

St Georges Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY252842
Inspection date	20 March 2008
Inspector	Jenny Read
Setting Address	Elm Lane Pavilion, Elm Lane, London, SE6 4LB
Telephone number	07759 147 629
E-mail	
Registered person	St Georges 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. Georges Pre-School was founded in 1967 and moved to its current premises in 2003. It operates from the first floor of a community pavilion and has use of the surrounding enclosed playing fields. A maximum of 24 children may attend the Pre-School at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09:30 to 13:30 during school terms.

There are currently 38 children from two years to under five years on roll. Of these, 21 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions and most come from the local area. The setting supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs seven staff members. Of these, two staff, including the play leader hold qualifications to level 3 and two staff to level 2. There are three staff currently working towards a qualification. A cook is also employed. The pre-school receives support from the Local Authority and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing a good understanding of healthy living because the staff encourage the children to make healthy choices and develop independence. For example, the children go up to the serving table at lunch time and choose what they wish to eat and carry it back to their table. When they have finished eating they take it in turns to empty their plates and place dirty items in the washing up bowl. However, they do not help to count the cups and plates or lay the table to extend their learning during daily routines. Three staff, including the cook have attended a Basic Food Hygiene course, ensuring they have up-to-date knowledge of the food standards required.

Children enjoy ample quantities of the wholesome, nutritious, home-cooked meals, going up for more food if they wish. Staff know the children well, providing alternatives to cater for specific dietary requirements and offering the snack very early on in the session as a number of children do not have breakfast and express they are hungry to staff. The children are very well hydrated because they readily access the drinks station and have plenty to drink during meal times. Children talk about the foods they are eating at the table with staff and the planning shows discussion about how milk helps them to grow.

Children are developing independence in their personal care, for example, helping themselves to tissues to blow their nose. They know hand washing routines, using the step to reach the liquid soap and taps and access the paper towels to dry their hands, placing these straight in the bin. However, a staff member is always on hand to offer support if needed and to monitor children's use of the water. In addition, bowls of soapy water are used for hand washing at the cooking activity, painting easel and other messy play activities. Good questioning and sensitive reminders from staff is helping reinforce children's awareness of the importance of hand washing to minimise the spreading of germs.

Staff maintain good standards of cleanliness throughout the room, regularly sweeping and mopping the floors and wiping the tables. There are good nappy changing procedures in place that staff implement well. They wear aprons and disposable gloves and clean the changing mat after each child to minimise cross infection. Children are well protected from infections and diseases because staff implement the clear health and safety policy successfully. For example, the play leader was notified of a suspected case of measles. She read the policy, notified the committee to inform Ofsted in line with the regulations, displayed a sign informing parents, sought additional advice on the disease and printed this out to give to each parent so that they were well informed.

Children's health care needs are generally well met because most staff have completed first aid training, have sought additional advice and training on administering specialised medication and show good awareness of individual children's medical needs. Staff seek written permission most of the time prior to administering any medicines and record clearly any accidents or medication administered. However, written consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is not in place to ensure children receive appropriate treatment and care in emergencies. The first aid box is complete, but contents are not regularly checked to ensure they are in date and sterile.

Children benefit from daily fresh air during fine weather, enjoying free-flowing indoor and outdoor play on the balcony. However, this area is not accessible during the winter months

because the driving rain and wind through the mesh disrupts the children's play and makes the area too wet and cold for the children to play. The children enjoy regular exercise on the grass, taking part in a selection of planned outdoor activities that encourage co-ordination, control and balance. For example, they try to roll hoops to each other and learn to kick, throw and catch balls with increasing skill. Photographs show children tentatively balancing and walking on stilts, using ropes to skip and using tools to plant and grow flowers in pots. Children enjoy music and movement sessions in the room during the winter months, eagerly wriggling their bodies, shaking their arms and making different faces and sounds as they learn to use their body in different ways.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have ample space to move freely. Staff place good emphasis on making sure the environment is inviting and ready for the children on arrival, setting out the tables and activities and decorating the room with hanging mobiles of shapes, numbers and words to depict the different areas of learning each day. Although, there is no area for children to explore programmable toys and investigate technology. In addition, there are no regulators on the radiators and although staff recognise the risk and put tables and benches in front of some of them, the risk is still present that children may burn their hands because they are very hot to touch.

Displays around the room show examples of children's work to value their achievements and show the children what the different areas can be used for. Although the current outdoor spaces are not ideal, children utilise them as best they can to support their development. The setting has been successful in obtaining a grant and work is due to commence on developing a specific area for children to climb safely, an area to ride bikes and trikes and an area for planting and free play.

