

St Richard's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	113731
Inspection date	18 October 2007
Inspector	Rosemary Musgrove
Setting Address	St Richard's Church Hall, Collingwood Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN12 6HZ
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Registered person	Susan Johnson
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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. Richard's Pre-School is a long established, privately owned group. It operates from St. Richard's Church Hall in Worthing, West Sussex. The group opens each weekday during term time from 09:00 until 12:00. Children can stay until 13:00 if they bring a packed lunch. St Richard's Pre-School serves the local residential and surrounding areas.

St Richard's Pre-School is registered to provide sessional care for 26 children from two to under six years. There are currently 22 children on roll. Of these, 12 receive funding for nursery education. There are no children on roll with learning difficulties or disabilities, or who speak English as an additional language.

There are five members of staff. Of these, three hold an appropriate early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enthusiastically take part in a range of physical activities. These contribute to their health and physical development. In the outdoor area, they confidently use the wheeled vehicles and learn about road safety. Adults help children to develop a variety of skills, such as throwing or hopping on the hopscotch mats. Indoors, children practise their agility skills on the large climbing frame and enjoy marching songs.

The setting understands the importance of healthy food and drinks. There is a water dispenser and children help themselves to a drink whenever they are thirsty. Snack time is a pleasant sociable occasion and children sit at a small table and talk with their friends and staff. They choose a drink of milk or water and healthy snacks include apples, bananas and bread sticks. Children independently spread butter, marmite or cheese spread on to brown bread to make their own sandwich. At the end of the session, some children stay for lunch. The setting encourages nutritious food in the lunch box and gives parents a leaflet with recommended healthy foods.

Two staff have a current first aid certificate. This means they can administer first aid in the event of an emergency. The setting has a clear sick child policy. This states that if children have an infectious disease they do not attend. This means that other children do not catch unwanted illnesses. The setting has written parental permission to seek emergency medical treatment and keeps appropriate records if a child has an accident. Staff know the procedures to follow if a child needs medication.

Children are looked after in a clean environment and one member of staff has completed food and hygiene training. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through reminders from staff. For example, they wash their hands with wipes before eating their snack and use soap and water for washing their hands after visiting the toilet.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their play in a suitable and welcoming environment. The attractive areas of learning engage the children's interest during the session. These include small world play, number, reading and graphics areas. The setting has a good range of resources including construction equipment, wheeled vehicles and a computer. During the session, children are enthusiastic to select a favourite resource or activity, such as, looking at acorns with a magnifying glass or creating a room in the doll's house.

The hall is safe and secure and the setting keeps a record of visitors. There are effective systems for the arrival and departure of the children and written guidelines to follow if a child is lost or uncollected. When children play outside, staff are vigilant and supervise the children at all times. There is a good range of procedures and records to protect children from harm and keep them safe. These include a daily checklist of hazards and regular risk assessments. There are clear procedures for evacuating the hall in the event of an emergency. Regular fire drills mean that children are beginning to learn how to look after themselves in the event of a fire.

Staff encourage children to keep themselves and others safe by gentle reminders. For example, children learn how to carry their chairs safely. The setting has clear guidelines for keeping

children safe on outings. Before a trip, a member of staff does a risk assessment and talks to the children about road safety. On the outing, there is a high ratio of staff and children are encouraged to hold hands. This means that children are well cared for on visits outside the setting.

Children in the setting are well protected because the manager and some staff have a good understanding of their role in child protection, through training courses. They have a good knowledge of the signs and symptoms of child abuse, and know the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their play in an environment that is stimulating, well organised and fun. They arrive happily with their parents, settle well and enjoy varied activities, such as exploring the sand, painting a picture or making marks in the Play Dough. The good ratio of staff means that children have guidance and support as they make their choice, such as, exploring a collection of boxes or rummaging through a tray of crispy autumnal leaves.

Each morning, staff set up a range of activities and resources. These encourage children to make decisions and be independent. They include sticking and creating pictures, construction activities and a computer. Children are keen to participate and are involved in the activities, for example, they create a shopping list in the role play area or enjoy building a tower of bricks alongside an adult.

Although staff have an understanding of the needs of the very young children, they do not always plan activities that encourage them to explore in a meaningful way for their developmental stage.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good working knowledge of the Foundation Stage and the areas of learning. The setting has the key elements of curriculum planning in place. Long term plans give details of the topics and learning intentions that children cover during a two year period. Medium and short term plans give details that are more specific and allow staff to be spontaneous and respond to the interests and needs of individual children. The setting has good procedures for observation and assessment and the findings are recorded in the child's developmental record. Children's achievements and observations are used to inform their future learning.

Children are keen to choose activities and are motivated to play. There is a good balance between adult-led and self-chosen activities. For example, children are enthralled as they listen to the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' and enthusiastically join in the events, such as, eating the porridge. Self-chosen activities include sand play and devising an obstacle course out of large construction resources. Children are independent and select many of their own resources, for example, craft materials and writing implements for mark making. Children play well alongside each other and understand the need to share resources and take turns.

