built up as they take turns to be the drink monitor and help to give out snack and as they choose between activities, selecting work and resources for themselves. As a result children demonstrate developing levels of confidence and are able to persist with difficult tasks such as trying different ways to stick the material to make their flowers. Children's language is developing well because they are continually encouraged by the staff to express their needs and ideas. Children's attention is drawn to how staff write for a purpose, such as writing the children's description of their pictures. This encourages children to experiment and practise their own skills for writing. Children busily make their mark in the appointment book when playing in the pretend hairdressers. Activities such as collecting name cards to signify that children are present and the captions and signs used for circle time and to label items around the room help children to understand that text carries meaning. However children's interest and understanding of the sounds that letters make is not fully encouraged. Activities, games, songs and stories are used by staff to develop children's concept and use of number, shape and size. Children show good interest in recreating simple patterns with the compare bears and they can move the snail along four paces correctly on the board game. However children are not challenged enough to use number for a purpose and to solve problems. Children's interest in music is enhanced through

opportunities such as listening to a musician playing the violin and being able to experiment with the instrument to make sounds themselves. Children particularly enjoy the role play area. The staff make good use of props and discussion to help fire children's imagination, encouraging them to engage in role play to express their ideas and feelings. Children enjoy exploring many different textures. They find out about living things by visiting attractions such as the Butterfly Farm and see, handle and learn about creatures when the 'Zoo lab' visits the group. These types of activities help children to progress at a good rate and provide them with great fun and excitement.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Staff are aware of children's individual needs and liaise closely with parents to ensure that these are met. Children are given time to settle into the groups routine and parents are encouraged to help in this process. Children participate in activities of their choosing; deciding which of the many different areas they wish to play and they are able to select resources independently. Children are well behaved and know the routine well. They willingly help with tasks such as giving out plates and cups at snack time. They take turns when playing with toys and listen to each other when speaking in a large group. Staff create a calm atmosphere where there are clear routines and boundaries so that children know what is expected of them. Opportunities for children to positively develop their awareness of diversity are good. There are resources such as books, puzzles and toys depicting positive images and planned activities such as a role play options and celebrations to acknowledge different festivals such Chinese New Year promote children's knowledge and understanding of the wider world. All activities are planned and adapted to ensure the inclusion of all children and ensure each child is treated with equal concern and respect.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are included in the life of the setting and are made very welcome. Staff are always on hand to exchange information with parents and all staff have a friendly warm manner. Parents are encouraged to become actively involved in the group. They are able to attend the annual general meeting to discuss the running of the group and they are actively encouraged to become members of the committee which has the responsibility for the management of the group.

Partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning and receive useful information relating to issues such as healthy eating. They receive newsletter informing them of themes and topics and receive regular written reports regarding their child's progress. Discussions with parents demonstrate that they are happy with the information they receive regarding their child's progress and feel that their children are progressing well.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Overall children's needs are met. Staff are committed to providing good levels of care and education to enhance children's experience and well-being. Children benefit from staff that are enthusiastic about all areas of their work and committed to providing a stimulating environment for the children. All staff working with the children are appropriately qualified and most are very experienced. There are effective recruitment and vetting systems in place to ensure children are well protected. Most required policies and procedures are in place and implemented by staff to contribute to the welfare, care and learning of the children who attend. Staff work well together to ensure that the routines run smoothly and children feel settled and secure. They are aware of their roles and responsibilities and consequently deploy themselves effectively to ensure that children are interested in their play. Staff have a good understanding of the setting's policies and procedures and are generally effective in their implementation. All required documentation is in place and stored securely.

The quality of the leadership and management of the nursery education is good. There is an established team who work very well together. Staff meetings enable staff to share good practice and identify areas for improvement. They discuss and contribute ideas for children's learning so that the activities are varied, fun and stimulate interest. Activities and planning is regularly evaluated so that staff can build on children's interests. They determine which activities have been successful or unsuccessful and share observations of children's care and learning. There is a clear commitment to developing and improving all areas of practice. For example, the current exciting plans to develop outdoor play. The group has also recently evaluated the quality of teaching in the area of communication, language and literacy. Weaknesses and strengths have been identified accurately and plans are already in place to address these. This is very good practice as it will help to ensure strengths are developed and weaknesses are reduced. As a result, children's potential for learning will be continue to be improved.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the pre-school agreed to improve low level storage to enable children to select, use and replace resources. Improvement has been made in this area. Children are now able to access resources such as jigsaws and writing materials from mobile drawer units.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

#### The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- review written child protection policy to ensure it complies with the Local Safeguarding Children's board policies
- inform parents of recent changes to the complaints procedure
- ensure all hazards are identified and minimised.

#### The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- further develop the systems to identify children's next steps in learning to ensure suitable challenge for all children
- increase children opportunities to recognise the sounds that letters make and to use number for a purpose and solve problems.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)