Children play with a plentiful range of stimulating toys and equipment. These are clean and in good condition because children inform adults if a toy is broken, helping them learn to take responsibility and care for other people's belongings. The children develop good independence as they access recyclable media, maths resources, construction sets, water toys and writing tools and implements freely for themselves. These are stored in numerous low-level open units in the designated areas.

Children's safety and security is given suitable priority. Daily safety checks of the play areas and bathroom and adequate risk assessments ensure most hazards to children are successfully minimised. Staff are vigilant and supervise the children closely both indoors and out and monitor the entrance rigorously to safeguard the children. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe through good questioning, clear explanations and regular discussion about the rules for safe play, such as, staff asking them before they go outside 'what do we not do?' and 'what are the rules?' Fire procedures are very clearly displayed and are well understood by parents. Attendance records show clearly children's times of arrival and departure but do not indicate when staff are present to show clearly who is present at any one time in the event of a fire or child protection concern.

The children are generally well protected from abuse and neglect because staff have experience of working closely with Social Workers and attending child protection conferences and strategy meetings. Most staff have attended child protection training and through discussion demonstrate sound awareness of the signs and indicators and the importance of recording and reporting

any concerns. However, the play leader is not clear on the up-to-date referral procedures and indicates she will refer immediately to the settings' child protection policy for guidance. Although this clearly outlines how to record any concerns, the policy is confusing and not very clear about where to report them.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a broad range of stimulating and interesting activities, which staff set out for the children each day. These include play dough, shaving foam, spaghetti and paint mixing, providing many experiences that heighten children's senses and imagination. Children readily make choices in their play, go straight off to play on arrival and have fun accessing a range of toys and play materials for themselves. For example, extending their play in the home corner as they find objects to wrap up a member of staff pretending to be ill and get books to read a bedtime story, using the resources and their imagination creatively. In addition, staff occasionally leave tables blank to enable the children to plan parts of their play. This encourages the children's ideas and creativity.

Staff demonstrate a sound knowledge of the Birth to three matters, covering all aspects and outlining what the focus of play and learning is for the younger children through colour coding the main planning sheet. This notifies all staff and shows clear differentiation. Staff are skilled in supporting and extending children's play, confidently encouraging their play ideas and promoting autonomy. For example, children respond well to staff's very good questioning and effectively challenge their thinking while they play with glitter in the water. For instance, 'how can we get the glitter off our hands?', 'I catch it', child announces, 'how can you catch them?' staff ask, 'nets' children reply, in which the member of staff promptly finds small nets, sieves and tea strainers for the children to experiment catching the glitter in the water. Children confidently go to staff, ask for help and readily invite them to join in their play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is good. Children are making sound progress because staff demonstrate a clear knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and provide effective challenge through useful questioning and appropriate support to aid children's learning and achievements. In addition, they use a range of teaching styles that motivate and interest the children, such as Jolly Phonics, displays and a variety of print examples.

Staff have very clear understanding of intended learning for the activities to guide individual children appropriately, clearly differentiating for children with learning difficulties, children that are older or more able and those who speak English as an additional language. For example, encouraging children that are more able to count independently and those that require more support to use their fingers to aid counting. Staff have good expectations regarding children's potential and although observations are not completed routinely and their assessments records do not link to planning and are not up-to-date due to several months of staff upheaval and absence, staff know individual children generally well. They discuss daily the activities, what they wish the children to gain, questions to ask and how they will be deployed to provide effective support.

Staff plan a wealth of innovative activities based upon a topic, such as growing, that cover the six areas of learning. Although children seldom contribute to the planning of topics or discuss what they would like to learn from these, children readily make choices in their play. Staff set

out many resources for the children to select and are confident to allow the children to organise and develop their play independently. For example, staff set out the shop with a wide variety of equipment, including the wooden shop front, tills, food, writing materials, trolleys and toy money. The children played co-operatively, choosing their role and talking with each other about how their play can be developed using their own first hand experiences successfully. They had fun writing shopping lists, sounding letters and asking how to spell the words, matching and counting food then using dressing up clothes to extend their roles further.

Children show pride in their achievements and readily show adults their masks. Staff nurture children's emotional well-being and help them to feel special, for example, by singing happy birthday and talking about their special day. Staff sensitively support children when settling, joining in their play, modelling language and introducing them to other children. This is helping the new children to make attachments with other members of the group. As a result, children are forging good relationships, mostly playing co-operatively together and are sensitive to the needs, views and feelings of others. For example, a child informs their peer, 'that's not very kind' when a derogatory sound was made.

Children are very independent in their personal care and enjoy many opportunities to make choices and be independent in their learning. For example, finding their name card each morning to post in the box and putting their aprons on. Children are confident speakers as shown at the design and making table where children readily talked through, reflected and modified what they were making with the recyclable materials. Although children enjoy looking at and sharing books on the comfortable cushions, some adult-led story sessions are not relevant to all children and do not engage them, meaning some lose interest and become restless.

The children have many opportunities to hear and say letters and letters sounds and to practise and develop their emergent writing skills both in adult-led and free-play activities. For example, magnetic letters, chalking, sand and dough assist the youngest children to develop hand and eye co-ordination and small muscle control. They occasionally write their names on their pictures and most children recognise and find the first letter of their name. Some children that are more able match the magnetic letters to those on my computer before finding the other letters for their name and placing them in the correct order.

Children are skilful in their use of number, measuring the length of their car against the ruler and confidently recognising and naming numerals in the environment. They are learning to use different forms of measurement, for example, using their hands to make a height chart, comparing and using mathematical language, such as how many?, tallest or shortest. Although, children miss opportunities to count for a purpose beyond 10 and to compare how many boys, girls and adults are present each day because the member of staff counts for the children, they have access to a broad and varied selection of mathematical resources that challenge and encourage their understanding and knowledge. Children use their growing awareness of shape, space and pattern to complete jigsaws and challenge their problem solving skills when helping themselves to more complicated puzzles with more pieces.

Children show interest and confidently use a range of everyday technology, explaining with clarity how if you press the tune button it will play the alphabet song, demonstrating a good understanding of how things work. Other information and communication technology is in place, such as the 'Bee Bot', digital camera and computer, however, these have rarely been available to the children over the last year, because batteries have not been replaced or they have been broken, limiting children's experiences and opportunities to develop their skills further.

Children explore their surroundings, showing interest as they use magnifying glasses to observe the bugs in the sawdust and bark from the trees. Staff are innovative in the media introduced to the children to extend their experiences. For example, children eagerly investigate the properties of soil and hay while playing with the farm animals and figures in the builders tray. They are inventive and use their imagination cleverly, accessing materials, such as tin foil to represent water for the cows and explain how they are using the hay to make 'a cosy bed for the animals'. The children show interest in different media and explore colour as they randomly mix colours on the painting easel.

Although children gain little awareness about the passing of time through talking about the day, date, month and weather each day, the planning indicates they have regular opportunities to learn about the life cycle of a caterpillar, to plant seeds and grow beans and to set up a baby clinic and talk about how they have grown as children.

Children have fun in the home corner and different role play areas, developing their play and learning in the hospital, tea shop and grocery shop through excellent resources and staff interaction. They enjoy making music, exploring the different instruments and the sounds they make. This enables the children to express and communicate their ideas and feeling in different ways, such as singing familiar songs and making up rhythms as they play their instruments and dance gaily around the room.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are generally well behaved because staff are consistent, give clear explanations at all times and recall the rules and boundaries regularly. This helps the children learn right and wrong and begin to manage their own behaviour. The use of pictorial reminders helps the younger children to learn daily routines and expectations and supports those who need more support to recall and feel a valued member of the pre-school. Children are polite and are beginning to use their good manners at the appropriate time, for example, thanking me for helping them to take off their mask. Most children are very confident and self-assured because staff take time to praise their achievements and encourage their good behaviour. As a result, children are very eager to help tidy away the toys and resources at the end of the session, each child having a role.

Children's individual needs are very well met because staff work very closely with parents and other professionals to provide effective support and a very inclusive environment. They use their vast experience to devise individual educational programmes in partnership with parents and agencies involved with the children to support practice, set up picture exchange communication boards and implement agreed speech and language techniques. In addition, staff undertake home visits at parent's request to gain a valuable insight into children's specific needs and attend relevant training to increase their knowledge and skills. For example, training on how to deal with an epileptic fit or to administer an Epi pen means staff can provide appropriate care and treatment for those children.

Children gain good awareness of the wider society and benefit from a broad range of activities and resources that help them value diversity. For example, they learn about their own cultures and those of their peers because staff plan topics and festivals that meet the very diverse cultural backgrounds of the children and staff at the setting. For example, they sing Jamaican songs, celebrate Hindu festivals and learn about different food from around the world. Children show interest in the world in which they live, as the planning shows they take part in regular

visits to the local shops, fire station, library and recycling centre. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children benefit from useful communication and close links forged between their parents and the staff. The parents have access to a number of notice board articles and folders displayed by the entrance, which provide them with good information about the pre-school provision. These include leaflets about local organisations that offer help for parents in the community and the pre-schools policies and procedures. Most of these contain sufficient detail and are signed by a number of parents to say they have read and understood. The prospectus provides adequate information about what the setting provides and describes the role of the parent.

