

# St Andrews Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	206862
<b>Inspection date</b>	22 January 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Yvonne Layton
<b>Setting Address</b>	St Andrews Community Church, Pentland Road, Dronfield Woodhouse, Derbyshire, S18 8ZQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01246 417243 + 07814941343
<b>E-mail</b>	
<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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Andrew's Pre-School opened in 1973. It operates from St Andrews Community Church in Dronfield Woodhouse, Derbyshire. A maximum of 28 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday during term time. Sessions are from 08.45 to 11.45. Children have access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 46 children aged from two-years-six months to under five years on roll. Of these, 28 children receive funding for early education. The pre-school serves families from within the community and surrounding areas. They currently support a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre-school employs eight members of staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. The setting is run by committee and has a parent helper rota.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because the staff follow effective procedures and practices which meet their nutritional, physical and health needs. This includes, consistent hygiene routines followed by staff, such as, only staff who have a basic food hygiene certificate prepare snack and they routinely wear gloves and aprons when handling food. The strong adult support and guidance helps children gain a clear understanding of hygiene and a real desire to become increasingly independent. The children are well used to the established routine of washing their hands prior to and after snack and activities and respond well to staff's consistent reminders. They are able to visit the toilet independently with staff providing appropriate, unobtrusive support and supervision. Children develop good awareness about personal care and hygiene through a wide variety of pictorial reminders, such as, to encourage hand washing and the importance of drinking water. Easily accessible drinking water is provided and the children are well-used to the correct disposal of their beaker. Varied themes are undertaken as planned activities including, 'all about me' and how the body works.

Children's health is protected as all required medication and accident documentation is in place and confidentially maintained. The required documentation is well-supported by supplementary emergency, health and safety policies which are accessible to parents. Staff hold appropriate first aid certificates and a first aid box is readily accessible.

Balanced and nutritious snacks ensure children are well nourished. All snacks are recorded on a menu for parents to see. Individual health and dietary needs are met, including, the recording of allergies. Children learn about food and nutrition through varied activities and by the buying of provisions every day. Two children, on a rota, accompany a member of staff to the local shop where they discuss, choose and purchase the food for snack. Activities also include, planned themes, such as, food tasting, baking and by making their own snack. For example, the children select the filling and make their own sandwich, they choose and chop their own fruit for fruit salad. Each child has their own, named, plate which is covered and stored appropriately until snack time. Children enjoy a planned snack time where they independently select and serve themselves thus increasing independence.

Children explore, test and develop physical control in stimulating daily indoor and outdoor experiences. They learn about themselves and their bodies through a variety of free-choice and planned themes and activities. Children are able to undertake physical challenges as they have access to outdoor and indoor play equipment, such as, a climbing frame and wheeled toys. Physical activities are incorporated into imaginative play, including, a blanket swimming pool, where children are encouraged to 'swim'. Action rhymes and music and movement are used to challenge children and encourage them to keep fit. They undertake free choice and planned challenges such as, ball control, balancing and climbing. Physical play is within the setting's activity planning and includes the staff role to encourage and support children. For example, an identified staff role is talking to the children and getting them to consider what effects exertion has on their bodies.

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

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a very welcoming, stimulating, clean and well-maintained environment. However, to ensure children are fully protected the cracked toilet and missing light bulb covers in the children's toilet require attention. The provision is decorated with a wide variety of posters, photographs, theme tables and wall displays and children's own creative work. They have access to a wide range of resources, toys and equipment that meet their developmental needs well. The staff monitor resources to ensure they are safe and clean for the children to use.

