

# St Andrew's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	303819
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 September 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Helene Anne Terry
<b>Setting Address</b>	Huddersfield Road, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX3 0AA
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<b>Registered person</b>	St Andrew's 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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Andrew's Pre-School was registered in 1972. It is run by a voluntary committee and operates from a room in St Andrew's Methodist church hall. A maximum of 24 children may attend the setting at any one time. The pre-school is open Tuesday to Thursday from 09.30 to 12.00 term time only. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 11 children on roll aged from two to three years. Of these, three children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school caters for children from the local community and surrounding area.

There are three members of staff employed to care for the children; two of whom hold early years qualifications to level 3. There is one member of staff who is working towards level 4. The setting receives support from the local authority and the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and well maintained environment where effective procedures and practices ensure that children's physical, nutritional and health needs are fully addressed. The staff provide good support and guidance to ensure that children develop a good understanding of hygiene. Children know hand washing routines very well, using the bowls of water to wash their hands following art and craft activities and accessing soap and paper towels easily. Staff supervise hand washing appropriately before snack using antibacterial hand wash. Children are effectively protected from cross infection through the use of good hygiene practices and procedures. This includes the regular washing of equipment and a sickness policy that is available to parents. Children's health needs are clearly recorded and there is a member of staff present who has suitable first aid training. Documentation to promote children's health is good. Accident and medication records are maintained well.

Children learn to appreciate healthy foods through provision of a varied, balanced snack that is offered mid-session. The rolling snack bar creates a social occasion and promotes children's enjoyment of food. Staff sit with the children as they help themselves to different fruit, vegetable sticks, rice cakes and bread sticks. Children look at pictures of food that is good for them and talk about where apples are grown and their different colours. They also learn about a healthy diet through the activities provided. Children enjoy water with their snack and a carton of milk is offered at circle time as they listen to a story. Individual dietary needs are fully considered to promote children's well-being.

Children have wonderful opportunities to develop their physical skills as they participate in physical activities on a daily basis. Staff make good use of the outside play area to promote children's health and development. Children delight in bouncing on the trampoline, and playing on the bikes and scooters. They develop good hand and eye coordination as they play bat and ball and show persistence at activities when they repeatedly attempt to balance and walk using the balancing cups. Children also enjoy painting with water on the pavement and fencing and observe the changes as the sun dries up their artwork.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy comfortable premises that are warm and well maintained. Their play space is very well organised to provide a rich, inviting learning environment. For example, children benefit from bright, interesting displays and well planned activities that are thoughtfully set out to provide interest and to ensure that children are effectively motivated to learn. Children access a good range of play equipment and resources, much of which is presented at low level in boxes and in open storage trolleys. The learning environment is bright and stimulating, welcoming to both children and adults, which enhances children's learning and increases opportunities for them to be independent and develop self-esteem. Children also enjoy using the secure outdoor play area, which is well used to provide a safe and varied learning environment.

Children move around safely because staff ensure that premises and equipment are well maintained and potential safety hazards are successfully minimised. For example, comprehensive annual risk assessments are carried out, electrical and heating systems are maintained annually

and good emergency evacuation procedures are in place. However, the fire drills are not practised regularly to ensure that children are familiar with them. Children's safety is further met because staff closely monitor access to the provision, to protect children from unknown visitors and to prevent children from leaving the setting with unknown adults. Children are also learning good practices regarding their own personal safety. For example, they learn to walk in the playroom so as not to cause accidents and they enjoy activities about road safety when the 'Lollipop man' makes them a visit.

Children are safeguarded from harm and protected because practitioners have a suitable knowledge of child protection issues and a clear understanding of how to respond if concerns are identified. There are written policies and procedures in place; however, these have not been updated in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. This hinders staff's ability to respond effectively to any concerns.

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

The provision is good.

Children take part in a very good range of activities and play opportunities that foster all areas of younger children's development. Activities and resources in the playroom are age specific for children attending and these are all easily accessible ensuring children have free choice, which promotes independence. Children move between activities freely spending as much or as little time as they wish, depending on their interests. This ensures that children take responsibility for their own stage of learning by the ways in which they interact with materials available to them. They delight in playing with the sand and water and observe the changes as they mix the materials together. Children are given the opportunity to decide what they want to play with in the water tray and two-year-olds giggle as they put the floating fish into the water. Children are learning to represent their experiences and feelings when they easel paint, mark make and play with the dough. Children also enjoy adult-led activities; for example, they make leaf prints and paper plate faces. Staff enable children to vary this activity when it turns into revisiting making hand prints.

The interaction between staff and children is very good, ensuring that warm, trusting relationships develop and that most children are very happy and settled. Children who have just started the setting and find it difficult to settle are shown sensitivity with lots of one to one support. Staff spend all of their time engaging with the children, giving support, using playful talk and encouraging them to explore their environment.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. However, there are some good aspects. Staff have sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and of how children learn and progress. Consequently, children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. The learning environment and programme of activities is planned effectively to provide a broad and balanced range of activities and experiences across the six areas of learning. The planning and children's assessment records are in the process of being developed and staff are developing an understanding of the new process. Planning provides clear guidance on the learning outcomes of the activities for the children. Differentiation for children's differing abilities is clearly identified and planning is evaluated. Children's assessment records are in the early stages of development; they include observations of what children can do, with the next steps of their development identified. Although observations are linked to the six areas of learning, they do not highlight the stepping stones along which children are progressing. This hinders staff ability

to gauge individual children's development needs across all areas of their learning. Staff set good challenges for the children and use spontaneous events to extend learning well. For example, children spill the water that they are playing with outdoors; staff notice children making handprints on the pavement with the water and introduce a mathematical element into their play by asking them whose hand is the biggest. Time and resources, including accommodation, are suitably managed to enable children to make progress. Warm, caring relationships are established between staff and children; this provides an environment in which children feel secure and confident in order for them to explore and investigate.

