

St Francis Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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 Francis Pre-School opened in 1990. It is a registered charity, run by a committee whose members mostly comprise parents of children attending the setting. The pre-school operates from a self-contained portacabin with one main activity area, kitchen and toilets, which is set in the grounds of St Francis School, South Ascot in Berkshire. The premises are accessible at street level. The pre-school has access to a large outdoor area and can make use of the school hall. The group serves the local community and surrounding areas. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register to provide care for 24 children aged two to five years; of these not more than four may be under three years. There are currently 41 children on roll in the early years age group. The pre-school provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term time only. Morning sessions are from 9am to 12 noon and afternoon sessions from 12 noon to 3pm. Children can attend for both sessions and stay for lunch at the pre-school. There are five members of staff, two of whom work on a full-time basis and four members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. In addition to the permanent staff there are four contracted supply staff. The deputy manager holds a degree in Early Years, Development and Learning and has Early Years Professional Status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children happily arrive and settle well at the pre-school. The pre-school take some positive steps to close children's achievement gaps, however, these are not always sufficiently implemented to ensure that all children achieve their full potential. Routines and staff support at times impact on children's inclusion during learning experiences. Although the pre-school make some good improvements, self-evaluation is not always sufficiently robust to identify additional priorities for improvement. The pre-school demonstrates a sound capacity to develop and improve. Partnerships and communication with parents is good, although links with other settings children attend are not fully established.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the support children receive and underpin children's learning further to ensure it is personalised to meet their individual needs
- review routines so they flow more with the children's needs

- develop ongoing partnerships with other settings to support continuity and consistency in children's development and progress
- develop further reflective practice, self-evaluation and informed discussion to identify the setting's strengths and additional priorities for development that will improve the quality of provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of their responsibilities to children's welfare. They know how to access and implement procedures in the event of concerns about children's welfare arising. Effective risk assessments, including daily checks promote children's safety at the pre-school. Staff underpin children's good understanding of safety through reminders, asking questions and regular practises of the evacuation procedure.

Staff have defined roles and responsibilities which underpins sound team working practices. The pre-school values parents' and children's feedback. This appropriately supports their self-evaluation. The pre-school drive and maintain sound continuous improvement by developing their practice. For example, there have been effective improvements to the outdoor area and pre-school building to provide additional facilities. The pre-school actively responds to advice and training ideas to benefit the children. However, the pre-school do not always prioritise additional areas to improve the quality of provision further for all children.

Positive images of diversity are on display and toys and resources generally reflect the children's different backgrounds and wider world. Some words in different languages children speak are on display in the preschool, valuing individuality. Not all children fully achieve, as support for some groups of children is sometimes inconsistent. At times staff do not always deploy themselves to enable sustained interaction with all children. The pre-school offers a welcoming and inviting environment. Resources are stored appropriately with storage containers at a low level, which supports children's independent choices.

Parents have access to good information about the pre-school and their children. Staff and parents develop a positive rapport enabling them to exchange information effectively. Parents speak highly of the staff and pre-school and state they are happy with the care and learning experiences their children receive. The pre-school establishes some partnerships well, for example, with the school on the same site and with some outside professionals. However, there are no continuous partnerships established with other settings, such as nurseries or other pre-schools children attend. As a result, the pre-school are unable to fully promote consistency and continuity in children's learning outcomes.

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

Children form positive relationships with staff, which result in them feeling safe and secure in their care. Children demonstrate a strong understanding of safety, for example, they use the outdoor wheeled toys with care and consideration for others. Children enjoy interacting with staff and overall communicate with adults confidently. Children develop good friendships with other children and enjoy self-initiated play and ideas, such as role-play together demonstrating effective social skills. At times routines reduce children's opportunities to participate and be involved in learning activities, for example, children leave to wash their hands during circle time and then sit at the tables to wait for snack time. As a result, they are unable to take an active part in the discussions. Children benefit from suitable activities that promote their sound awareness of diversity, such as cooking activities and celebrating different festival and religious dates.

Staff provide some effective interaction with children, although this is not always consistent. They ask some good open questions to support children's thinking skills. Some groups of children do not receive sufficient support to underpin further progress, for example, staff do not always implement children's identified next steps of learning. Children benefit from free-flow access to the outdoor area where they play imaginatively using the large construction to form a 'garden', and explore and investigate different mediums, such as sand and water. Children access books freely and enjoy exploring these with their friends and with staff. Children develop suitable skills for the future. They freely access modern technology resources, for example, children enjoy taking photographs of their friends and staff. The more able children use these resources independently and understand how to use the special effects. Staff soundly encourage more able children to write their names on their work and appropriately underpin other children's understanding of letters that form their names. Children become familiar with the on-site schools foundation stage teacher and premises due to the good links in place. This supports smooth transitions as children move onto full time education.

Children enjoy a good variety of physical activities indoors and outside. They experience different weathers, for example, they have fun going for a walk in the rain around the school playground. They come back full of enthusiasm about their experiences of splashing in puddles. Good use of the grounds and other outdoor spaces challenge children's physical skills as they climb trees and balance along logs. Children develop good independent skills as they put on their own coats to go outside and pour their own drinks. Staff promote children's mathematical understanding effectively at snack time, for example, counting the number of children at the table and counting how many plates and cups are needed in correspondence. The pre-school offers healthy based snacks and drinks that underpin healthy eating. During imaginative play staff underpin children's positive understanding of healthy options with play food.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
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	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
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	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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