

# Alfriston Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	507907
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 July 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Alison Weaver
<b>Setting Address</b>	Alfriston War Memorial Hall, The Tye, Alfriston, Polegate, East Sussex, BN26 5TL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01323 896047
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<b>Registered person</b>	Alfriston Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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?

Alfriston Pre-School opened in 1971. It operates from the Memorial Hall in the centre of the village. It has access to a large hall with an adjoining kitchen and toilets. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. The group opens four days a week, Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, during school term times. Opening times are from 09.30 until 13.00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 32 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 16 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs seven staff. Of these, four of the staff and the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Staff take the necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection and promote children's health. The staff ensure all areas and resources are kept clean for the children. The staff carry out very good hygiene practices such as wearing disposable gloves for all toileting and wiping round the toilet seat after every use. Disposable aprons are also used for preparing and serving food. The children learn the importance of washing their hands before handling food and after using the toilet. The use of a portable hand-washing unit is a very useful addition to the setting. It results in children being able to easily access water to wash their hands after doing messy activities.

Staff obtain the necessary information about children's individual health needs from parents. They use this information to help them promote children's welfare. Parents are kept well informed about any health concerns. There are clear policies about sick and infectious children and this information is shared with parents. There are sufficient trained staff who are able to administer first aid treatment in the event of an accident to a child.

Children are helped to enjoy a good variety of healthy snacks and learn about the importance of eating well. They choose from snacks such as cheese, raisins, raw carrots, fruit salad, pasta and houmous. They often try different foods that they may not eat at home. Children also find out about what is good to eat as they take part in various planned activities. Drinking water is always available to the children as they have their own named water bottles left out for them on a low table. Children help themselves to a drink when they get thirsty. Staff are easily able to monitor their drinking to ensure that the children do not become dehydrated.

The children learn about keeping themselves healthy when they explore topics about their bodies. They learn how their bodies work and the effect exercise has on them. Visits from a physiotherapist helps to develop children's awareness of the importance of staying fit and healthy.

Staff plan and provide plenty of activities that effectively promote children's physical development. They thoroughly enjoy their 'Pre-school Olympics'. The children show very good control and co-ordination as they play safely with a variety of games equipment both indoors and outdoors. Children become very skilled at using small equipment such as stilts. They show very good control as they kick footballs. They join in enthusiastically in movement activities and action songs, learning to use their bodies in many different ways. They have regular opportunities to use larger equipment such as a climbing frame and soft play shapes. Their fine motor skills develop well as they use a wide range of tools and small equipment.

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

The provision is good.

Children benefit from playing in a very secure and safe environment. The use of alarms on all the main doors helps ensure that children cannot leave the hall unsupervised and there is no unauthorised access to the children. The staff are deployed very effectively and the children are well supervised at all times. The staff regularly carry out a variety of effective risk assessments and comprehensive safety checks so that children move freely and are protected from harm. Appropriate safety equipment is in place, including socket covers and door guards. The setting

carries out regular fire drills to ensure that all staff and children are fully aware of what to do in an emergency. Visits from police and fire officers are used to develop children's awareness of safety.

The setting plans a wide variety of interesting outings for the children. Safety on these outings is given high priority as a site visit is carried out before each trip. A member of staff carries out a thorough risk assessment, which helps the group prepare for any safety concerns there might be and ensures the safety of children.

Staff spend considerable time and effort preparing the hall for the children. The staff create a child friendly learning environment that is colourful and welcoming. They organise the hall very effectively so that different play areas are available for the children. All the children enjoy playing with an extensive range of toys and equipment that are of good quality and safe. The resources are age appropriate and used well to challenge and stimulate the children.

The setting has all the required procedures and documents in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. There are very clear guidelines on the safeguarding of children that help support staff in their role. Staff have updated their knowledge and skills on child protection by attending recent training. This means that they have a good awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse. Several of the staff attended an advanced child protection course to extend their knowledge further. All staff are fully aware of their responsibilities to report any concerns about a child.

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

The provision is good.