Children learn to listen and follow instructions during the Sticky Kids tape and join in the actions with vigour and enthusiasm. They are beginning to speak with growing confidence during role play activities and circle time, when they talk about the weather and days of the week. Children

have opportunities for mark making and create letters in the sand tray. Older children are making good progress with phonics, in preparation for their transfer to school. Children regularly listen to stories and share books with adults; however, they do not independently choose to select a book to browse alone or share with a friend.

Children are making good progress in mathematical development. They learn to count in many meaningful ways throughout the session. For example, they count the number of children at the pre-school and then write number 13 on the white board. On the malleable play table, children make 13 circles of Play Dough and are encouraged by an adult to make six more. Children's understanding of shape and space is developing well. They explore a range of boxes of different shapes and sizes and try to find something that will fit inside.

Children have many worthwhile experiences and learn about the world in which they live. During a topic on growing, they grow potatoes and sunflower seeds. They find out about many different vegetables, taste fruit and make a graph that shows their favourite fruit. Children look at Van Gogh's sunflower pictures and then create their own paintings of sunflowers. Children are enthusiastic as they use a range of technology. For example, on the computer they enjoy a song about ducks and practise their skills of addition and subtraction. They enthusiastically use a programmable toy and learn how to make it move in a certain direction.

Children demonstrate good co-ordination skills. They use a wide range of implements, such as scissors and glue spreaders in the making area and cutters and rolling pins in the malleable area. Each day, children enjoy singing activities as part of their routine. They enthusiastically use the wooden claves to make soft and loud sounds and to make a slow and fast rhythm. Children express themselves through a range of different mediums. These include free painting, making a collage, moulding the Play Dough and cooking activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children and their families are welcome at the pre-school. Staff have a good understanding of individual children and try to ensure their preferences are met. Before children start at the setting, parents complete a registration form. This gives details of special requests, the children's fears and a range of valuable information. This means that staff have a good knowledge of the children when they join the setting. Children learn about a variety of different festivals and cultures. During Chinese New Year, they eat a stir-fry with chopsticks and take part in a lion dance and parade. At Christmas, they perform a nativity for their parents and friends. The setting has close links with the local church and the children collect food for homeless people. This means they are learning to think about the needs of others. Community workers visit the children. These include the Fire Brigade, when children look at the fire engine, wear helmets and have fun trying out the hose.

Two members of staff have responsibility for providing appropriate care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They attend regular training, such as, learning about children with communication difficulties. Currently, there are no children on roll who have additional requirements. However, the setting has the knowledge and systems to support a child to ensure their needs are met.

Children at the setting behave very well and respond to staff requests, for example, tidying up. The setting has a written behaviour management policy. This states they encourage good behaviour by consistency, positive role models and helping children to see the consequences

of their actions. If a child displays unsuitable behaviour, appropriate strategies are used. These include redirection to another activity, sharing and an opportunity to sit quietly and reflect on their actions. All staff treat the children with respect and they benefit from genuine praise and encouragement. Children learn important social skills, such as, listening to others, sharing and taking turns. These factors mean children have a positive attitude to their play and learning. These aspects of the provision foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. This contributes to the children's well-being in the setting. Parents have a good range of information on the notice board and through regular newsletters. The setting has an attractive prospectus and an excellent range of information on the Foundation Stage. Parents look at their child's developmental records and discuss these with their child's key worker throughout the year. The setting has a written complaints procedure and understands how to respond to a parental complaint. Parents are happy with the pre-school. In particular, they value the good ratio of staff to children, the range of information and how well their children develop as individuals.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by a dedicated team of staff who really love their work with young children. They have a wealth of experience and a range of qualifications. All staff attend regular training. Recent examples include speech and language and developing outdoor provision. The setting is committed to improvement through continual evaluation of current organisation and practice. These factors mean that children have a good level of care and support. This helps them to feel secure and make progress in their learning. Staff deployment is effective and children are well supervised at all times. Areas of learning are stimulating and resources are generally suitable for the age and developmental stage of the children.

All mandatory documentation that is required for the safe and effective management of the setting is in place. This is well maintained and securely stored. The setting has a number of policies that contribute to the welfare of the children, such as, food and drink and health and hygiene. The setting keeps child development records and samples of the children's work. These are shared with parents and contribute to the continuity of the children's care.

Leadership and management is good. The manager is motivated and enthusiastic. She continually updates her knowledge and attends regular training, such as, child protection and building and managing teams. This means she has a good understanding of current childcare practice and can support and develop the care and learning of the children. There are suitable recruitment and induction procedures for new staff. Staff appraisal is in place and staff discuss future developments and evaluate progress during the past year. There is a comprehensive staff handbook; this includes details of rules and good practice for working with children. Staff have regular meetings and discuss plans and the needs of individual children.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the setting was asked to develop systems to support and induct new staff and to monitor and evaluate staff performance and development.

The setting now has an induction policy and a staff appraisal system. This means that new staff know about the setting and this supports the continuity of the children's care and learning. Regular staff appraisal helps individual staff to evaluate their practice and improve the outcomes for the children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required 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):

- improve outcomes for children under three by using an approach in line with 'Birth to three matters'.

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):

- consider ways of encouraging children to browse books independently.

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