

Aldbourne Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	146021
Inspection date	11 October 2007
Inspector	Jenny Scarlett
Setting Address	St Michael's C of E School, Back Lane, Aldbourne, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 2BP
Telephone number	07919 808641 (m)
E-mail	
Registered person	Aldbourne Pre-school
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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Aldbourne Pre-school opened in 1962 and moved to St Michael's C of E School in 1997. The pre-school is privately owned and operates from a self contained classroom with its own toilets and cloakroom facilities at St Michael's C of E School in the village of Aldbourne near Marlborough in Wiltshire. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 07:45 to 15:00 term time only. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 51 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. Of these 40 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide geographical area. The pre-school supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs eight staff. Of these seven staff, including the managers hold appropriate early years qualifications and or teaching qualification. One staff member is working towards a recognised early years qualification. The pre-school is a member of the Bristol Standard Quality Assurance scheme and receives support from the Early Years Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are aware of the importance of looking after their bodies. They follow excellent personal hygiene routines such as hand washing and wiping their noses and are very independent in their care needs. Children actively contribute to the development of the health and care routines such as tidying up after activities and preparing themselves for snack and meal times. Children stay healthy because staff implement effective robust procedures to minimise the spread of infection. For example, they clean tables using anti bacterial spray and provide anti-bacterial hand gel for the children. A high ratio of staff are qualified in first aid procedures. This ensures all accidents are dealt with effectively.

Children learn about healthy living through discussions and stories with staff and activities linked to projects, for example, children make vegetable soup using a variety of vegetables. Children are able to talk about foods that are good for you and demonstrate an excellent understanding of foods that are healthy. Children appreciate the varied healthy snacks such as crackers with cheese and banana. These comply with individual dietary requirements to ensure children remain healthy. Children show self-assurance when helping to prepare the tables for snack time. They are able to select and serve their own portions and are aware drinking water is available to them at all times. Lunch club meals supplied by the pre-school are well balanced and take account of the individual and cultural needs of all children. Children have choices in a selection of sandwiches with varied fillings, followed by jelly and yoghurt as well as cake. The additional resource of a dedicated person to supply picnic lunch meals is an excellent initiative.

Children experience varied exciting opportunities to develop their physical skills both indoors and out. For example, children use their imagination well as they build a snake pit using twigs and sticks. They lift grass turfs and look for worms and hide them in the sticks. Some children build a pirate ship using crates and plastic boxes whilst others dig in wet sand or sit on the large tractor tyres and chat to each other and staff. Children move confidently between areas both in and out of doors. They demonstrate excellent co-ordination skills and an awareness of others as they join ring games and balance and jump of beams in the school hall. Children take part in a range of activities in all areas of learning, which helps develop both their fine and large motor skills. They are able to control pencils, scissors and paintbrushes with a good range of activities to develop their manipulative skills. Children move with confidence, they run and jump, take part in ring games with staff and dig in the garden. Children receive excellent opportunities to explore and visit the local community. They go on outings to varied places of interest such as the local woods where they explore their environment and the garden centre.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children use an excellent range of safe, good quality, developmentally appropriate resources. They are able to self select and choose with whom and what they play with. The pre-school environment is vibrant and child centred with wonderful displays of children's work, photographs and pictures displayed. Staff are confident to allow the children to choose where they play and allow them to move the resources around the room to meet their play needs.

Children are very confident and secure in their environment through the excellent deployment of staff who work directly with them. Staff's awareness of children's developing abilities helps to ensure appropriate safety measures are in place to avoid dangerous situations and minimise risks. As a result, risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because staff are extremely vigilant and use thorough risk assessments to reduce potential hazards both on and off site. Staff have an excellent understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits and encourage children effectively in organising their play environment. This allows children to learn some sense of danger and knowledge about how to protect themselves from harm; for example, building a camp fire in the woods and the safe use of scissors when opening boxes in the setting.