Children are cared for according to parents wishes because most written permissions are in place and all records are shared appropriately. Parents feel the staff are an asset and are very happy with what the pre-school provides for their child, stating their children are very happy and really enjoy coming each day.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. They receive general information about the education provision and their children's progress. This is offered through displaying of the planning, coffee mornings, open evenings, yearly summary reports and informal discussion. This enables parents to share their children's profiles and discuss with staff their children's progress. Staff and management are currently working on up-dating children's profiles to ensure they show an accurate record of attainment now all the staff have returned. However, parents receive little information about the six areas of learning and how their children's on-going progress links to the stepping stones. This limits their understanding of the curriculum and how their children build on what they already know and can do.

Parents value the termly newsletters about what their child will be doing, stating this aids discussion and helps them to support their children's learning at home. They are happy and feel confident to speak with staff about how their children are doing or if they have any concerns about their progress. This enables parents to feel involved in their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. Children's learning is of a consistently good standard and they are making effective progress from their individual starting points because the education provision is monitored successfully. For example, staff arrive early to the setting to set out the room, which allows time for staff to discuss daily the activities, what the focus of learning is and to highlight specific support for individual children. The children are engaged and motivated to learn and have a wonderful time at the pre-school because the staff provide a wealth of innovative and creative activities that enhance and support their learning. As a result, there is a very happy atmosphere throughout.

The experienced and well-qualified staff are very committed and enthusiastic and use their vast experience and secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum to ensure the six areas of learning are given equal emphasis. The play leader is encouraging to the staff and utilises their strengths through effective deployment and designation of roles. Consequently, staff are long standing, work extremely well as a team and indicate they enjoy their job and feel well supported. The management team has a strong focus on personal development and regularly funds on-going training for staff.

The play leader has a clear vision for the future of the pre-school, which includes providing a safe, happy environment, to implement the plans for the new outside play area and ensure the delivery of the curriculum is successful and meets children's individual needs. She has a sound awareness of the settings strengths, such as staff's excellent interaction with the children and delivery of the curriculum and shows good understanding of the areas for improvement or areas they wish to develop to enhance their practice further. Staff meetings are used very effectively to address issues and review practice, such as agreeing children's assessment records need to be up-dated to show an accurate record of achievement to help inform the planning and parents.

Children benefit from the well-organised resources, which maximises their independence and learning. They are grouped appropriately most of the time and are building solid relationships with staff and their peers. The committee works hard to support the setting and is very effective at fund raising to increase the selection of play materials, tools and equipment to enhance children's experiences and learning opportunities. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Recruitment and vetting procedures are robust and well known to ensure new staff are suitable and have appropriate skills and knowledge to do their job. However, these are not included in the settings operational plan. Staff appraisals over the last few years have lapsed but the new management committee are beginning to review these with staff to ensure their continuing suitability. In addition, implementation of training tracking sheets, daily discussions and six weekly staff meetings ensure appropriate issues are highlighted. All the required records and documentation are in place and these are stored securely in individual compartments and named sections in a lockable filing cabinet. This allows staff to access necessary records and information readily and maintains confidentiality.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection recommended the provider reviewed nappy changing procedures, improved record keeping and fire safety awareness and up-dated policies for lost children, complaints and fire safety. The provider has made good progress in regards to promoting children's health, safety and welfare. Nappy changing routines are hygienic and well implemented, the policies are clearly written and displayed and regular practise of the escape plan ensures children, staff and parents learn appropriate action to take in the event of an emergency.

The last nursery education inspection recommended the provider encouraged children's self-help skills and independence during meal times, made writing and maths resources more accessible and created opportunities for children to count, estimate and calculate during everyday activities. Children's self-help skills and independence are actively promoted during all daily routines. They readily access writing implements throughout the different activities and freely choose from a selection of maths resources. They count during free play and some daily routines and have occasional opportunities during adult-led activities and through purposeful questioning to estimate and calculate.

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):

- take suitable action to regulate the temperature of the radiators and ensure appropriate steps are taken to prevent children's access
- request written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment and ensure contents of the first aid box are regularly checked and items replaced as necessary.

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 the availability of everyday technology to support children's learning
- develop the observation and assessment systems to ensure children's next steps link closely to the planning and provide further opportunities for children to contribute to the topics and activities.

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