

# St. Sebastians Nursery Class

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	307185
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 September 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Zoe Smith
<b>Setting Address</b>	United Reformed Church, Hollins Lane, Marple Bridge, Stockport, Cheshire, SK6 5BB
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 427 8208
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	St Sebastians 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 Sebastian's Pre-school Nursery has been registered since 1992. It is based at St Sebastian's Church Hall in the Marple Bridge district of Stockport. The group is open from 09.00 to 11.45 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and from 09.00 to 12.45 on Tuesday and Thursday during school term times. The group have use of a large hall, kitchen and toilet facilities.

The group is registered to provide sessional day care for a maximum of 24 children aged between two and five years. Nursery education is provided for three and four year olds. There are currently 19 children on roll of whom 11 are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The group is able to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group is committee run. An appropriately qualified person is employed to manage the group on a day to day basis. The manager is assisted by a team of eight staff, most of whom hold recognised childcare qualifications. The nursery works closely with an early years development worker to enable them to develop the quality of the care and education provided.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children join in a good range of physical play activities and are finding out that physical activity is fun and good for their health. They exert lots of energy stretching, jumping, marching and dancing to music, they also skilfully walk round the room on stilts. They competently use tools, such as toy drills, screwdrivers, scissors, brushes and spreaders as they play. These activities promote the children's development of hand to eye co-ordination, gross and fine motor skills.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean environment. Effective hygiene practices and routines are implemented to protect children from illness. Children wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. All members of staff have current training in food hygiene and administering first aid. The necessary permissions and records are in place regarding the administering of medication and accidents to children. Regular visits and talks from the dentist are helping children to learn how to look after their teeth.

Children enjoy a healthy and nutritious snack which includes fresh and dried fruit. Parents provide packed lunches following the group's healthy eating guidelines. Fresh drinking water is readily available to quench children's thirst and keep them hydrated. Children participate in activities and discussions that reinforce the benefits of healthy eating. They enjoy sorting pictures of food and putting them in the healthy and good food box or the not so healthy and bad food box.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and well maintained environment. Displays, educational posters and examples of the children's creativity are displayed on room dividers. This helps to make the room more welcoming and child-friendly. Risk assessments and daily safety checks are conducted and effective safety precautions put in place to minimise identified risks. The premises are kept secure and plug socket covers are provided. Effective fire precautions and procedures are in place. Fire detection and fighting equipment is provided, regularly checked and appropriately maintained. Regular fire drills are conducted to ensure children and staff are proficient in emergency evacuation procedures.

The safety and protection of children is of utmost importance to staff, they are well deployed and diligently supervise the children at all times. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe through stories, discussions and activities. The road safety officer regularly visits to talk and read to the children who enjoy dressing up in crossing patrol outfits and practising how to cross the road safely. Children choose what to play with from a good range of resources that are appropriate for their age and stage of development. Parents regularly take part in fund raising activities to raise money to enable the group to replace and purchase new resources. Children are protected because staff are well trained in and have a good understanding of safeguarding children procedures and their responsibilities.

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

The provision is good.

Children explore a wide variety of age appropriate activities, toys and equipment, which are designed to be enjoyable and interesting. They have lots of opportunities to develop their imaginations through make believe and pretend play. They make good use of the role play area and have great fun building with very large cardboard boxes and sitting in them pretending they are trucks, trains and houses. Children enjoy manoeuvring the toy trucks and cars round the room and to and from each other as they take them on pretend journeys. Positive adult and child interactions are encouraging children to become skilful communicators. Children love looking at books and listening to stories, joining in action rhymes and singing sessions. These activities are helping them to listen, respond to language and build their vocabulary.

Children have planned opportunities to explore a range of sensory, messy and creative activities, such as sand, paint, water and dough. They enjoy sponge painting and carefully painting their hands with paint and then taking prints of them. They savour the touch and feel of the paint as they squeeze and squelch it through their fingers. Children enjoy helping to wash up the plates and cups from snack time, they carefully use the sponge to make sure the crockery is spotlessly clean. However, children are not always able to freely access a variety of these activities during a session. Children enjoy building with construction toys and completing jigsaws and inset puzzles, carefully matching and manipulating pieces into place.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children's learning is extremely well supported and promoted by the staff team who have an excellent knowledge of the individual abilities of children. Planning and assessments consistently identify the next steps in children's learning and therefore if a child finds an activity too simple it is adapted to make it more interesting and challenging. A broad range of interesting, challenging and enjoyable activities are provided that cover the six areas of learning. Children receive lots of individual attention and skilful questioning techniques effectively support and help them to consolidate their learning.

Children are happy in the friendly and calm learning environment. They have positive relationships with each other and staff. Children are becoming increasingly independent as they attend to their own personal care and put on their own coats in readiness to for home time. However, at most snack times their drink and snack is prepared and served by a member of staff. Therefore opportunities are missed for children to develop new self-help skills and independence. Children sit quietly, concentrate and listen intently at group singing, story and discussion times.