Children are safeguarded from harm because staff recognise their role with regards to protecting children in their care. Children's safety is assured as they arrive and leave the pre-school as all staff remain vigilant and are deployed effectively. Children are protected from visitors because they are requested to show identification, sign into the setting and are never left unsupervised with the children. Children are well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures and give high priority to the children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children have a real appetite for learning and relish their time in the pre-school. They enter the pre-school confidently and settle well because of the individual welcome staff provide. The high level of staff supervision enables children to explore and learn within a safe, secure environment. Children's needs are met effectively through staff's sensitive and appropriate interactions that promote their self-esteem. They achieve well because staff are skilled and use their excellent understanding of early years guidance, such as the Birth to three matters framework and the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage, to provide high quality care and education. Excellent positive relationships are evident between staff and children. Younger children receive sensitive support from well qualified staff until they are ready to face new challenges independently.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. The vibrant stimulating environment enables children to learn through child initiated play. They are interested in what is around them, have excellent choices in their play and activities and confidently utilise their environment and resources to become independent learners. Children behave extremely well. They know the boundaries and work well together negotiating turn taking during their play and activities. Staff work directly with the children. They show an excellent understanding of the individual development needs of the children. Staff help children to focus on activities such as counting and comparing numbers and building and developing good concentration skills. Children grapple with new ideas, they explore why the duplo will not stay together and persist at activities demonstrating excellent concentration skills. They ask staff for help and support in activities if they need it and children welcome staff in to their play, for example, building a rocket in the cloakroom. Children share exciting news with staff when they see a man climbing the church spire or when lots of parcels are being delivered to the pre-school. Children's imaginary play is varied and interesting as they draw on their own experiences as they build a snake pit in the garden. They respond to challenges with great enthusiasm and excitedly hunt for worms and bugs under grass turf and logs.

Children are making outstanding progress towards the early learning goals. By the time they go to school they are ready, well prepared and confident to accept the transition to their new environment. Children respond to new activities and challenge with enthusiasm. They increase their thinking skills with practical first hand experiences to explore and investigate. Activities are broad and balanced and based on children's individual needs. A flexible approach to planning and an excellent balance between adult and child-led activities allows children to learn at their own pace. Staff are perceptive to children's interests and utilise this knowledge to plan activities, such as a visit to the local woods where children explore their environment and build a camp fire. They question children effectively to gauge their learning and revisit topics and activities to consolidate their learning. Teaching is inspiring, spontaneous and exciting. Children listen enthusiastically to imaginative stories and show high levels of curiosity as they imagine what is in the boxes. They learn mathematical concepts through first hand fun activities such as putting the boxes in number order and compare lengths as staff and children lay on top of them.

Staff are extremely well qualified and have an excellent knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. They are secure in their knowledge of the children's starting points and build on these to provide an exciting learning environment. Assessments of the children are rigorous. They use highly effective systems to observe, monitor and record children's achievements and to provide experiences that help children take the next step in their learning. Staff demonstrate an excellent knowledge of tracking the children's progress and use the information effectively to guide planning. Staff promote an open door partnership with parents and carers and provide numerous ways to enable them to become involved in their child's learning.

The activities and experiences for all children are rich and varied meeting their individual needs extremely well. Relationships are excellent with a happy buzz of children engaged in varied activities within the setting. All staff are skilled and sensitive to the management of the children and their behaviour. Staff use the accommodation and resources effectively to support the children's learning which reflects their backgrounds and the wider community. The staff work extremely well as a team, guided by the committed and motivating joint managers. There is a strong commitment to improvement through regular meetings, training and development of the staff. The managers are rigorous in their monitoring procedures enabling all staff to maintain the high standards of teaching.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Children arrive at the setting happy and confident. They and their parents are made to feel welcome on arrival and eagerly look forward to the days activities. Children's individual pegs, shoe store and labelled drawers provide them with a sense of belonging as they store their pictures and personal possessions.

