

St Pauls Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY152328
Inspection date	24 September 2007
Inspector	Naomi Bold
Setting Address	St Pauls Church, Crescent East, Hadley Wood, EN4 0EN
Telephone number	020 8447 0448
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Registered person	St Pauls Pre-School
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 Paul's pre-school opened in 2000. It operates from a large church hall in Hadley Wood, London. A maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:15 to 12:00 during school term times. All children share access to a small secure enclosed outdoor area within the grounds of the church.

There are currently 22 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 11 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the surrounding areas.

The pre-school employs six staff including the manager, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are protected by staff who have a clear regard for their health. The setting has a clear 'Sick Child Policy' that is shared with parents via the prospectus and the notice board identifying communicable diseases to protect children in the pre-school from cross-infection. The setting has a clear no smoking policy in place in conjunction with current UK law to further protect children who attend. The setting has records of food hygiene assessments and a separate risk assessment for the kitchen area to make sure that all preparation of food is hygienic and appropriate. Records of allergies and special diets are kept available at all times to ensure that children's health is protected.

Instructions for hand washing are placed in the toilets to ensure that all children are able to learn how to wash their hands effectively. Children are taken to the toilet in small groups to ensure that each one uses the toilet appropriately and to make sure that they all wash their hands. Soap, tissues and hand paper towels are all labelled to help children recognise the equipment they need to wash their hands.

Activities are planned termly that help to promote children's independence in daily hygiene routines and to enable them to manage their own hygiene, for example learning to put on and take off their coats and discussing tooth brushing and the importance of a varied diet. Children also have regular opportunities to take part in cooking activities, establishing a positive relationship with nutritious food.

Staff offer a range of healthy snacks for children that are prepared in the suitable and hygienic kitchen including appealingly arranged fruit platters that children eat with enthusiasm. Staff use disposable gloves and aprons and place plastic tablecloths that are sprayed with antibacterial spray to ensure that surfaces are hygienic enough for children to use to eat on. Hand washing after messy activities takes place in a bowl in the main room and as all children use the same bowl there is a risk of cross contamination. However, the water in the bowl is changed regularly so risks are minimised.

Children have daily opportunity for physical play and exercise as there is a well-stocked outdoor play space including several slides, climbing frames, swings and bikes. Children enjoy their outdoor playtime and use the slides and cars with good levels of control, demonstrating the benefits of regular exercise on their physical development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are kept safe by a number of extremely well defined systems that ensure that all arrivals and departures of children and visitors are documented to fully protect children in an emergency. Accident, medical and incident forms are all up to date and are appropriately completed and signed by parents and a separate witness. The medication book also includes details for children with potentially life threatening conditions, and step by step instructions for how an emergency should be dealt with. Contact numbers for parents are also included in this information to allow quick reference, saving vital minutes. A password system and a 'going home' book ensure that children are only collected by authorised persons which further protects them. The new manager

has also created a 'concerns sheet' to document any safeguarding issues, further demonstrating the high regard that staff have for the safety of the children in their care.

Children are able to play happily in a large and safely laid out hall. All equipment is suitable for their use and daily risk assessments include checks to all of the equipment in the setting. Registers are up to date and include a written head count, to ensure that all children can be accounted for in an emergency situation. Any children that leave early or late are fully documented so that staff are always aware of who should be in the room.

Fire drills are carried out regularly and are fully documented, noting staff and children who were present to ensure that all those who attend the setting have the chance to regularly practise. Risk assessments for inside and outside play are consistently thorough and evaluative. Staff inside and outside of the building use walkie talkies to ensure that they can communicate with each other without having to leave a group of children at any time. This is especially valuable when some staff have taken children into the garden as it is a short distance from the main building and further demonstrates the highly responsible attitude that all staff have towards the safety of the children in their care.

Children are protected at all times as all staff have a sensitive understanding of child protection issues and of the need to report concerns if they arise. Staff show an extremely clear understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and are all aware of the procedures for reporting concerns. The manager has recently undertaken further child protection training to ensure that she is up to date with current local safeguarding children's bureau guidelines and the procedure in place is thorough and appropriate. The manager has also taken time to inform all staff of current best practice guidelines and has arranged to send all staff on further training in the current term.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff make regular assessments based on the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Regular inset days and staff planning meetings ensure that all staff are involved and aware of plans in place to help children play and learn effectively.

Observational records are detailed and cover the individual needs of all children including ideas of activities at home so that parents can promote the learning of their children. Observations are mainly evaluative and are clearly used to inform next steps to improve children's progress.

The main play space is decorated with many child lead displays that demonstrate the work of all the children in the setting. Children are welcomed warmly on arrival at the setting and select their name from a set of laminated cards. Staff use gentle questioning to help children recognise the letters in their name. However, some paintings of children's work have typed labels of children's names on them and these are not hand written so that children do not have every opportunity to make their own marks although staff help children write their name on paintings they take home.

