

St Antonys Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	309463
Inspection date	18 September 2007
Inspector	Christine Fraser Turner
Setting Address	St Antonys Parish Centre Annexe, St. Antonys Drive, Fulwood, Preston, PR2 3SQ
Telephone number	01772 490295
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Registered person	The Trustees of St Antonys Pre-School Playgroup
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 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 Anthony's Pre-School Playgroup is run by the trustees of the playgroup. It opened in 1992 and operates from the parish centre annexe in Fulwood, Preston. The group uses a large room with direct access to a kitchen area, a large hall, a coffee area, a small room and toilets. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The group serves the local area.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.15 until 11.45 and on Monday afternoon from 12.30 until 15.00 term time only.

There are currently 39 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 25 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties or disabilities.

The pre-school employs seven staff. There are six staff, including the manager, that hold recognised childcare qualifications. There is one member of staff working towards a relevant childcare qualification. The setting is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are protected from infection and are well taken care of if they have an accident or become ill because staff follow current and appropriate health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. Children learn to understand simple good hygiene routines, such as washing their hands after using the toilet. Staff enforce the message through posters in the bathroom and activities during the session.

Children bring healthy snacks from home and staff always have emergency supplies in case a child forgets their snack. They bring drinks in easily recognisable containers and access them easily during the session. Children learn about healthy eating and living through projects and visits from health professionals. They discuss what foods are good for you and which foods may harm your teeth and some children know that fruit is good for you and too many sweets are not good for you.

Children enjoy a good range of physical activities both in and out of doors. They have daily access to large equipment, such as climbing frames with good safety mats underneath. They learn to crawl through the tunnel and ride bikes, play with balls and hoops. Children move in time to music in planned music sessions indoors.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure, safe indoor and mainly safe outdoor environment. Detailed risk assessment for outdoors does not include all risks. Children benefit from staff taking positive action to keep children safe indoors, for example, a purpose made gate to keep children secure. There have been improvements to the premises for people with disabilities. There is now a ramp to the front entrance and a toilet for people with disabilities.

Children use good quality, suitable and safe equipment. They select additional resources for continuous provision from clearly labelled accessible boxes. Children learn about keeping themselves safe as they are gently reminded to keep toys on the mat to prevent tripping over them. They learn about road safety through visits from the lollipop person and through role play, where they practise using the zebra crossing and waiting for the traffic to stop before crossing.

Children are safeguarded because staff have a good understanding of their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy in the setting and staff provide good support for new children who need reassurance. Children are encouraged to be independent, for example, finding their name card and putting their drink and snack on it. They are involved in a broad range of planned activities and spontaneous events, which support their development. Children choose their own play from a good range of resources available through continuous provision. They enjoy role play, for example, bathing the dolls, using sand, water and paint and dough.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and plan interesting activities linked to the six areas of learning. They plan together as a team at the weekly planning meeting and use their observations and assessments of the children to inform the planning. Staff do not make full use of information they have on children because they send their 'Birth to three matters' records home without updating their Foundation Stage record. Staff create a good learning environment where children can readily access resources.

Children are confident to make their needs known, for example, asking for toys that are not readily available or a particular colour of paint. They concentrate well on self-chosen activities. They form good relationships with each other and staff, for example, in role play as they use their imagination in the hairdressers and staff have rollers put in their hair.

They are learning to recognise their name through self-registration as they arrive. Children confidently access writing tools in a variety of areas and confidently make marks, for example, one child sends a card for his dad's birthday, chosen from a selection in the mark making area. Children count as they put pegs in numbers and sort and count animals in the farm. They learn about how things grow as they plant and care for fruit and vegetables in the garden, for example, tomatoes, beans and potatoes. Children have first hand experiences at looking at chicks as they visit the pre-school. They meet people who help in the community, such as police officers and fire fighters who visit the pre-school. They join in enthusiastically with action songs with the keyboard.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by staff who work effectively with parents to meet children's individual needs and ensure they are fully included in the life of the setting. Good settling in procedures help children and parents become familiar with the setting. Children and parents are greeted warmly by staff as they arrive. Children learn about their own community, for example, as they visit church for the harvest festival. Children behave well and staff act as good role models for the children. Children are encouraged to behave well and receive certificates, for example, helping to tidy up. They play happily together as they play with the farm. Children benefit from a good range of activities and resources that help them value diversity. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. They are well informed about their child's day through daily discussion at the beginning and end of each session. Staff seek parents' views on the setting through questionnaires and staff respond to any queries. Many questionnaires stated that parents were happy with the group and that staff were approachable. Parents receive letters on what their children are learning. They receive written weekly updates from their child's key worker. Parents and carers can ask to see their child's records at any time. Information on the Foundation Stage is available for parents in their folder in the entrance but staff are not pro-active in making sure all parents and carers are aware it.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from recruitment and vetting procedures that contribute to children being protected and cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child development. There is no named deputy to take charge in the absence of the manager. The adult-child ratio positively supports children's learning and play for most of the time. However, staff do not always sit with the children to supervise and promote social interaction at snack time. Good use of time and well-organised space contributes to children's good health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting. Effective policies and procedures work in practice to support the smooth running of the pre-school. Record keeping systems are used well to meet children's needs.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Children benefit from the setting's clear vision that children learn through play. Effective monitoring systems are in place to ensure that all areas of learning are covered and any identified gaps are covered. Staff are committed to ongoing development through training and bring new ideas back to improve the provision for children. Staff identify their own areas for improvement and take steps to improve.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to continue to develop the operational plan and risk assessments. The provider also agreed to include the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse against a member of staff.

There are now written risk assessments in place, and procedures are made available to parents in a folder in the entrance hall. The child protection policies now includes the procedure in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff.

At the last inspection staff agreed to give consideration to children being able to access additional resources so they can further develop their own play and to increase the range of print in the environment so children can identify correctly formed letters.

Children can now benefit from additional resources being made accessible in clearly labelled low containers in the room. They can request further items from staff who bring them from the large store cupboard. Staff now provide more opportunities for children to see correctly formed letters, for example, through doing the weather board and identifying their name.

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.

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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 outdoor area is fully risk assessed before children use it
- ensure there is a named deputy in place
- review the organisation of snack time to ensure more staff are available to sit with children while they are eating to develop the social interaction and supervision of children whilst eating.

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 all parents receive information about the Foundation Stage
- retain children's record of achievement for children already attending the playgroup and use as a starting point for children's continued 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