Children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. They are confident, enter the playroom happily, self-register and immediately take part in the activities showing a positive approach to new experiences. They adapt well to the changes in the routine as they line up to play outdoors and approach the snack table at snack time. They are beginning to develop their independence skills when they wash their hands after doing messy activities, put on aprons, help staff tidy away activities and help themselves to the resources from the shelves. Children are building good communication skills. They talk about what they see and what they are doing during their play. Staff effectively question them to enable them to think and respond in their own words. For example, they talk about their homes as they play with the construction materials. Children are beginning to develop emergent literacy skills. They enjoy books, handle them well and take part in rhyming activities during circle time. More able children are beginning to recognise the sounds of some letters of the alphabet. For example, children at the dough table enjoy playing a game of 'I spy' with a member of staff as they find 'r' for rolling pin and 'curly c' for clothes. Children handle mark making materials well and ascribe meaning to marks as they draw a house with windows and create a rainbow.

Children are beginning to talk about numbers and shapes during their play. They count the numbers of children present in the line as they go in and out of the play area and count objects giving a number name for each object they see in a book. More able children are recognising some numbers and shapes as they are drawn on the chalk board at circle time. Children are beginning to show an interest in number problems; for example, they count how many legs a frog has and then state how many legs they have. However, children are not given the opportunity to use simple calculation during everyday activities, for example, by finding out how many children are present and comparing this with how many cartons of milk they need at snack time.

Children enjoy investigating their world to a certain extent. They explore objects and living things as they play with the magnets, different kinds of construction resources and plant seeds and watch them grow. However, children do not have access to resources to enable them to explore how and why things work and happen; for example, through the use of magnifying glasses, binoculars, kaleidoscopes and cameras. They also have limited opportunity to develop an interest in information and communication technology.

Children are creative and enjoy making three-dimensional structures from collage and recycled materials. They can differentiate between some colours as they choose colours to paint and draw. They show an interest in musical instruments and explore the different sounds of the tambourine, drum and maracas. Children sing simple and familiar songs during circle time and use their imaginations well as they play with the dolls and pretend to comb a member of staff's hair using a comb and spoon in the home corner.

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

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are very effectively met through a variety of means including information received from parents at the gradual induction of the child. Equal opportunities are promoted satisfactorily. A suitable range of resources positively represent most areas of diversity in society and children celebrate a variety of festivals from around the world. As a result children begin to understand and respect the differences and similarities between people. However, there is a limited range of resources that positively represent disability in society. Boys and girls are encouraged to take part in all activities.

The staff have a very good awareness of positive behaviour management techniques to enhance children's well-being. Children learn to share, take turns and learn about the consequences of their behaviour on others. Lots of praise and encouragement is offered to children, boosting confidence and self-esteem. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnerships with parents and carers are good. Children are cared for according to parents' wishes, which promotes continuity of care and their well-being. There are effective systems in place to ensure information is shared on a regular basis about the child's progress and daily activities; for example, through daily chats with staff, access to the child's key person, and written reports about children's progress. Policies and procedures are available to parents about the setting and a newsletter is used to update them on any changes and forthcoming events. However, there no information in the prospectus to inform parents about the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage'. Parents are involved in the setting's committee and attend sessions as part of the helper rota. This promotes the two-way process in enhancing children's progress. Parents are also actively encouraged to be involved in their child's learning by bringing in items related to themes being followed and the new leader is in the process of developing a system for sharing information on how parents can extend their child's learning at home. This enriches children's overall development.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a well organised environment. Space, resources and deployment of staff are used very effectively to meet the needs of the children and enhance their well-being. Adult to child ratios are consistently maintained and children benefit from the experience of good, qualified staff, most of whom hold a level 3 qualification in care and education. The generally good range of policies and procedures effectively underpin the setting, in most cases. Most documentation is in place and maintained well.

Leadership and management within the setting are satisfactory. The new manager is motivated and enthusiastic and all staff take full advantage of the training opportunities available to them. The manager has instigated many changes within the setting; she reflects effectively on the practice, which enables her to identify the setting's strengths and weaknesses and implement beneficial plans. Many of these changes are ongoing and reflect areas that need improvement. Staff work very well as a team and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Everyone is committed to the continued improvement of the care and education of the children. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the previous care inspection it was recommended that improvements were made to documentation and resources. Satisfactory improvements have been made to protect children. Staff have a suitable understanding of the child protection procedures and accident records are maintained well. The resources that represent positive images of disability continue to be limited and remains a recommendation.

At the previous nursery education inspection it was recommended that improvements were made to the planning of the curriculum and children's assessment records. Satisfactory improvements have been made to enhance children's learning. The planning is now differentiated to promote the development of children's differing abilities. Although children's assessment records highlight the six areas of learning, they do not take full account of the stepping stones along which children are progressing towards the early learning goals. This remains a recommendation.

## **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 complaint 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 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):

- update the child protection procedures in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board
- ensure that fire drills are practised on a regular basis
- obtain resources that positively reflect images of disability in society.

### **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):

- ensure that appropriate account is taken of the stepping stones towards the early learning goals in the assessment of individual children's progress

- provide opportunities for children to use simple calculation skills during everyday activities
- provide more opportunity for children to develop an interest in information and communication technology and to explore how and why things happen and work
- provide information for parents about the 'Curriculum guidance for 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)