

# St Peter And St Mary's Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Inspection date** 20/05/2010  
**Inspector** Deirdra Keating

**Setting address** St Mary's Community Centre, Silverdale Avenue,  
Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 1LS

**Telephone number** 07790 544043

**Email**

**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*.

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## **Description of the setting**

St Peter and St Mary's Pre-School was re-registered in 2000 and is managed by a voluntary church committee. The facility operates from St Mary's Community Centre and children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The Pre-school is in Stowmarket, Suffolk. It is open each weekday from 09.15 to 12.15 Monday to Friday during term-time.

The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 45 children aged from two to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The pre-school has a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are nine members of staff, eight of whom hold early years qualifications to at least Level 2. One member of staff has recently achieved an Early Years degree. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds. The pre-school has achieved a quality kite mark.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's welfare, learning and development are promoted well in the setting. Experienced and dedicated staff have detailed knowledge of each child's needs and provide a programme of activities that are responsive to children's abilities, starting points and capabilities. Children are very safe, secure and their welfare needs are met well. Significant progress has been made by staff to bring about improvements and make changes which greatly benefit the children. The partnerships with parents are a key strength and significant in making sure that the needs of the children are all met.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- develop opportunities to work in partnership with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure progression and continuity of care
- review the organisation of whole group activities including snack time to ensure every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children are expertly safeguarded by staff who fully understand the relevant procedures. These are clearly set out in comprehensive written policies, using

guidance from the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Children are cared for in a secure and safe environment where staff give children's ongoing safety the highest priority. They are cared for well by adults who have completed all necessary suitability checks, are well qualified in childcare and are high in number. Senior staff are long serving and the ongoing professional development of staff is fostered extremely well, resulting in forward thinking staff that can embrace and implement change and new ways of working.

Staff truly recognise the value of working in partnership with parents and carers, and provide many opportunities for parents to become involved in their children's learning. For example, there is a parent representative and a visual time table showing what each child has accomplished during the session. Learning journey booklets are shared actively with parents who are encouraged to add their comments. There are systems in place to gain the views of parents and use these to make changes to practice. These include feedback questionnaires and a suggestion box. In addition, the key worker system provides good opportunities for parents and carers to build trusting relationships with staff and consequently parents are relaxed and openly communicate with staff as they drop off and collect their children. In contrast, however, partnerships with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage are not yet established to ensure that they contribute to children's achievement and well-being. There are some links in place and transition activities between the school that most children will attend.

The manager and staff possess ambition and drive in securing continuous improvement. Monitoring systems are good, staff are a cohesive team and enthusiastically channel their efforts to improve outcomes for children. For example, the outdoor area has been funded and developed to provide an extension of the setting and is very well-used. In addition, other resources are good and the goals achieved in children's learning and development are attributable to the imaginative use of these. The environment is child centred, conducive to learning and well-cared for. Risk assessments are used well to ensure there are no hazards to children and security systems have been very well-thought through.

Children learn about the wider community through community fundraising events that help them understand different events, strongly promoting equality and diversity. Children are all highly valued and the staff actively celebrate children's differences in the setting.

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

Children have good levels of self-esteem and have built strong relationships in the setting with the staff and their peers. They settle well and happily initiate their own play from the appealing and stimulating activities that are readily available. Staff are skilled at helping children think critically and at extending their learning through activities that interest them and consequently children are motivated to learn and make good progress. Staff have a very good knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage, enabling children to make choices according to how they

feel and their current interests. Children develop their understanding of the correspondence between spoken and written sounds and learn to link sounds using many resources, including the computer, stories, books and texts displayed around the room. Books are an important part of the pre-school and are used well by children who understand and enjoy stories and books with staff and alone, however, group story times are not always tailored to all children's needs and some children become restless. The setting offers a book lending scheme and children take books home to share with their families.

Children are secure, they develop a strong sense of belonging in the setting and clearly feel very safe. They clearly know what is expected of them and treat one another with respect and kindness. Children are always encouraged to play safely and use equipment carefully, for example, children digging with metal spades are reminded about keeping them low and being mindful of other children's whereabouts when digging with enthusiasm. Clear golden rules are displayed and children are reminded of these in order to maintain a caring atmosphere where children are all equally valued and feel safe.

Children make very good use of the outdoor play area and are empowered by the staff and the good deployment of resources in the setting. They confidently move resources to support their ideas and imaginary play and are given practical help and encouragement. Children are adept in their design and construction, using one object to represent another. For example, they balance logs on top of one another to make a building, transport water and stack tyres as they develop their ideas outside. Children participate with high levels of involvement as they gain new skills and enjoy first-hand experiences using natural materials outside in the fresh air where their curiosity and interest is fully enhanced.

Children's healthy lifestyles are promoted well, they spend long periods of time outside in the outdoor area, that has been creatively and imaginatively set up. The secure garden links the children to the local neighbourhood, giving children a window into the activities of the local community. Children observe refuse collections, talk about the shops and observe traffic and animals as they pass at a safe distance. Children are protected well from the elements by a covered area and sun hats. They are given good ownership of their health and demonstrate that they are well-informed about healthy living. They operate a water dispenser to get drinks when they are thirsty and follow good personal hygiene routines, such as hand washing before eating. Children are provided with a healthy snack that is available over a rolling period of time. Crackers, spread and fresh fruit are offered in addition to milk or water. Some children are able to help with the snack and spread their crackers developing some new skills, however, these are limited as at times adults pour children's drinks and consequently children sit and wait for periods of time with little to do.

## 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

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

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	1
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	1

### 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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	1
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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