

# St Philip's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY359988
<b>Inspection date</b>	14 July 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Jayne Utting
<b>Setting Address</b>	St Philip Neri Playgroup, The Cottage, Ellison Road, GATESHEAD, Tyne and Wear, NE8 2QU
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<b>Registered person</b>	St Philip's Pre School Committee
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day 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 Philip's Pre-School is committee-run and is based in the Dunstan Hill area of Gateshead. It operates from a single-storey detached cottage situated in the grounds of St Philip Neri Primary School. The children have access to their own enclosed garden as well as use of the school yard. The group are registered for 16 children aged from three to under eight years. They currently have 25 children on roll, 22 of whom receive nursery education funding. Playgroup sessions run from 09.00 to 11.30 and 13.00 to 15.30. A wrap-around lunch club is provided from 11.30 to 13.00 term time only. There are currently four members of staff employed to work with the children, all of whom hold or are working towards a recognised early years qualification.

### THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

#### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Outdoor play is a central part of the daily routine for all children and a good variety of physical activities are provided for all children. This helps to promote and enhance their physical

development. For example, children thoroughly enjoy practising the egg and spoon, sack and running races in preparation for their forthcoming sports day. Children understand the benefits they obtain from frequent access to fresh air and regular exercise to support their physical development. This is demonstrated through children's conversations with each other, when they talk about how doing their exercises is making them fit and how big their muscles are. Children are encouraged to make full use of the resources and activities provided and to test their capabilities within a safe and very supportive environment. Staff also provide a balance between busy and quiet times for the children and organise space so that children are able to access a quiet reading area where they can relax away from the main activity room.

The pre-school's commitment to helping children develop a healthy lifestyle is continued in its promotion of healthy eating as they offer the children a variety of fruit at snack time and link this into topics through the term, such as the creation of a fruit and vegetable stall in the home corner. This is further reinforced through discussion with the children at lunchtime about which foods in their packed lunches are good for them. In play children talk about the importance of eating fruit and vegetables to give them lots of energy, showing they are beginning to make the connection between diet and good health. Staff and parents discuss any specific dietary requirements a child may have whether for religious, cultural or medical reasons and the relevant information is recorded. Children have free access to water throughout their time at pre-school and are offered water or milk to drink at snack time. They understand the importance of remaining hydrated so they do not wilt like their sunflowers did in the hot weather. The children are encouraged to sit together during snack time, providing an excellent opportunity for them to gain good social and learning opportunities.

Most staff hold a valid first aid certificate, which helps safeguard children's welfare. Good hygiene standards are maintained by staff, who hold relevant qualifications and have a clear understanding of related policies and procedures, which are well implemented. For example, staff ensure that all surfaces are wiped down with anti-bacterial spray prior to the children sitting down to eat their lunch. This helps maintain a healthy environment for the children. Children further gain a good understanding of hygiene through the consistent adult support and guidance they receive and they are becoming increasingly independent in their personal care. For example, they wash their hands before snack time, after messy play and after using the toilet, prompting each other to ensure this is done. A clear written policy regarding sick children and the effective recording of all accidents and emergency contacts further promote children's health and well-being, positively safeguarding children.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where they are supervised closely by staff at all times. This enables children to move freely and independently, protecting them from injury or accidents. Many effective safety measures have been taken internally, with sockets protected by covers and smoke alarms and table corner protectors in place. Staff are vigilant regarding safety and effectively implement procedures to minimise risks. For example, there is a detailed risk assessment in place which is reinforced through the daily completion of a safety assessment record of the facilities and resources, this being undertaken prior to the children's arrival. Electrical and fire safety equipment is regularly checked by the school and kept in a safe condition. The outdoor area is well planned and, as a result, is safe and secure for children to play in. Participation in regular fire drills helps to raise the children's awareness of how to stay safe in emergencies.

Children are also encouraged to be aware of safety both in and outside the setting through daily routines and staff guidance. For example, children are encouraged to think about how they might behave in different situations, thereby enabling them to begin to take responsibility for their own safety and well-being and that of their classmates. Children learn other ways to stay safe through reference to effective group procedures which the staff consistently reinforce. These include reminding children to walk indoors.

There are effective security systems for entry into the building and both the arrival and collection of the children is well planned. There is an up to date record in place of persons with permission to collect children and parents let staff know if there is someone different collecting the children. Visitors are required to sign in and out of the group, with staff ensuring they have no unsupervised access to children. This helps keep children safe.

A sound understanding of the group's comprehensive outings policy ensures children are well protected on excursions. The policy details effective safety procedures including the completion of a detailed risk assessment prior to the trip, maintaining ratios, carrying a mobile phone and contact details, as well as taking other appropriate equipment including drinks, snacks and sun creams.

Children have access to a wide range of resources that are well organised, allowing them safe and independent access. Toys are in a good condition and remain this way through routine checks by staff for breakages or any other problems. All staff show a good awareness of child protection issues. There is a comprehensive child protection policy in place and children are well protected by staff who are confident and secure in their knowledge of these procedures.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the environment. They know the routine well, enter the group confidently and leave parents easily. Staff build very good relationships with the children. They provide a very welcoming, stimulating and inclusive environment where all children are acknowledged and respected as individuals. Children interact with staff in a relaxed and warm manner and they build good relationships with their peers. All children have easy access to a range of resources, and well planned meaningful activities support and enhance their learning and development. For example, children enjoy making cakes and volcanoes out of play dough, talking to one another about their creations. Other children choose to construct a railway line, or to play in the sand burying monster spades ready to jump up and say 'boo'. All staff working with children under three years show a good awareness of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Children are well supported and benefit greatly from the good quality interaction with staff. Staff are well motivated and have a comprehensive knowledge of childcare and development. This has a positive impact on children's learning and achievements and children are confident, with high self-esteem.

The playroom is set out effectively to promote children's independence and staff rotate resources to ensure a good variety of opportunities are provided.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. There is a good system in place for planning and assessment, appropriately linked to the stepping stones and developed in line with the principles of the Foundation Stage. Key workers regularly monitor and observe children as they participate

in activities and use this to inform future activities, ensuring they are sensitive to the differing needs of each child. Staff work well together as a team to create a welcoming and stimulating environment that offers many good learning opportunities. Good individual support and encouragement are given to children to be independent and to talk about their experiences. The manager has begun to evaluate activities and is in the process of implementing a formal system for recording this to show how this influences ongoing planning.

The children are progressing well. They listen carefully, use good concentration skills and enjoy the freedom to make choices in their play. Children are keen to learn, engage in play well and are eager to try new experiences, showing confidence as they approach adults to ask questions and share information. They know and follow the routines of the day, respond well to adults and their behaviour is good. Children show developing independence and help to serve drinks and snacks to their friends as well as putting on their own coats at home time.

Children are beginning to show an interest in written words, with many recognising their own name as they choose their peg tag as they enter pre-school. There are ample opportunities for children to develop their writing skills both indoors and out; children making good use of the giant white board outside to practise their letters. Children are confident speakers and express their feelings, ideas and needs most readily. Children thoroughly enjoy listening to books and these skills are developing well. For example, they pay close attention as their favourite books are read to them, following the story and answering questions about it correctly. Whilst children take a real interest in the books available, these are currently kept in a box and, as a result, are not readily accessible to them. There is limited use made of labelling, which impacts on children's developing ability to recognise numbers and letters.

Children are encouraged to count in meaningful ways, such as counting how many children there are in pre-school that day or how many sacks they need for their sports day practice. Children have opportunities to bake and through this are introduced to some more complex concepts, such as weight and measure.

Children happily talk about themselves and events in their lives and develop a sense of time through the clear routines they follow each day. They learn about living things in well planned activities. For example, they care for the sunflowers they have planted outside, ensuring they receive enough water to keep them 'growing tall'. A recent topic on the seaside has given the children an opportunity to learn about life under the sea. Their interest table contains lots of artefacts from the beach including sandcastles and shells, the children taking great delight in picking up shells and trying to listen for the sounds of the sea. Children develop a sense of the wider world as they learn about aspects of other countries as part of a topic on travel.

Children are developing balancing skills as they walk with quoits on their heads and practise the egg and spoon race ready for their sports day. They also love to run around the large grassy outdoor area and climb on the large climbing apparatus and slide. There are opportunities for children to freely express their creativity during a variety of art and craft activities including paint, collage, sand, model making, dough and music. Children are well supported and appropriately challenged.

