

St Andrews Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	146010
Inspection date	07 June 2007
Inspector	Penny Wood
Setting Address	1-2 St Andrews Road, Tidworth, Wiltshire, SP9 7EP
Telephone number	01980 602539
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Registered person	Army Welfare Service
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 Andrews Pre-School has been registered since 1991 and operates from two adjoining semi detached houses in Tidworth, Wiltshire. There are seven rooms used as play space, with a secure garden for outside play. There is a mix of children attending the group from both military and civilian families.

A maximum of 42 children between the ages of two and eight years old may attend at any one time. There are currently 52 children on roll, of which 48 are funded to receive nursery education. The setting supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:00 to 14:45 during term-time and each weekday from 08:40 to 17:30 during school holidays.

There are eight members of staff, five of which have a relevant childcare qualification and two are currently training.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing a good understanding of personal hygiene routines. The regular washing of hands after activities and prior to snacks reduces the spread of germs and infections, with gentle reminders from staff to wash and pull the chain after visiting the toilet. Children enjoy an environment which is clean; with staff following appropriate routines to ensure toys and equipment remain hygienic and suitable for their use.

Children benefit from the sickness policy which reduces the spread of illness within the group. For example, the exclusion of staff or children when they are ill protects the health of all those present. Good systems ensure children receive medication in-line with individual needs. Children receive appropriate medical care from staff that are trained in first aid. Accident records contain details of events and the care children receive. However, these are not consistently shared with parents at home time to ensure they receive this information.

Children enjoy regular physical exercise, mainly outside in the garden and along a tarmac area. Should inclement weather arise, staff adapt their provision to enable children to be physically active indoors. Children enjoy a wide range of activities which aid the development of body strength, their co-ordination skills and physical well-being. They particularly enjoy pedalling tricycles up and down the tarmac area, manoeuvring themselves well and negotiating their pathways amongst each other. After physical exercise and particularly during spells of hot weather, children enjoy regular drinks of water, reducing the risk of de-hydration.

Children enjoy a range of healthy snacks, which include daily portions of fruit. They enjoy independence at snack time, particularly when making their own wraps with cheese or ham or buttering their own slices of toast. All opportunities are seized by staff to promote further learning. For example, when a child recognised that his toast looked like a 'volcano', staff congratulated the child on his observation and asked what shape a volcano looked like, to which he correctly responded 'a triangle'. Staff respect children's individual dietary needs and only provide suitable foods. Children's lunchboxes are appropriately stored to ensure they remain fresh.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enter an environment which is warm and welcoming. Vibrant displays of posters and children's work ensure the setting is visually stimulating for children. They enjoy a range of different areas, which are well organised to enable children to move freely and safely between one activity and another. Activities are well-resourced with the good range of toys regularly checked to ensure they are safe for children to play with.

Safety measures adopted throughout the setting promote children's safety. For example, the premises are secure and the use of stair gates prevents children's unsupervised access to the first floor. Annual and daily risk assessments identify hazards, with action taken to reduce any risk to children. Regular practices of the fire evacuation procedure ensures both staff and children are able to act promptly in an emergency.

Staff supervise children well both within the building and when playing outside. For example, when outside, staff spread themselves throughout the area in order to offer children support

and to monitor their behaviour. Children benefit from the staff's knowledge and understanding of the child protection policy and procedures, with strategies in place to ensure prompt action in order to protect children's welfare and safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are developing good friendships within the group and eagerly welcome each other on arrival. Most children enter the group with ease, with parents welcome to stay and settle their children on arrival. The preparation of the environment prior to children's arrival enables children to quickly commence playing once registration time is over. Children are able to choose from a good range of toys, all of which are accessible and stored at child level. The rotation of toys with further resources stored within the building ensures children benefit from variety within their play. Activities are appropriate for all ages of children in attendance, although some craft activities are too adult-led, limiting children's independence and their ability to explore the activity for themselves.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children enjoy a varied range of interesting activities which cover all areas of learning. Staff provide children with both planned activities and opportunities to explore their own learning through independent play. Children are keen participants within their own keyworker groups, during which, staff manage the activities well to enable children to participate at their own level of ability. However, the planning system for these activities does not cover sufficient information to guide staff and additional helpers on the purpose and proposed learning intention of activities. Observations during activities are used to inform children's records of achievements and to guide staff on the future provision of activities to further develop children's learning.

Staff deploy themselves effectively during free play in order to support children whilst they enjoy the varied range of activities available. Good questioning techniques by staff and discussions held regarding the activities encourage children to explore and investigate the topics further. Children benefit from play areas that are well-resourced, allowing them to extend their play and learning opportunities. For example, when sifting through trays of soil, the provision of a range of utensils enabled children to uncover, pick up and examine the hidden bugs. An opportunity to extend this activity allowed children to explore for bugs in the garden.