Children feel valued in the setting. Relationships are excellent. The play and education provision is organised and monitored exceptionally well to ensure children have access to the full range of activities. Staff have established excellent links with staff at St Michaels' Primary school, They share good practice, advice and strategies for children, resources and have a close supportive relationship with the head teacher. This eases the children's transition to the school environment. Parents and carers are well informed by staff. Staff actively seek parents' views about their children's needs and interests before the child starts at the setting. They share relevant background information, play activities and discuss children's specific needs. A variety

of clear and informative notice boards with relevant up to date information is accessible to all parents. Children benefit from the open door policy and two-way sharing of information, with opportunities for parents to speak to staff to enhance their development and learning. Parents receive excellent opportunities to contribute to the assessments made on their child and to be involved in their learning. As a result, parents and carers have a very good understanding of their child's progress. Parents are extremely positive in their praise of the pre-school and the care and education offered to their children.

Staff are pro-active in ensuring the needs of all children are being met. They demonstrate an excellent knowledge of the individual needs of the children in their care. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) demonstrates an excellent knowledge of the fundamental principles of the code of practise. As a result, staff work together with parents, carers and other professional bodies to plan appropriate activities to ensure the children take part at a level appropriate to their needs. Children develop a positive attitude to others through varied positive images displayed around the setting. They receive extensive opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through planned activities, visitors to the pre-school and outings to local places of interest. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Children benefit exceptionally well from staff who adopt a consistent and positive approach to the management of their behaviour. The clear expectations and consistent boundaries for children, helps them learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Children are encouraged to make informed choices and make decisions in their play and learning. They become aware of the routines and procedures and know what to expect. Children know right from wrong, they are sensitive to the needs of others, readily share toys and resources and co-operate with each other. Staff increase children's understanding of right and wrong, they respond to gentle reminders to care for their environment, the pre-school resources and each other. As a result children's behaviour is exemplary.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The provision for the quality of leadership and management is outstanding. Children's care is significantly enhanced by the pre-school's effective and efficient organisation. Staff working with the children are highly skilled, enthusiastic, knowledgeable and consistently promote the children's wellbeing. Staff ensure children experience meaningful opportunities within a vibrant atmosphere which is contributing to their learning. As a result, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The joint owner/ managers and the staff team are enthusiastic and well informed about Early Years. They demonstrate an excellent understanding of their roles and responsibilities with robust induction procedures in place. Staff are committed to continuous improvement and development for themselves and the pre-school. They update their child care skills and knowledge by undertaking training and promoting their personal development. The managers have a clear focus, are reflective practitioners and know their staff well. They regularly reflect, monitor and improve the quality of their care and education. They motivate and inspire staff are very hands on and promote excellent practice. These robust procedures are used to help develop their skills in organising a provision that meets the children's needs, keeps them healthy and safeguards their welfare. This results in a happy and focussed team who work effectively meeting the personal development and achievements of all the children.

Improvements since the last inspection

The previous care inspection recommended that the pre-school make sure parents are made aware of the child protection procedures, ensure the daily registers are accurately recorded and to update the medication forms to ensure they are dated and signed by parents. The pre-school have made significant improvements which promote the children staying healthy and safe. Clear and robust procedures for notifying parents of child protection are in place. The managers regularly review and update the policies and procedures to ensure staff recognise their responsibilities and roles towards the children's care. All medication records are accurately recorded and countersigned by parents and carers and clear registers are recorded detailing staff, children and visitors on the premises. As a result children's safety, health and wellbeing are protected well because staff are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary.

The last nursery education inspection highlighted that there were no significant weaknesses to report but consideration should be given to; further developing the assessment programme to ensure they are effectively used to plan for each child's future learning and increase opportunities for children to practise their mark making skills. Children have excellent opportunities to mark make and are encouraged to write their names on their own pieces of work. Assessments of the children are rigorous. They use highly effective systems to observe, monitor and record children's achievements and to provide experiences that help children take the next step in their learning. Staff demonstrate an excellent knowledge of tracking the children's progress and use the information effectively to guide planning.

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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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