

St Catherine's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Caroline Hearn

Setting address St Catherine's Pre-School, Wittenham Avenue, Tilehurst,
Reading, Berkshire, RG31 5LN
Telephone number 07745 909 348
Email clarky140804@btinternet.com
Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

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Description of the setting

St Catherine's Pre-School opened in 1966. It operates from the St Catherine's Church Hall in the village of Tilehurst near Reading. The pre-school has access to one room and a fully enclosed outdoor area. The pre-school serves a wide geographical area. They are a committee run group and are open to all families within the local community. The nursery is readily accessible and supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register to care for 26 children aged from two to the end of the early years age group. There are currently 37 children on roll aged between two and four years. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9.15am to 11.45am Monday to Friday. They also offer a lunch club for children aged over three years on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 11.45am to 12.45am. This lunch session is dependant on the pre-school having sufficient uptake. Of the seven staff members who work with the children, five hold early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children clearly enjoy the time they spend at this pre-school and develop close trusting relationships with the adults and other children present. They undertake a wide range of activities that well promote all aspects of their learning. The staff team constantly reflect on their practice, making adjustments to ensure they continue to provide all children with a level of care that best meets their individual needs. This results in all children making sound progress in their learning and development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- consider developing a whole staff approach to letter formation
- ensure that when children receive education and care in more than one setting, practitioners promote continuity and coherence by sharing relevant information with each other

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The staff and committee work closely to ensure safeguarding is well promoted across all areas. All staff understand their duty to safeguard children and the process for making child protection referrals. Risk assessments are undertaken on all areas used by the children and staff diligently make ongoing assessments, moving trip hazards such as toys left in walkways by the children. A full range of

relevant policies and all required documentation support the daily management of the pre-school. As a result of all these actions, their safeguarding processes are highly effective.

The pre-school makes good use of the self-evaluation process, reflecting on how they can develop their practice. They reflect on areas such as how well the children are using the room, resources and any changes they could make to enhance this. This ensures they make the best use of the learning environment. Awareness of issues of equality and diversity underpin everyday practice; staff get to know each child very well and understand how to meet their differing needs and promote fully inclusive practice.

The nursery has developed strong partnerships with parents. They conducted a survey to gain parents' views then used this to develop their practice, such as introducing a more formal parents meeting where parents can discuss their children's progress. They have very good support systems in place to ensure parents and carers are aware of their children's development; this is especially evident in their joint working with looked after children. They have not, however, been as successful in developing links with other early years setting children may attend. Children have access to a wide range of resources both inside and out. Staff regularly rotate the selections on offer to ensure children are provided with sufficient challenge and variety.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Staff use their secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage to provide interesting activities that centre on children's interests and capabilities. Consequently, children enjoy learning through play, exploring materials freely and making their own decisions about what to do. They work well independently because staff set up the playroom to help them do so; they find their own aprons when painting, for example, knowing where to put their creations when they have finished. They behave well because they enjoy themselves and know what staff expect from them. Good relationships help this. Staff intervene quickly when minor disagreements arise. Children clearly trust the staff and feel safe in the pre-school.

Children benefit from a broad range of activities that cover all six areas of learning daily. They have free access to the outdoor play space throughout the session and this space is well used by the children. The children show good independence skills, knowing they have to put their coats on before going out to play. Children are offered a wide range of opportunities to develop their early writing skills. The pre-school does not have a whole staff approach to letter formation, however, which means the children do not have a consistent model to follow when learning to write their name. Children's progress is clearly charted in their 'Look What I Can Do' books and staff make good use of these as a starting point for future planning. Staff use their good knowledge of the children to highlight when a child's progress is delayed and make appropriate referrals to other professionals, such as speech therapists. This ensures children get additional support quickly, reducing any minor achievement gap.

The pre-school promotes inclusive practice and supports the children to learn about the cultures and beliefs of others. Children have, for example, learned about Diwali and Chinese New Year. When they have children with a different cultural background, they also encourage parents to come in and talk about their beliefs and any differences such as food or celebrations. This type of activity well supports the children to learn about the beliefs and cultures of others. Children understand how to promote their own safety. Staff give them good opportunities to develop these skills, for example, children use items such as scissors and fruit knives independently with care.

To help them promote their personal hygiene skills, children are encouraged to wash their hands before snack and after outside play. They are also developing a sound understanding of being healthy and know it is good to go outside to play and have fruit for snack. Children make good, all year round use of the outdoor area.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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