

St. Andrew's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	147619
Inspection date	06 July 2007
Inspector	Daphne Prescott
Setting Address	St. Andrews Church, Lynford Gardens, Edgware, Middlesex, HA8 8TZ
Telephone number	020 8958 5352
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Registered person	The Committee of St Andrew's 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.

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Andrew's Pre-School is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children at the pre-school. It opened in 1968 and operates from three rooms in St Andrew's Church in Edgware in the London borough of Barnet.

A maximum of 23 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:30 to 12:30, term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 27 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 20 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local community. The pre-school currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six staff, all of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm clean setting. There are effective procedures in place to ensure that the setting is kept clean. For example, staff wash the tables with an anti-bacterial spray before and after snacks. Children are also learning about personal hygiene through daily routines. For example, they know to wash their hands after using the toilet and before they have their snack. All relevant policies and procedures are in place for medication administration and accidents. Children receive suitable first aid treatment in the event of an accident as staff hold valid first aid certificates. Parents are informed of any accidents. However, parent signatures are not always obtained to acknowledge the entry in the accident book and emergency consent has not been obtained from parents for the well-being of children. Children do not attend if they are sick or infectious as clear information is shared with parents to help prevent the spread of infections.

Children are beginning to have an understanding of healthy eating as they make choices from a variety of healthy options at snack time, such as a variety of fresh fruit. Activities are also planned to help children's learning of eating healthy foods. At snack time children and staff sit together in small groups which create a lovely, relaxed and social atmosphere and promotes children's social skills. Children's independence is also encouraged as they help themselves to snacks, spread low fat spread on their crackers and select fresh fruit with tongs. Children's individual dietary needs are known and followed by staff as information is clearly recorded. Throughout the session a jug of drinking water and cups are available in the play room. Children independently help themselves to drinks when they are thirsty.

Children are developing a positive attitude to exercise which is enjoyed on a daily basis. They show great excitement when playing outside as they are having fun running around freely in the garden. Older children are developing their physical skills. They are confident in the use of play equipment and are learning specific techniques as they ride their bikes with great confidence. They enjoy playing football, kicking the ball with good control as they cheer each other when they have scored a goal. They show increasing control as they are able to manipulate a range of small tools and equipment successfully. For example, children are competent in using the rolling pin to roll out the play dough and are able to use pencils with good control. Younger children have the opportunity to develop control over their bodies; they are learning how to climb and jump by using the climbing apparatus in the garden with great fun and excitement.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the welcoming surroundings as staff greet them and their parents warmly, helping children to feel secure and content. The walls are displayed with posters and children's art work providing a warm welcome for children. They benefit from the way in which staff make use of the space. Children move confidently around the environment, both indoors and outdoors. The arrangement of the resources and equipment means that children can move around safely and freely. They are able to help themselves to play equipment from low storage and use play materials at tables, easels and on the floor safely which helps promote their independence.

They are cared for in a child focused environment where risks are identified and reduced to safeguard the children. For example, staff check the toys and equipment on a regular basis to

reduce any hazards. They also check the garden area before the children go out each morning. However, part of the fencing is not secure. The manager is currently addressing this safety issue to ensure that children's safety is not comprised. Regular fire drills are practised which helps children gain an awareness of fire safety and emergency procedures. Staff complete detailed risk assessments of the premises and when children are taken on outings. However, risk assessments are not completed for visitors from the local community such as the fire brigade. This would further promote children's safety. Children are kept safe as effective systems are in place as staff monitor the entrance at the beginning and end of sessions to ensure children are dropped off and collected safely.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by the staff's clear knowledge of child protection matters. They understand the signs and symptoms of possible child abuse and are familiar with the reporting procedure to follow if they are concerned about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time in the setting, they are happy and confident. Staff provide appropriate care and support for the children, this helps them to separate confidently from their parents and carers. Children and staff enjoy positive interaction with one another. Staff are interested in the children and know them well. They receive lots of attention and have a strong bond with staff which increases their sense of wellbeing.

Younger children's care and learning is promoted as staff have an understanding of how to meet their needs. Staff are beginning to use the Birth to three matters framework, providing activities that support younger children's development and learning. Younger children take part in all the activities offered, for example, they have great fun playing with natural materials, such as play dough. They are developing their senses as they touch the play dough with their hands and chat with the staff that it feels sticky. Most children enjoy listening to stories at group time. However, not all the children are engaged and involved at story time because the group is too large and children become restless. They have a great time as they laugh and have fun as they energetically join in action songs. They also enjoy opportunities to express themselves through imaginative play, dressing up in different outfits such as fairy dresses and animals. They are developing their fine motor skills and creative abilities as they confidently manipulate paintbrushes. They smile with a great sense of achievement when they have finished their painting. As staff give the children plenty of praise that they have done well, this helps towards developing their confidence and self-esteem.

Nursery Education

The quality of the teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff demonstrate an understanding of the foundation stage, and stepping stones. Some planning information is in place. However, staff do not always complete the planning and this has an impact on providing a broad and balanced range of activities across the six areas of learning. Staff observe children's progress through observation. However, they are not evaluating activities and assessing children's progress to help plan the next steps in their learning. Children have good relationships with staff, and children are treated with respect. This is reflected in the children's good behaviour, and motivation to participate and learn. Children receive plenty of attention and support from the staff as they are always nearby to offer guidance when needed. Some staff are beginning to question children in order to encourage them to think for themselves. Although, this needs to be developed further to assist and extend children's learning.

Children are confident and able to express their needs as they ask the staff to play with them, for example, in the home corner or outside playing football. Children are developing good relationships with one another, they show consideration to others and are learning to share and take turns when playing games. They enjoy listening to stories. However, at story time older children sometimes become distracted as the group is too large and they lose their concentration. Children are confident and enthusiastic about communicating with staff and each other. They recognise their own names on cards, helping children understand that labels and print carry meaning. Children have the opportunity to practise writing their names and link sounds to letters. However, they have fewer opportunities to access a wide range of writing materials to practise their early writing skills, so that they learn that writing is used for different purposes.

Children are learning the concepts of simple number operations through everyday situations and learning to count numbers one to 10. They are beginning to use language to describe and compare shape and size. However, there are few opportunities for children to experience measuring volume and capacity through practical activities. They are developing a sense of community as the staff provide activities to help children learn about their local community by taking the children on local outings. Children are beginning to learn about their own culture, and others, through the celebration of a range of festivals throughout the year. They are developing knowledge and understanding of sense of time through discussions about past events with staff and their families. They build and design with a variety of construction sets. They have access to everyday technology for example; children independently access the computer and use the mouse with good control. Although, children have less opportunities to explore and investigate how things work.

Children have opportunities to take part in physical activities, both indoors and outdoors. However, the outdoor play could be developed further to fully incorporate the six areas of learning to enhance and extend children's learning further. Children have opportunities to express and develop their creativity through imaginative play as they show good imagination when acting out simple storylines and role-play together. For example, they have great fun pretending to make a birthday cake out of sand and sing happy birthday; staff join in to help extend children's play. Children are eager to play in the home corner and enjoy pretending to cook their lunch. At tidy up time they are happy to tidy up the home corner and are praised by the staff when they have done this task well. Children enjoy exploring different colours and textures whilst painting and gluing. Children can sing simple songs from memory and they participate actively at singing time.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are welcomed and play a full part in the setting because staff value each child as an individual. They are respected as individuals and are given appropriate praise and support to enhance self-esteem and confidence. Children are learning to be kind and respectful towards each other because the staff are appropriate role models and set good examples. They talk to the children with respect and, in turn, children are seen to be kind and caring to each other. Staff give the children plenty of praise when they have done something well, children are very proud of themselves when staff tell them 'I am so happy. That's really good tidying up'. This helps to build and develop children's self-esteem, making them feel good about themselves. Children learn the boundaries of acceptable conduct in ways that they can understand, as staff use age-appropriate and positive strategies to manage any difficulties that arise. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children learn about themselves and the wider world through planned activities and discussions, helping children to understand different cultural practices. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are welcome into the setting as the staff have a positive attitude towards this area of childcare. The staff adapt their ways of working to ensure all children are included and able to reach their potential.

Partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Parents spoken to on the day of the inspection said that they are happy with the educational progress their children are making. The manager organizes coffee mornings with the parents to discuss the Foundation Stage, and the six areas of learning. Parents also have the opportunity to attend a consultation meeting to discuss their child's progress. Staff maintain a record of the children's observations through individual books and these are available for parents to view. However, they do not receive a record of their child's progress which would help acknowledge their child's achievements and develop their learning in the setting and at home.

Children benefit from the friendly interaction between staff and parents. Staff obtain detailed information about each child's individual needs from parents to ensure that children receive the appropriate care. A notice board displays relevant information and policies and procedures of the setting that is also available for parents to view, which helps towards promoting children's safety and welfare. Staff recognise the importance of working with parents to ensure that children's needs are well met. Parents receive verbal feedback from staff about their child's morning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. The manager is very committed to the improvement of quality childcare and education for children, and understands the importance of providing activities which promote children's development in all the six areas of learning and monitoring the quality of teaching. The manager is also aware that planning and recording of children's development and future learning to help children progress through the stepping stones needs developing. The manager and staff team are currently working with the advisory teacher looking at planning and implementing the Foundation Stage of learning.

The manager and staff work well together as a team, and focus on the needs of the children. Although, the organisation of story group times and a safety issue regarding the fencing needs to be addressed. Children's care and learning is supported by the effective deployment of staff because the manager maintains the child-staff ratios which help to ensure children's well-being. Staff ensure all children are secure and happily engaged in activities.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because most of the required records and documentation are in place to ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the setting. The written policies and procedures practiced by staff also help ensure children's well-being and protection. Recruitment and vetting procedures are in place, thus ensuring that children are protected and cared for by staff who have knowledge and understanding of child development. Staff work with parents to ensure they have a good knowledge of children's individual needs. Children and staff benefit from the positive working relationship between parents and staff. The staff are very kind and caring and consequently, children are happy in the setting. The setting is meeting the needs of all the children for whom it provides care.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the manager agreed to complete a action plan detailing how the qualification requirements for staff will be met and ensure that proof of staff qualifications are available at inspection; ensure that appropriate systems are in place to cover staff absences, making sure that staffing ratios are maintained at all times; ensure that the required procedures and correct consent forms are in place; review the daily routine to provide children with more opportunity for outdoor play and make the end of the session more conducive to children departing calmly. All of the staff have a child care qualification and proof of staff's qualifications are available. The manager has increased the staffing levels and has contingency arrangements are in place to cover emergencies and staff absences. All policies and procedures are updated annually and most of the required consent information from parents is in place. The manager and staff provide children with daily opportunities to play outdoors and have reorganised the end of the session. All of which helps to ensure children's safety and well-being.

At the last nursery education inspection the manager agreed to provide opportunities for children to write for a variety of purposes and resources which allow children to learn about living things. Also, to evaluate the written assessment of children's learning. They have improved opportunities for children to learn about learning things. All of which helps to support and develop children's learning. They provide opportunities for the children to write for a variety of purposes. Although, this needs to be extended further. The manager and staff are currently working with the advisory teacher to evaluate the written assessment of children's 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 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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 signatures are obtained against entries in the accident book
- obtain parents permission for the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future
- ensure the garden fencing is secure

- conduct risk assessments on visitors to the setting
- ensure group times meet the needs of all of the children (also applies to nursery education).

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):

- provide a range of activities to fully incorporate the six areas of learning indoors and outdoors
- improve the planning, implement the evaluation of activities and an assessment system to provide an ongoing record of children's progress and plan the next steps in their learning
- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of how to extend children's learning in all six areas of the curriculum
- ensure information regarding their child's progress is shared with parents.

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