

St Ambrose Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Gerald Griffin

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

St Ambrose Pre-School opened in 1982. The group is committee run and operates from a self-contained building in the grounds of St Ambrose's Primary School, a Roman Catholic school close to the town centre of Kidderminster. The setting serves both the local and surrounding areas. A maximum of 40 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open from 08.55 until 15.00 each week day during term time only. Children may attend for a variety of sessions between these times. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area, and older pre-school age children attend physical education sessions in the school hall. The setting has good disability access. The setting is on the Early Years Register, the compulsory part of the Childcare Register and the voluntary part of the Childcare Register.

There are currently 55 children from two to under five years old on roll. This includes 30 children in receipt of early education funding. Support is available for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The pre-school also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

One full-time member of staff and seven part-time members of staff, all of whom have early years qualifications to degree level or National Vocational Qualifications Level 3, work with the children. The setting receives support from the local authority and is involved in local early years partnership group and providers' forums. The group recently achieved a Bronze award in the 'