

St Andrews Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Jill Milton
Setting address	Albert Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 7AW
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

St Andrews Pre-school was registered in 1989, although it has been running for over 40 years, and it is managed by a voluntary committee. The pre-school operates from rooms within St Andrews Church Hall, Caversham, Berkshire and there is access to an outdoor play area. The intake of children is from the local residential area. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 30 children under eight years may attend at any one time and there are currently 44 children on roll in the early years age range. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged three and four years. Support is provided to children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school opens during school term times on weekdays from 9.15am to 12.00 noon and one afternoon between 12.15pm and 2.45pm. The pre-school employs seven staff and over half have appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children receive excellent care and support during their time at pre-school. They are able to make great strides in their learning and development since the staff provide individual support, tailored to the children's unique abilities and stages. The staff demonstrate a high degree of professionalism and are extremely well organised in all aspects of the provision. There is a successful approach to continual improvement as staff reflect and adjust their practices over time. There are extremely good partnerships developing with parents and with other providers who care for the children. These consistently high standards promote excellent outcomes for the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- extending the range of snacks on offer each day to enable children to make healthy choices for themselves

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

An extremely capable and experienced team of staff runs the pre-school. There is a responsible approach to safeguarding children, with staff repeating training in the area of child protection. There are robust procedures in place with regard to recruitment and the committee work closely with staff to ensure careful and thorough checks are in place on adults working with the children. The staff are

diligent in their daily routines for checking areas where the children play and they record specific risk assessments as new situations arise to keep children safe. Where necessary, staff include parents in considering risk assessments, recognising that parents have unique insight into their child's abilities and needs.

The staff benefit from the empowering attitude of the manager who promotes a positive attitude with regard to solving problems and moving the group forward. The staff are continually searching out fresh ways of working and they make some excellent choices for new resources that delight the children. An impressive training record is in place and staff receive support and regular reviews of their professional development. The organisation of documentation is superb and fully supports staff in their day-to-day work with the children. Policies receive reviews and staff thoughtfully change procedures in light of new developments. The staff create a welcoming environment, with excellent use of storage space and rotation of a comprehensive range of resources. Helpful information cards at each activity remind staff, parents and students about the purpose of the activity in supporting children's learning.

Partnerships with parents and carers are outstanding. Families receive a great deal of encouragement to become involved in the pre-school and there is an excellent working partnership between staff and the committee. The standard of information staff provide for parents is superb, with a strong emphasis on sharing details about the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Staff value and respect the opinions of parents and families speak very highly of the care their children receive. Staff find ways for families to be included and they overcome potential problems, such as access to parts of the building or by addressing specific health needs, so that children can feel welcome and supported. Staff demonstrate an excellent attitude to working with other professionals on a number of levels, for example, making links with local schools the children will attend or supporting work placements for students in the local community.

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

Children are highly motivated to engage in the interesting daily activities. They are developing very good attitudes towards learning in a safe and caring environment. The staff provide excellent support to children's emotional development through reassurance and praise. Standards of behaviour are excellent, with children responding well to the guidance from staff. The children often play in sociable groups, for example, enjoying imaginative play with pirate ships and announcing to friends to 'set sail my hearties'. Staff are skilled at story telling and children relish the chance to retell those stories using props, to a group of friends. This brings benefits to language development and builds children's self-esteem as they speak and act out stories in front of others. Children are developing confidence at early writing and they frequently use materials in play to make marks. They enjoy experimenting with rhyme and develop creative movements to music. A robot song proves particularly popular and as the music slows a child explains to a friend that the 'our batteries are running low now'. Staff are very good at involving themselves in play situations and encouraging children's language by using

effective questions. Staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of the areas of learning and the EYFS framework. They plan a delightful range of daily activities that help to promote development in all areas. Planning shows very good levels of differentiation to allow for children's individual pace of learning and progress towards the early learning goals. Staff fully involve parents in all stages of record keeping, tracking the children's development and there are individual play plans in place for each child.

Children are developing an excellent awareness of the world around them, supported by topics and resources. Children celebrate a wide range of festivals and take an active role in the life of the church at special times like Christmas. There is a very good emphasis on learning through sensory play with objects made from different materials and early science and technology are very well supported. Stimulating play continues in the outdoor area, as children are keen to use the new child-sized traffic lights as they cycle around a roadway circuit. This helps them to learn about road safety as they queue up waiting for the green light. Children show a sensible and safe attitude as they park their bicycles in a line when it is time to go inside or when they move chairs around the hall. Outdoor play provides an excellent opportunity for children to be active and gain physical skills. They also use equipment indoors as they learn control and co-ordination through daily activities. Snack times are sociable and well organised so that children can talk in small groups. Staff maximise the use of practical situations like this to develop children's understanding of counting and number recognition. Children eat a healthy range of foods over time, though the choice offered each day is quite limited. Staff are meticulous in the attention they pay to children's health and they have excellent procedures in place with regard to hygiene.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met