Staff make sensible use of a wide range of resources including sand and water trays, a painting table and a curiosity table to promote children's learning. A curiosity box where children can submit items from home that are then used in circle time ensures that children feel a part of the group activities and that all children have some individual attention throughout the day. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress in relations to their starting points. Observations and evaluations are clearly linked to the six areas of learning and demonstrate a clear learning journey for each child. The setting also uses the Schools Library Service which loans equipment to meet the early learning goals of the Foundation Stage curriculum. This ensures a constantly varied set of resources are available to children, helping to develop their imaginations.

The planning system is in the process of being updated by the new manager to reflect her good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The manager is also beginning to introduce the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum which demonstrates her ability to forward plan to secure the best possible outcomes for children in her care. Long, medium and short term plans are well thought out to cover all six areas of learning. The plans also detail forward planning and cater for all aspects of the areas of learning. There is suitable differentiation included for children of different ages and/or abilities. There is ample flexibility in the planning to allow for children's spontaneous interests to be catered for.

Resources are wide ranging and well used to cover the six areas of learning. Children can self-select from craft activities, modelling with dough or junk, painting, dressing up and puzzles, counting games or role play and quickly settle to task. One child takes the role of lollipop lady and directs children on bikes, demonstrating that children have been learning about road safety. Children show good control of a range of bikes and trikes, and make good use of the outdoor play space, using the wide range of play equipment with enthusiasm and confidence. Plans reflect a number of opportunities for children to take part in activities that reflect the cultural and religious diversity of our wider world. However, resources that reflect positive images of disability are limited and this could affect perceptions of children in the setting.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by staff who demonstrate inclusive practice throughout their time in the pre-school. Children are exposed to some positive images of our diverse world, including books and displays that represent people of different culture and religions. There are displays that include different languages, exposing children to a number of different languages. The church's family minister also taught children how to say 'hello' and 'goodbye' in a number of different languages to introduce the bible story of the morning of inspection.

Detailed learning support plans for individual children demonstrate how carefully staff deal with children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff have taken written observations of all children and these are carefully evaluated to inform future planning so that children achieve their individual potential. The plans also include reference to preparing individual children for full time school, demonstrating the setting's commitment to preparing children for the next steps in their lives.

Children have opportunities to take part in fundraising events to help the local community and take part in Red Nose Day annually. Visits from the local community including the fire brigade and many parents from the setting also help to increase the children's awareness of their place in the local community. Children demonstrate good control of their own behaviour and staff rarely have to intervene in disputes between them. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Cards from parents of children who have left are universally praising of the preschool. Parents are very happy with the care that their children receive. Regular information evenings and informal discussions as well as a range of newsletters and letters home strengthen the relationships with parents and carers. End of term reports also help to inform parents of their child's progress. Parents are welcomed into the setting and most stop to have a chat with the staff who receive them warmly. Regular parents evenings and daily verbal catch up opportunities ensure that the relationship between staff and parents is a cooperative one that benefits the continuity of care for all children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting is managed well by an enthusiastic and competent manager who is constantly seeking to improve the experience of children in her care. Staff are all suitably qualified and experienced and children benefit from the warm and cooperative environment that they provide. A communications book and regular staff meetings underpin the effective exchange of information that benefits children in the setting and ensures that the staff work well as a strong team. The majority of procedural documentation is well managed, although the Complaints Log requires some improvement to ensure that any complaints made are not lost.

Leadership and management of Nursery Education is Outstanding. The new manager has already begun to adapt and improve existing systems in place to protect children and to help them achieve to the best of their ability. She has improved existing plans, building on the existing strengths of the setting to ensure that all children are catered for. The manager has a strong knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and is slowly introducing the new Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum to ensure that all staff are familiar with working within the as yet unfamiliar document. The manager, although new to the setting has an excellent working knowledge of the staff and the children in her care, ensuring that she can plan activities that cater to staff strengths but that help build on weaknesses in children's learning.

All required documentation is up to date and the manager is carefully improving existing systems, policies and procedures to ensure that they are up to date with current best practise guidelines. All necessary consents are in place for outings, photographs and medicines, demonstrating the setting's high regard for the requirements of their registration. Policy documents are in the process of being updated as the manager has identified weaknesses within the current prospectus, further demonstrating her commitment to providing the best possible outcomes for staff, parents and children.

Improvements since the last inspection

While no formal recommendations were made at the last inspection, the setting has taken a number of steps to ensure that any issues raised in the inspection report have been dealt with. The setting has created a detailed action plan that covers all issues raised and set a time scale for improvements to be made. The plan is evidence based and all successes have been clearly evaluated.

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.

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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):

- consider improving the Complaints Record to ensure that all records are kept together

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 increasing the range of resources that demonstrate positive attitudes towards people who have a disability to increase children's understanding of the diversity of our world

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