

# St Andrews Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 139362  
**Inspection date** 18 April 2007  
**Inspector** Brenda Joan Flewitt

**Setting Address** St Andrews Road, Bridport, Dorset, DT6 3BJ

**Telephone number** 01308 458151

**E-mail**

**Registered person** St Andrews 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](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 Andrew's Pre-school was first established in 1975 and has been in its current premises since 1997. It is managed by a committee of volunteers and operates from the old school house in the town of Bridport, Dorset. The pre-school has the use of two playrooms, a kitchen, office, toilet facilities and an enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 36 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 50 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 42 receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group supports children with learning difficulties and children for whom English is not their first language.

The group opens on Mondays to Fridays during term time only. Sessions are from 09:00 to 11:30 and from 12:30 to 15:00. Some sessions are specifically for children who are approaching school age. A parent and toddler group is provided in one of the pre-school rooms on Wednesday mornings.

There are eight staff who regularly work with the children, supported by additional temporary staff and an administrator; seven of the permanent members of staff have relevant early years qualifications. The group is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's health is very well promoted. They learn good procedures for their own personal hygiene. There are low-level basins in both rooms which children use independently to wash their hands after messy play, and tissues are readily available for them to wipe their own noses. They know how to wash their hands thoroughly to get rid of germs, after using the toilet and before handling food, making sure palms, backs of hands and between fingers are clean. Children are protected from the spread of infection through the staff's routine procedures that include keeping equipment clean, and a clear sickness policy which makes sure that children must not attend if they have an infectious illness. Children's medication and accidents are managed well. All the staff are up to date with first aid training, first aid resources are easily accessible and the relevant records are completed accurately, including parents' signatures to acknowledge the record.

Children enjoy a healthy lifestyle. They take part in a variety of outside activities on a daily basis which gives them opportunities for fresh air and exercise. They use various equipment skilfully to help develop large muscle skills such as manoeuvring wheeled vehicles, climbing, balancing and travelling over and under bridges. Activities such as sand and water play enables children to practise using smaller equipment like spades, jugs and pots to transfer materials and solve problems. For example, children are encouraged to think how to stop the water coming out of the holes in a tube as they pour. A child remembers that the holes need to be on the top.

Snack time is a social time where children and adults exchange news and ideas. A good range of nutritious options is offered to the children which enables them to make healthy choices. They choose from a selection of fruit and raw vegetables such as apple, banana, orange, carrot sticks and kiwi fruit which is displayed attractively. Children develop independence in pouring their own milk or water, as they are supplied with small jugs to enable them to complete the task successfully. Drinking water is readily available at all times, so that children can drink whenever they are thirsty.

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

The provision is good.

Children play and learn in safe and secure premises where most hazards are identified and minimised. The good security arrangements mean that children are protected from uninvited visitors and cannot leave the building unsupervised. There is a dedicated health and safety officer and risk assessments are carried out regularly. However, there is occasionally a potential risk to children from staff's hot drinks. The space available is organised effectively so children move around freely and in safety as they choose their activities and during their play. They use furniture and equipment which is kept in good condition.

Children learn what is expected if they must leave the building in an emergency as they are involved in regular fire drills. Staff have clear roles and responsibilities and there are contingency

plans agreed with the school next door. All this helps promote children's safety in a real situation. Children are kept safe on outings through staff routine procedures which includes parental consent, high adult-to-child ratios and risk assessments. Children learn about keeping safe through planned activities such as visitors from the local community visiting the group. These include police and fire officers.

Staff have a good understanding of how to recognise signs of abuse and the procedures to follow with concerns. They attend training regularly to up-date their knowledge in safeguarding children, and existing injuries are recorded as routine. This all contributes to protecting children from harm.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and secure. They enjoy the time they spend at pre-school and make good relationships with staff and each other. They are cared for in a busy, friendly and caring atmosphere where the adults who work with them have a good understanding of how children learn through play, and value their thoughts and ideas. Children like to take 'Polly Pet', (a soft toy rabbit), home with them and then tell their friends what he has been up to. One child describes how he 'boinged up and down on the trampoline'. Staff use the Birth to three matters framework well to plan and assess the progress for the younger children.

Children enjoy a broad range of activities that help them learn in all areas of development. They use a good supply of equipment and play provision which is organised so that they can access resources for themselves. They develop confidence and independence in practical skills such as managing their own clothes, pouring drinks and washing hands.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a secure working knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use this to plan a wide range of interesting activities and experiences across all areas of learning. They know the children well as individuals and use a range of teaching methods to challenge each child appropriately to help them move on to the next stage. Staff use effective questioning to help children think, predict and solve problems. Staff are developing an effective system to record children's achievements and development, which includes regular observations, samples of children's work and planning for the 'next steps'. Therefore, children are making good progress in their learning.

Children enjoy a good balance of self-chosen and adult led activities, linked by topics and themes, providing meaningful experiences. They develop a good sense of using maths in everyday situations as well as planned activities. For example, children help to count how many children are present in the group, identifying the number of boys and girls and then adding them together. They count out pieces of fruit as they select at snack time and the older children take turns in tasks of responsibility such as matching the china cups and saucers and laying the table. Shapes are referred to constantly during physical games like bean bag throwing, craft activities, construction and the 'shape of the week' discussion. During a 'Transport' topic, a craft activity encourages children's interest in science in addition to construction and the use of tools and materials. Four-year-olds enjoy making boats by cutting out a triangle sail from paper, decorating it to their own satisfaction using coloured pens, joining it to a straw, then using plasticine to help it stand up in a tub. This is followed by observing whether the boat they have made 'floats or sinks' in water, experimenting both inside and outside. Children

explore and use their senses during various activities such as making 'tracks' on paper with paint and small vehicles, or making 'soup' as they mix earth, water and leaves in the garden area.

Most children use language well to communicate. Some confidently initiate conversations with adults and peers. They enjoy sharing news and talking about events in their own lives. For instance, children explain about how they ride their bikes, with or without 'stabilisers', following a story about riding a bicycle. Children write for a purpose in many situations such as taking an order for a pizza in the role play area, or writing out tickets in the 'travel agents'. Children move around with confidence and coordination showing an awareness of others. They express themselves in various forms including art and craft, singing, dancing and making music. As children dance to music they count the beat and use scarves to make intended movements as instructed by the 'leader'. They use technology to listen to tapes or record themselves and develop skills in using a mouse to complete tasks on a computer.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children behave extremely well. They know what is expected through routine, and explanations and the good example set by the staff. They are cared for in an environment where they learn to respect each other and show kindness. Children confidently relay what 'kind hands' mean, including being polite and considerate to each other. Children respond well to the consistent praise and encouragement they receive for effort and achievement, which helps build their self-esteem.

Children are highly valued as individuals. Staff know each child very well through the effective key worker system, and continuous communication with parents. Children who have additional needs and learning difficulties are well supported. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator attends ongoing training, liaises with parents, staff and connected professional to ensure that all children are fully included and make progress.

Children develop a strong sense of belonging and being part of a community. They can see photographs of themselves within the setting and are made to feel special on their birthdays when they receive a card, and their friends sing to them. Children enjoy visiting the school next door where they use some of the facilities, and visit in the term before they transfer to meet teachers and become familiar with the building. Children learn about their local community as they visit places like the local shops during topic work, and as visitors come in to the group to talk about their jobs. They develop a positive attitude to the wider world through planned activities where they explore celebrations from different cultures as well as their own, such as Chinese New Year, Diwali and May Day. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Children benefit from the excellent relationships established between parents and staff. Parents are supplied with comprehensive information about the setting in various forms, including a detailed prospectus, regular news letters and notice boards in the pre-school. They are given various opportunities to express their views and have an active voice in their child's care and education, for example, by acting as a member of the management committee, or using the 'suggestions box'. Parents are very well informed about the curriculum, what children learn from different activities and how they can support this at home. Parents are welcomed into the pre-school to help at sessions, which gives them an opportunity to gain insight into their child's learning. There are formal and

informal opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress with their key worker. Staff make themselves available at the beginning and end of each session to verbally exchange information. Staff actively seek knowledge from parents when a child starts at pre-school, to assess their starting points. This all contributes towards meeting individual needs and making sure any additional requirements are addressed.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by a team of dedicated, experienced and enthusiastic staff who work well together to provide smoothly run sessions. This means children know what to expect and settle quickly. There are clear staff recruitment and induction procedures to ensure that new staff are suitable to work with children and well informed to carry out the policies and procedures in place to promote the children's welfare.

The effective organisation of the premises, resources, routine and staff deployment means that children play and learn in a generally safe environment, develop independence in making choices and practical activities, making good use of both inside and outside areas. Staff are in the process of drawing up plans to improve the outside areas to increase the activities offered. Children due to start school benefit from the 'All Fours' sessions where they are given extra responsibility and encouraged to practise skills which prepare them for school. All the required records are in place, well organised and completed clearly.

Leadership and management is good. The setting is pro-active in keeping up-to-date with changes and information regarding children's care and learning. They seek advice and support from local authority advisors as required. For example, the group are working together with advisors on plans to develop the outside area. Staff maintain positive links with the school, which helps the children make a smooth transition as they start in the reception class. There are effective systems in place to monitor staff's effectiveness and training is well supported. Staff regularly attend a variety of courses to update their knowledge in different aspects of caring for children and helping them learn. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

The last care inspection recommended that the reviewing and evaluation of documentation and practice was continued, to maintain good quality care.

All staff and committee members are supplied with copies of policies and procedures and there are monthly meetings to update staff on any changes in documentation. This contributes towards everyone working together for the good care of the children.

The last nursery education inspection recommended that evaluation, assessment and reviewing of the provision was continued, to maintain the high quality nursery education.

Regular meetings involving the leader and the deputies are arranged to review the planning of activities, and assessment system. Parents' evenings have been organised to enable parents to discuss their child's progress with the key worker. This helps towards children making good progress in all areas of their learning.

## **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):

- review the arrangement for staff's hot drinks to minimise the risk to children.

#### **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):

- continue to develop the outside area to further promote each area of learning.

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)