Children are cared for in a setting where risks are identified and minimised and all reasonable steps are taken to ensure they are cared for in a secure environment. They are protected by the effective security of the premises and by the use of safety equipment, including, a safety chain to the main door and substantial radiator covers. Detailed safety policies, procedures and risk assessments, which staff adhere to well, ensure children remain safe. Clear fire evacuation procedures, fire drill practices and subsequent evaluations ensure children develop a sound understanding of the need for fire safety and are kept safe. The staff are vigilant and have consistent safety arrangements, supported by pictorial reminders for the children. For example, children are consistently being reminded and given explanations of safety procedures, such as, wearing shoes in the main room and there are pictorial reminders about how to carry a chair properly. They are kept safe as children are very clear and involved in making the settings safety rules. For example, they easily and confidently recall and explain the reasons for the rules when they use the climbing frame, such as, not using it with dressing-up clothes on or when carrying toys. Children also remind each other about the rules. They actively learn about personal safety by planned, focused themes and activities, including creative. Their awareness is raised by a visit from the road safety officer and they are able to practice road safety using working equipment, such as, a zebra and pedestrian crossing.

Children's welfare is protected as the staff have a sound knowledge and clear understanding of their role and responsibilities with regard to the safeguarding children procedures. All of the staff have attended training and the procedures are made available for parents.

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

The provision is good.

Children are very well settled in the pre-school and have a warm, friendly relationship with the staff. They are extremely confident and keen to access the range of well-presented play activities. All children are encouraged to experience activities by staff who are skilled at supporting and enabling them to enjoy their time at the setting.

Staff are enthusiastic and activities are undertaken with a sense of fun. The mix of planned activities, for example, circle time, story time and focused, and free choice activities ensure children develop independence as well as becoming used to routines and working together. The children are developing their socialisation skills as they learn to participate in group activities and co-operate with each other and adults. However, to further enhance all children's enjoyment and learning a review of the organisation of the structured group times with particular reference to the numbers of children in the group needs to be considered as some children lose interest and focus in the activity.

Children become independent as they choose to access the activities themselves. They have a wide choice of free selection books, mark-making, including, stamps, small hole-punches and templates, and creative, including, a very wide range of resources, such as, junk boxes, feathers, corks, shells and different paper. Staff promote learning well through supporting children when required and their sound practice of knowing when to stand back and let children develop their own ideas, such as, with imaginative and role play.

Children's developmental progress is noted by observations. Staff verbally share information with parents or carers informally daily. There are opportunities for them to share ongoing developmental progress made at home. Planning of activities and assessment records are based on 'Birth to three matters'. This assists staff to promote individual learning.

#### Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make sound progress towards the early learning goals as staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage. All areas of learning are covered and re-visited within activities and over a period of time. Staff are clear about which aspect of learning the activities are related to and record children's achievements on an ongoing basis. Workable planning is in place which is focussed on and has links between each area of learning. All this ensures the children are purposefully occupied. However, child-initiated and led activities are limited both in relation to children in receipt of nursery education funding and for children under the age of three years. Individual assessments are an ongoing record of children's achievements and obtained from using focussed and spontaneous activities. However, records for each child's next stage of learning and how they will be progressed is limited.

Children are challenged by staff that use open-ended questions to develop potential effectively during activities. They are able to reason, question and think, for example, they hold lively discussions with staff during group sessions. Children behave well and are eager to try new experiences. They concentrate well both with the support of staff and alone, for example, a three-year-old concentrated alone for an average of fifteen minutes cutting and tearing paper at the free-choice creative table. A staff member joined him and appropriately supported him to use the scissors to cut the paper. Children relate very well to their peers and staff and to visitors. For example, a four-year-old explained in detail about how he could help himself to free mark-making resources and explained fully about how to use and what he can make with a small hole-punch. Children are confident. All are very well supported by staff to explore and develop their own personalities.

Children are able to recall as they listen to rhymes and stories and respond to staff questions. They have access to a very varied range of mark-making resources and activities, including, free-choice mark-making and letter forming in sand and on white-boards. Children enjoy a text rich environment. They have many opportunities to recognise their own name and most are able to write it. All are starting to form recognisable letters. There is good use of name cards, such as, on entry children select their name from a board and during snack they have their own named place and a named plate. Name cards contain the child's full name and there is a picture emblem to assist younger children. All children are actively encouraged to practise pencil control activities appropriate to their age and development.

Children are developing a love of books as they have lots of opportunity to enjoy them both individually and within a group. There is a well-resourced, comfortable book area where they readily sit alone or in small groups. This is supplemented by activities, such as, informal one-to-one story telling, planned story time and activities based on popular stories.