Staff extend children's vocabulary during activities. For example, they ask children to name bugs hidden in the trays of soil, such as, dragonflies and caterpillars, and sea creatures such as, lobsters and crabs during matching games. During discussions, children eagerly identify the differences between creatures, sharing their ideas within the group. During group time, children enjoy listening to stories; particularly those told using hand puppets, with children displaying high levels of confidence when taking part in telling the story for the second time.

Children enjoy exploring with a range of different media, such as clay and ice. They use their imaginations well, particularly when playing in the home corner. Weekly opportunities enable children to enjoy regular music sessions, encouraging them to move their bodies to music, to play a range of instruments and to develop a sense of rhythm. Children enjoy a variety of educational computer programs and display good co-ordination skills when using a mouse.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. All children are valued within the group and enjoy the attention they receive from staff. On arrival, they enjoy singing a welcome song to each other and saying hello in different languages. Opportunities to celebrate a range of festivals encourage children to develop an understanding of different cultures. Children enjoy access to a range of resources that depict positive images of people from around the world, encouraging children to develop an understanding of diversity.

Good strategies enable staff to meet children's individual needs. Staff liaise with the group's special needs co-ordinator, outside agencies and parents in order to provide levels of care suitable for children's individual needs and to encourage further development.

Children behave well and are developing good relationships with each other and staff. Throughout the session, staff encourage children to share and take turns, discussing inappropriate behaviour with the children to help develop their understanding of why it is unacceptable. Children consistently use good manners, saying please and thank you throughout the session.

Working in partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive information within the group's prospectus, the policies and procedures, all of which offer good information regarding the provision of nursery education and the group's role and responsibilities. The colourful displays of children's work combined with weekly diaries of events at pre-school offer parents an insight into what children do whilst at the group. However, not all parents are familiar with their children's records of achievements or that they can request access to these records at any time.

Parents are involved with extending children's learning at home, particularly by taking books home to read and by continuing to develop children's recognition of the phonetic alphabet. Furthermore, children enjoy bringing in items from home to 'show and tell' during circle time. Parents benefit from the flexible approach adopted by the management, particularly with regards to the lunch club, whereby children may stay for the occasional lunch if spaces allow. The group are very aware of the varying needs of the families and children, particularly those whose father's are currently serving overseas. As a result, they organise activities, such as the making of Father's Day cards in advance so fathers receive theirs in time.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children benefit from the good teamwork of the staff, many of whom have worked together for some time. Robust recruitment procedures ensure that all staff working with children are suitable to do so, with good induction systems in place to ensure all staff are aware of their role and responsibilities.

Good systems for the deployment of staff ensure that all staff are aware of their role for the session. Space is organised well to allow children to experience a wide range of activities and opportunities. All regulatory documentation is in place, and with the exception of the accident records are completed with appropriate detail. All documents are available for inspection, stored securely and maintain confidentiality.

Leadership and management is good. The manager leads a team of staff that are pro-active in attending further training externally to the group, with additional opportunities to develop their knowledge of the provision of nursery education through in-house training. Regular staff meetings ensure all staff are aware of changes within procedures and are able to share ideas for future activities and topics. Staff appraisals identify staff strengths and further areas for development. The group receive support through external agencies, namely a development worker, an advisory teacher and the area special needs co-ordinator.

Improvements since the last inspection

The setting have made improvements based on the recommendations set at the last inspection.

At the last inspection for care, the setting were asked to ensure parents acknowledge records of medication administered by staff, to make the gas shed and hazardous plants safe or inaccessible, to ensure the complaints procedure includes the name and contact details of the regulatory body (Ofsted) and to insure that the register contains the times of children's arrival and departure. As a result, the group have addressed all of these issues. Parents are informed of when medication has been given, children's safety is promoted within the outside area, parents have information available to them on how to contact Ofsted should they wish to raise a concern and the registration system represents an accurate record of who is present at any one time.

At the last inspection for nursery education, the setting were asked to provide further challenge for the more able and older children. As a result, most activities and play opportunities have been improved to extend children's learning opportunities. However, not all craft activities encourage children's independence and exploration. This is an area for ongoing improvement.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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.

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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):

- ensure parents acknowledge all accident records to ensure they are informed of events and first aid given to children

- ensure children enjoy opportunities to independently explore activities, particularly when participating in arts and crafts

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 improve the opportunities for parents to share children's records of achievements
- ensure the written plans for activities cover sufficient information in order to guide all staff and helpers on the purpose and proposed learning intentions of the activities taking place

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