Children's spoken language is developing well. They are becoming increasingly articulate and confident speakers, and initiate conversations and negotiate with each other. Children are learning that print carries meaning and are beginning to develop early writing skills. They make good use of the role play and writing area to make marks and practise their early writing skills. Children find their own name label when they arrive in the morning and before snack time. They enjoy writing letters at the writing area, putting them in envelopes and posting them or taking them home, they also make menus to use in the role play corner, make lists and write down each others orders.

Children are actively encouraged to develop a good awareness of number and to enjoy counting and calculating. They eagerly use tape measures to measure each other and see how tall they

are. Children then record their height on a wall chart, cut a piece of string that is the same length as they are and compare the different sizes of string to see who is tallest. They are beginning to use a range of mathematical language to describe shape, size, position and quantity. Children talk about the different sizes of the boxes and then count how many big boxes they have. Children have opportunities to use and recognise numerals in everyday situations; books and number posters are displayed for them to see and use to support their learning.

Children competently use a good variety of information technology resources and electronic toys in their play, including calculators, a computer, weighing scales and cameras. They follow simple instructions and skilfully control the mouse as they play educational games on the computer. Children watch and experiment to see what happens when white flowers are put in different coloured water. They design and build houses with lots of floors using brightly coloured bricks.

Children play imaginatively in the role play corner and express themselves using a variety of media, such as construction toys, shapes, creative materials and musical instruments. They enthusiastically join in the group singing sessions and play musical instruments. They talk about the different types of rhythm they are making as they take it in turns to beat the drum. Children have opportunities to explore what colours are made when they mix different colours of paint together.

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

The provision is good.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They have access to a range of resources that provide positive images of diversity, such as books, jigsaws and imaginative play equipment. Children participate in activities that help them learn about their own and the customs, religious and cultural beliefs of others. They enjoy tasting food, learning words and listening to music from different countries and cultures. These activities are helping children to learn about the wider world and to respect and value differences. Staff have been extremely pro-active in attending a range of training courses to enable them to welcome and meet the additional needs of children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Staff skilfully support and encourage children to play fairly, share and take turns. Children respond to the frequent and meaningful praise they receive and behave well. Activities, discussions and stories are used to help children learn about emotions, to share and choices and the consequences. Children look after each other, they explain to younger children when it is time for snack, take them by the hand to show them what to do and where to sit. Children are learning to care for others who are less fortunate than themselves. They took part in a sponsored toddle to raise money for a children's charity.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are made to feel very welcome at the group. They are spoken to in a professional and friendly manner by staff. Parents speak very highly about the group, staff, the support and care children receive and the good progress their children are making. Committee meetings, newsletters and daily discussions keep parents up to date about events at the group and their child's day. Children's developmental records and workbooks are regularly shared with parents and are used to effectively monitor children's progress towards the early learning goals. Positive steps are taken to ensure parents are kept well informed about all relevant policies and procedures.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and content in the calm, friendly and well organised environment. Most children are settled and happy, those who are unsettled at the start of term are well supported by staff and quickly become interested in their play. The key worker system is effective in enabling staff to get to know individual children well and to monitor their development. High priority is given to staff training and development. Most staff hold an appropriate early years childcare qualification and four are currently undertaking a degree in Early Childhood Studies. Regular attendance on short courses enables staff to continually enhance their skills in specific subjects, such as safeguarding children, managing inclusion and behaviour management.

The leadership and management is good, the committee, manager and staff work extremely well together to continually develop the care and education provided. They hold regular planning meetings and daily discussions to ensure every session is well planned and captivates the interest of the children. All required records and documentation are in place, they are clear, well maintained and retained for inspection. Well written and clear policies and procedures have been formalised to underpin staff practice and the care provided. Effective induction, recruitment and selection procedures are in place to ensure staff are appropriately vetted and their suitability assessed.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection three recommendations were agreed to improve the quality of care. Staff are now effectively deployed to support children and ensure they have balanced opportunities for independent play and creativity. An appropriate medication policy and procedures have been formalised to promote the children's health if medication is administered. Daily safety checks are now conducted to ensure that hazards are minimised and full details of practise drills are recorded in the fire log book.

At the last nursery education inspection two issues for action were agreed. Planning systems and the methods for charting children's progress have been evaluated and are now linked to the stepping stones, effectively chart children's progress and identify the next steps in their learning. The availability and opportunities for children to develop their large physical skills and to use a range of large resources has been increased.

## **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

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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):

- increase opportunities for children to freely access and play with messy and creative play materials (also applies to nursery education).

#### **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):

- increase opportunities for children to develop self help skills and their independence.

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)