Children are developing a sound understanding of mathematics. The environment is number rich. There is a well-resourced mathematics area with a number display and a wide variety of resources, such as, dominoes, number animals and jigsaws. Children are encouraged to spontaneously use their knowledge effectively during play, for example, during singing and rhymes. Planned, daily routine activities include number, for example, a pre-snack rhyme. Varied themes and focussed activities are undertaken which include the development of children's mathematical skills.

Children are developing an awareness of the needs of others. They respond positively to the setting's rules and boundaries and to the staff's consistent reminders. Children assist and show concern for each other. The natural world is beginning to be understood as children enjoy the varied topics presented by staff. For example, the life cycle of the frog is explored. They forage in the local environment to explore nature, including, collecting autumn leaves and using for creative activities. Visits from the ranger service and 'Bug lady' accompanied by a variety of creatures enable the children to explore nature. Children have the opportunity to develop their technology skills as they have access a lap-top computer, of which, staff appropriately monitor and support the children. This is supplemented with a variety of resources, including, a play calculator till, a karaoke machine, remote control toys and sensory lights.

Children's learning and experience is enhanced as they undertake topics about the world around them. National, personal and celebrations that occur in other cultures are well promoted. Themes within the setting relating to their own lives and other people of the world encourage a sense of belonging. For example, focussed group discussion time, table displays, creative and imaginative activities enhance children's experience. Children are very responsive to staff and use different languages confidently to say 'hello' at the greeting session. They recall and name previously discussed cultural greetings. At another planned group session they have opportunity to learn and talk about different countries, including, the tasting of different countries cuisine. Topics blend into each other, for example, 'all about me' is incorporated into healthy living. This includes an imaginative swimming pool, with a blue blanket for the water, changing rooms, a payment kiosk, pool rules and an assortment of swimming equipment. Children are encouraged to 'swim' for exercise, supported by discussion and encouragement from staff. Children's learning about their own community and the people within it is well explored. They regularly visit the local shops, surgery and building site. External visitors are encouraged, for example, a parent police officer with a police car and a parent fire officer and fire engine develop children's interest in people who help them. During a 'baby' theme the setting adapted the imaginative play area into a 'baby clinic'. The health visitor contributed to this and 'ran' a clinic.

Children's physical development is promoted through a balanced programme of activities. Their fine manipulative skills are enhanced through the use of a varied range of small resources and planned activities, such as using scissors, sticking tape, a variety of different glue and small hole punches during craft. Indoor and outside play provide opportunity to run freely, balance, pedal wheeled toys, catch and throw and kick balls, all of which children enthusiastically engage in and are fully supported to develop their potential.

Children have varied opportunities to develop their creative experiences as they have access to a exciting range of craft and role play activities. They have opportunities to develop their own creativity through planned and free choice activities, including, free access to painting and craft, junk box modelling and activities using a wide variety of textiles and materials. They explore natural and everyday resources, such as, household items, corks, bottle tops, cards and shells. Whilst adults are there to support them, children readily make their own decisions regarding the design and the content of their work.

Musical opportunities are varied. This includes, sessions with musical instruments and visits from the school band. Rhymes and songs are enjoyed using tapes with children's rhymes and a range of music, including, classical and cultural music.

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

The provision is good.

Children are valued and individual needs are respected. All children have access to all activities. Staff use discussion with parents and carers and outside agencies, when necessary, to ensure specific individual requirements are met. The needs of children who have learning disabilities and/or difficulties are recognised and met sensitively. Staff are well supported by a sound policy regarding learning disabilities and/or difficulties which details how the service will be provided to children. The thorough levels of support ensure that all children are included and their needs are soundly met.