Children arrive happily and confidently leave their parents. They gather in the circle and chat to their friends. Caring staff support the younger and less confident children as they settle in. All the children are greeted and made to feel welcome. New children soon develop their confidence and learn the routines of the setting. Children have a fun time in the setting and are helped to achieve. The staff are very caring and supportive, promoting children's learning as they play. Child initiated play is encouraged and there are plenty of opportunities for children to select their own resources. All children move freely around the hall choosing from the wide variety of fun activities. They have opportunities to take part in quiet and more active play. They enjoy the tabletop activities and looking at books in the book area. The outdoor area is popular with the children as they enjoy playing with the sand, water and games equipment.

Staff make effective use of the Birth to three matters framework when planning activities and recording the progress of the children aged under three years. Staff use the assessment records to help promote younger children's development.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make very good progress towards all the early learning goals due to the staff's secure knowledge of how children learn. Staff are skilled in talking to children and getting them to think about what they are doing. They use good questioning with the children to help them express their ideas. Staff interact very effectively with children to reinforce and extend their learning. They take advantage of the everyday activities and routines to promote incidental learning. For example, staff make use of many opportunities to reinforce counting and letter sounds. They are very good at using expression to tell stories and hold children's attention.

The curriculum planning is broad and balanced as it covers all areas of learning. It shows clear links to the aspects of learning and the stepping stones to ensure staff are aware of what children should learn. Staff have a very good observation and assessment process in place. They carry out regular observations and use these to inform children's records of progress. This enables staff to monitor what individual children are achieving and learning. The staff use the observations and records well to identify the next steps for individual children. Staff plan activities to meet the individual targets and needs of children. They also make good use of children's interests to plan further activities to extend individual learning.

Children are very confident and eagerly join in with the activities. They play well together and on their own. Children form friendships and learn to show concern for others. Good warm relationships between staff and children are evident. Children learn to feel good about themselves as staff effectively encourage and praise their contributions. Children's independence develops well in the setting. For example, the excellent use of the storage trolleys at the different play areas enables children to select their own resources.

Children are very confident speakers, using a wide vocabulary. They talk freely about their home lives and interests. The children learn to recognise the link between sounds and letters. They develop good writing and mark making skills as they enjoy a wide variety of opportunities to practice them. They write their names on their work and practise letter formation at drawing activities. Many of the children form the letters in their names very skilfully. They enjoy mark making in the role-play area, making lists and taking orders. They develop a love of books and stories. They listen avidly to stories such as 'Winnie's Magic Wand'.

Children count very confidently and show increasing skill in number recognition. Many children count easily to high numbers as they play. Children enjoy number activities during free play. They develop an awareness of simple calculation as staff talk to them about 'one more'. As they play with water, they learn about capacity and measurement. They count how many cups it takes to fill a jug. They explore shapes and patterns in their play. Children use mathematical language correctly, for example, as they talk about bigger and smaller.

Children have many opportunities to investigate using their senses. They learn about simple science as they do balloon experiments and make volcanoes. They find out about concepts such as floating and sinking. They use different tools and equipment such as magnets, magnifiers and microscopes to investigate the world around them. They have regular opportunities to use simple technology such as a laptop and remote control toys. Staff plan and provide a really interesting range of activities that enable children to develop an excellent understanding of other people and countries. The links with a pre-school in Zambia extends their understanding as they watch a DVD of the group and hear them sing their songs. They also find out about different celebrations, such as Chinese New Year, through planned activities. Children develop a good awareness of past and present as they visit museums where they look at how people used to live and eat. They have visits from the elderly, who share about their school experiences when they were young.

Children express themselves freely and creatively in numerous ways. They enthusiastically take part in art and craft activities. They thoroughly enjoy the aqua drawing. Children have fun creating their own designs on t-shirts. They enjoy using their imaginations in role-play and frequently act out different scenarios such as restaurants and a surgery. Children have regular opportunities to enjoy singing and explore music. They listen to different types of music and play instruments. They have opportunities to use African drums and rainmakers.

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

The provision is good.

Staff value children as individuals and respect parent's wishes. The initial assessment sheet completed by parents is very effective as it gives parents an opportunity to share what they feel their child can do. Staff find out about each child's home background so that they can help them settle into the group and meet their needs. They work closely with parents so that they can provide consistent care. They acknowledge children's religious and cultural backgrounds. They foster positive links with children's own culture and language. They involve parents by encouraging them to visit the setting to share their traditions and celebrations with all the children. Children benefit from these visits as, for example, they learn about Christmas in Germany and Russian foods. This helps children to value and respect diversity. Staff ensure that children have access to a variety of resources that reflect diversity. These resources include posters, dressing up clothes, dolls and books.

