

St Anthony's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	130719
Inspection date	11 February 2008
Inspector	Christine McInally
Setting Address	Tamworth Road, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 5FJ
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Registered person	Lynne Butler
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 first registered in 1989 and is accommodated in a church hall situated in the Poet's Corner area of Hove. It is privately owned, and the provider who holds a suitable level three qualification works as the manager. It is open Monday to Thursday from 09:00 to 16:00 and from 09.00 to 12.00 on a Friday, during term time only.

There are currently 60 children on roll who attend a variety of sessions, of these 48 receive funded nursery education. The pre-school has experience of caring for children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those for whom English is an additional language. The children attending are representative of the local community.

There are 10 members of staff including the owner, of these five hold suitable qualifications in childcare and four are currently undertaking a suitable qualification. The premises consist of a large playroom, a small kitchen off the main room and separate toilet facilities. The pre-school has access to a small outdoor area. The setting receives support from CEYC (City Early Years and Childcare) and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The group is

accredited by Brighton & Hove QUILT (Quality Improvement in Learning and Teaching) a quality assurance scheme for the Foundation Stage.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children thrive because staff follow effective procedures and practices which meet their physical, nutritional and health needs. Children learn good personal hygiene practices such as when they should wash their hands and why. Visitors, such as the dental hygienist, are used to good effect to help teach children to care for themselves. Good arrangements are in place for dealing with sickness and accidents minimising the risk of the spread of infection.

Children enjoy a good range of physical activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle, they play outside and extend their skills, on a daily basis. Children enjoy a stimulating variety of activities helping them to gain increasing control of their bodies for example, as they dig in the sand searching for 'monsters' or as they play on the climbing frame.

Children experience a range of healthy snacks including dried and fresh fruit encouraging them to develop healthy eating practices. While children are encouraged to pour their drinks for themselves they are not offered opportunities to prepare the snacks. Throughout the session children freely access drinking water, learning to respond to their bodies needs to drink when thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their play in a safe environment where staff use risk assessments well to reduce potential hazards. Children benefit from plenty of space which is adequately organised, allowing children to move around safely, freely and independently. They learn about safety through staff's clear and simple explanations as to why a rule is in place, for example they know not to run inside, as they might fall and hurt themselves. Children begin to learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe as they practise fire evacuation procedures. Through themes and topics, they become involved in fun activities about keeping safe. This is further supported by visits from police and fire officers.

Children use a range of good quality toys and resources; these are well maintained and appropriate to their age and stage of development.

Children are safeguarded by staff that have a clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures. There is a clearly written policy which is shared with the parents. All of these measures contribute to the safety and welfare of the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the pre-school happily and quickly separate from their parents to play with their friends and involve themselves in activities. The friendly approach of the staff contributes to this welcoming and relaxing environment for children. They achieve well because staff are skilled and use their understanding of early years guidance, such as Birth to three matters and

the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage, to provide good quality care and education. Children's art work and photographs are attractively displayed promoting their self-esteem and sense of belonging.

Children are interested in the activities available and spend time concentrating on self-chosen activities. Staff encourage children to play together and share. All children enjoy plenty of opportunities to develop their social skills. For example, as they sit together and chat at snack or negotiate and co-operate during role-play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff use the Foundation Stage guidance effectively to support children's development through the stepping stones. Planning is good, links clearly to the stepping stones and ensures a wide range of activities and experiences are provided to extend children's learning. Staff observe the children during free play and focussed activities using their notes to assess children's achievements. This information is then used to plan the next steps in each child's learning.

Children are well settled and comfortable with the staff, entering the building happily, and keen to see what is on offer. They are building good relationships with their peers and becoming very sociable. They share, take turns and co-operate well when playing. The staff interact well with the children, they become involved in their play and use this time to ask open-ended questions. This helps children develop their initiative, builds on their natural curiosity and encourages them to think for themselves.

Children develop a healthy interest in books, they enjoy sharing stories with adults and peers and delight in predictable endings. They are confident speakers, and understand they can use writing for a variety of purposes and are beginning to write for themselves. Children skilfully use and recognise numbers in everyday activities; they count confidently and know numbers that are important to them. They choose number activities during free play and enjoy number rhymes and songs.

Topic work and practical activities arouses children's natural curiosity and develops their exploration and investigation skills. They learn about nature and the man made environment as they study topics, such as Pets and Occupations. Children move confidently showing a good awareness of space and others as they move around the hall and as they play on the large physical equipment. Children express themselves creatively using all of their senses to actively explore a stimulating range of new experiences.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into the setting by staff who make them feel valued and special. Staff create a warm atmosphere as they smile at the children and show interest in what they are doing. This contributes to the children's self esteem. Children are developing an awareness of their own and other cultures through a range of resources, planned activities and as they celebrate a variety of festivals. Staff have a positive attitude to working with children identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their families. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is good. Staff act as good role models, they are attentive to children's needs and show respect for what they are doing and saying. Children are polite, share resources and take turns. Staff give explanations why behaviour is not acceptable to help children develop an understanding about right from wrong. Children take responsibility for their environment and eagerly help to tidy away toys and resources.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Positive relationships are established with parents through the welcoming approach of the staff and the effective involvement of parents as helpers. Parents receive good information on the activities provided and the Foundation Stage. The owner is currently in the process of setting up a website for the setting. Staff are friendly and approachable they ensure that all parents know how their children are progressing and developing, with regular consultations being held. Children's learning is enhanced by this sharing of information between staff and parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from being cared for by staff that are qualified and experienced in childcare. All staff members have a good knowledge and understanding of children's developmental needs. They work well as a team and are clear about their individual responsibilities. All children receive good support from a staff group that enjoy their company and know them well helping them feel secure and confident. The sessions are organised to allow children time for 'free play', when they can freely choose from the activities offered, and 'focus activity' when children take part in adult-led activities. The change over from 'free play' to 'focus activity' is not effectively organised, resulting in some children becoming restless.

Leadership and management is good. There are systems in place to monitor and evaluate the funded nursery education. Policies and procedures to guide the staff team are in place, and available to parents. These are used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. All aspects of the children's care and learning are discussed with the parents, who are kept well informed of their child's achievements. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the previous nursery education inspection the setting has introduced more opportunities for children to develop their personal independence by encouraging them to pour drinks for themselves at snack time. They have changed how they organise 'circle time'. This is now carried out with small groups of children, where they have an opportunity to discuss objects brought from home relating to the current topic. Both these measures encourage children's independence and confidence.

Following the last care inspection the pre-school developed staff's knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities issues. They have updated their child protection policy and their special educational needs statement; both now comply with current guidance. All of these measures contribute to the care and welfare of the children.

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):

- review the organisation of the transition from 'free play' to 'focus activity' to allow children more choice

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 more opportunities for children to be involved in the preparation of their snack

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