Children develop a good understanding of how everyone positively contributes in society. Resources which promote and represent the wider community are widely available, including, books, themed table displays and group work which effectively enhances the children's awareness. Children experience well planned topics regarding other countries and cultures, including, creative and imaginative activities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff are proactive in ensuring the setting's policy for behaviour management is implemented well. They talk to children about their behaviour and are consistent in their approach helping children to feel secure. Children know and understand the setting's boundaries well and as a consequence they are well behaved. They develop a sound sense of independence and self-worth as they are encouraged to share, take turns, co-operate and follow the pre-school boundaries. This is recognised by staff as they offer lots of praise to the children for their efforts and achievements. Children are reminded about caring for others and positive behaviour by posters throughout, such as, 'Use mouths to say kind things.' 'Hands are not for hitting'. They respond to staff's consistent reminders naturally. The use of praise, encouragement and positive reinforcement contributes effectively to the children developing good social skills and a sense of belonging to a wider family group.

Children's well-being is supported as all parents and carers receive information about the services provided and how their child will be cared for. They have free access to the settings policies and procedures. Regular newsletters are presented and parents receive information both written and verbal regarding, activities, themes, the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage. To promote partnership with parents the setting holds a play week and undertakes a summer outing for children, parents and carers.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Parents are kept well informed about what themes and activities are to be completed. Written information is provided about what areas of learning the themes and are relate to. Informal discussion about their child's progress and achievements keeps parents informed about their progress. However, children's development is not fully supported as assessment records are not seen by parents until they leave the setting. Parents are invited to contribute to themes and the setting has a book lending library.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides. This is a strong provision. It is successful at making sure that the outcomes for children are positive. The child care practice is effective. Children are in the care of qualified, experienced staff that support them to ensure they are happy and settled in the pre-school. The organisation to operate the pre-school is strong. Solid planning of activities and good use of resources, equipment and facilities ensures children's time in the setting is worthwhile and challenging. The manager has clear focus on what areas need to be developed. There are regular staff meetings and the staff are committed to develop their skills through accessing training. They are well-supported by the committee to access training. Children's well-being is additionally supported as each staff member has a designated responsibility for developing/ensuring a specific area of the setting is effective. For example, a staff member has responsibility to ensure resources for the imaginative and creative area are in place and another monitors and replaces books. The staff know each other well and this contributes to the pleasant atmosphere, created by the staff team, in which the children learn and play.

Leadership and management for nursery education is good. The three- and four-year-olds are making sound progress towards the early learning goals. The leadership of the setting has a clear, vision for the setting to support the children in their personal development to reach their potential and celebrate their achievements. The manager is forward thinking in recognising the provisions strengths and weaknesses and there is a commitment to address areas for improvement. Staff have a sound knowledge of the principles of the early learning goals.

The welfare, care and learning of the children are well promoted through the efficient maintenance of records, policies and procedures both required and additional for the efficient and safe management of the provision. Documents are stored securely and safely in order to ensure children's privacy.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the setting agreed to demonstrate how to make the toilet area suitable for children to use. Children's welfare is protected and parents are reassured as the children's toilet area is clean and generally well-maintained. However, there are current issues relating to one of the toilets and some light bulb covers in the toilet area that has been carried over to this inspection.

At the last nursery education inspection two points for consideration were made. These related to the continued development of the planning and assessment process to make staff more effective in highlighting what children are learning and where to move them on to. To provide more opportunities for children to explore technical equipment.

Children's learning is supported as the setting continues to evaluate and develop the methods of assessment in use. However, a record of children's future learning and how they will be progressed, which is accessible to parents, is not fully completed therefore this has been carried forward to this inspection.

Children's learning is enhanced as within the planning and through discussion the setting demonstrates appropriate use of the computer and a good range of technical equipment ensuring the children benefit from the equipment both as planned and free choice activities.



## 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):

- consider a review of the organisation of group time to further enhance all children's enjoyment and learning
- ensure all equipment is well maintained and in a suitable condition with particular regard to the damaged children's toilet and missing light bulb covers in the bathroom.

#### 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):

- develop further opportunities for children's interests, ideas and choices to be part of the planning of activities (also applies to care)
- continue to develop individual assessment and promote partnership with parents by identifying and recording children's next stage of learning and how the child will be progressed and by the sharing of assessment records 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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)