The setting has good arrangements in place to care for children with learning needs and disabilities to ensure that they are fully included. There is a trained member of staff to help support these children and give them the necessary care. Another staff member is also very experienced in this area of childcare so helps develop the setting's practices. Some staff are trained in Makaton so that they can give the necessary support to children with communication difficulties. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to help the children achieve and make progress.

Children behave very well and respond positively to staff. They benefit from the meaningful praise and encouragement given by staff. Children learn to play happily together, sharing and taking turns. Children talk about sharing, saying 'it's really kind to say; when you have finished can I have a turn?' Staff calmly talk to the children about the importance of sharing the resources. They help distract children when they are getting over boisterous. Staff reinforce the 'Golden Rules' with the children when needed. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good and there is a clear emphasis on working together to help support the children. Parents are very happy with the care provided. The parents of funded children have easy access to a variety of helpful written information about the curriculum and themes. However, there is no simple explanation for parents about the Foundation Stage to give them an overall picture of what children are learning. Parents are kept well informed about the activities in the group and can see the interesting displays on the wall of what children have previously enjoyed.

Parents receive a practical leaflet about letter formation so they can help their child form letters correctly. They are also given some suggestions of how they can extend children's learning at home. Parents receive regular written reports that clearly show how their child is progressing in all six areas of learning. The reports also show parents the next steps in children's individual development. There are formal consultations with parents so that they can discuss the children's reports and records of assessment together. Parents are encouraged to contribute to the assessment process.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Overall, the setting is well organised and space is used very effectively for the children. However, at times the organisation and length of the toilet and snack times are less successful. They break up the morning so that children have less time to play. The staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities, which helps contribute to the smooth running of the setting. Children benefit from being cared for by a very good level of qualified and experienced staff. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

All the required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being, is in place. There is a range of helpful written policies made available to staff to help guide them in their work. These policies are made easily available to parents so that they too, are aware of the procedures in the setting.

A thorough recruitment procedure is in place, which ensures that staff are suitable to work with children. There is an effective formal induction process in place to help settle new staff into their roles. The management is introducing a new appraisal system to help promote the ongoing development of staff. The staff meet regularly to discuss children's progress and general issues in the setting. This all helps to ensure that staff understand their role and know how to support children in their play and learning. The staff keep well informed about current childcare practices through ongoing training. The staff work very well together and have a good working relationship with the committee. They work closely together to develop and improve the practices in the setting. All the staff are well motivated and enthusiastic.

Leadership and management are good. The manager ensures that all staff are fully aware of what children can learn at the different activity tables. He displays a very good information sheet at key tables indicating to staff what children learn at the activities. The sheet gives very good guidance to staff about what vocabulary to introduce with the children and what questions to ask to help extend their learning. These are particularly useful for less experienced staff.

The staff are very proactive and committed to continuous improvement and development of the nursery education provision. They put very effective development plans in place where they identify areas they want to improve. Staff regularly monitor and evaluate the curriculum and activities to ensure that the provision is helping children make good progress towards the early learning goals. They also ask children and parents for their input on questionnaires. One of these questionnaires resulted in the staff reviewing the mathematics table to make it more fun and interesting for the children.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection, the setting was asked to improve the hygiene practices for cooking activities. This recommendation has been met as children now have easy access to the portable hand-washing unit. The setting has also improved children's access to equipment. The children have plenty of opportunities to independently select from a range of storage. The staff have increased the images of diversity on display with the use of pictures and posters around the room. They also have a range of toys available that show positive images of different people in society. This helps promote children's awareness of other people.

At the last nursery education inspection, the setting was asked to ensure that assessments linked to future planning. This is in place and helps ensure that individual children are moved

on in their learning. Children's opportunities to write for different purposes have been increased. They experience many different activities where they can make marks.

### **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):

- improve the overall organisation of the sessions with particular regard to snack and toilet times so that they meet children's needs (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):

- improve the written information given to parents so that it more clearly explains the Foundation Stage.

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)