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

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the staff's positive attitude towards equal opportunities and respecting individual and differing needs, as they lead by example using appropriate role modelling as a

tool to help children celebrate diversity and develop a positive view of the wider world. There are opportunities for children to learn about the world around them through a number of planned activities and play materials. For example, children have been learning about other countries as part of a recent topic on travel and they link with the school to celebrate festivals from different cultures including Chinese New Year. Whilst this is complemented by some resources that reflect images of ethnicity, disability and other cultures, the range of items available is limited. The manager has identified this as an area for ongoing development. There is a comprehensive equal opportunities policy in place and children are cared for as individuals whose similarities and differences are acknowledged and celebrated.

Children benefit from the pre-school's close links with the local community, which helps to develop their awareness of the local environment. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff are calm, competent and good role models. They sensitively support, praise and encourage all children, promoting their self-esteem, confidence and sense of belonging. Children are polite, well behaved and enthusiastic to take part in all aspects of pre-school life. Children listen to and respect staff, and appropriate supervision ensures that all children are beginning to learn right from wrong and how to share and be kind to one another. Good behaviour is reinforced through praise, and positive age-appropriate methods of behaviour management are used when necessary.

The pre-school is proactive in working with children with learning difficulties and disabilities and, as a result, all children are well supported and fully included in the setting. Key staff take responsibility, offer one-to-one care where necessary and have completed relevant training. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the needs of individual children and are committed to working with parents and relevant outside agencies so that specific care and education is provided for all children.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff clearly recognise the importance of working closely with parents to ensure that children's needs are well met. Parents receive good quality, comprehensive written information about the setting and their policies and procedures, as well as other relevant literature such as activity plans, information about the Foundation Stage and areas of learning. The registration and insurance certificates are both clearly displayed. Parents have access to their child's records, which include detailed information about their developmental progress. All parents receive regular verbal feedback from the staff at the end of each session as well as a detailed report on their child's progress at the end of the academic year. Parents are actively encouraged to keep staff informed of any important information that may impact on the care or progress of their child. This enables staff to work in partnership with parents and ensures that children's needs are best met. Several parents will be enrolling siblings of existing children; a reflection of their confidence in the level of service provided by the setting, its staff and management.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

All staff take a professional approach to their work; this is reflected in all areas of the pre-school including the well-organised room layouts, the effective safety measures taken and the exciting range of activities and opportunities available to the children. Well-defined daily routines combined with good staff to child ratios help children to settle well and feel secure.

A comprehensive, detailed range of policies and procedures, including child protection, behaviour management and equal opportunities, is used to inform practice and protect the welfare of children who attend. The pre-school has in place effective recording systems for medication administration and accidents and these are kept up to date and stored confidentially. All staff are subject to appropriate recruitment, vetting and induction procedures. This ensures that they are aware of their roles and responsibilities, and confirms their suitability to work with children.

Leadership and management are good. The pre-school and their committee work hand in hand, share the same vision and are totally committed to the children in their care. This is reflected in the effective and enthusiastic management of the setting. Regular meetings offer staff opportunities to discuss training needs as well as any issues concerning children for whom they are the key worker. All staff work well together and day-to-day management is good. The pre-school manager has worked closely with the reception teacher and committee to ensure that the educational planning and assessment systems are effective and aim to meet the individual needs of the children. Committed to improvement, the committee works closely with the manager to identify areas for further development and strategies to improve these. This is detailed in an annual development plan for the setting. A high priority is given to ongoing personal development and staff are well supported and given clear direction through meetings, regular staff consultations and the open-door style of management used. All staff are committed to the ongoing improvement of the setting and are well motivated, ensuring that the care of the children and the service delivered is of high quality.

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

#### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

#### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since registration 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):

- further develop the provision of resources to reflect non-stereotypical roles, racial and cultural diversity and positive images of disability

### **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):

- organise books so they are well presented, thereby encouraging children to access them independently (also applies to care)
- develop the labelling of resources to further facilitate word and letter recognition and children's ability to self-select (also applies to care).

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)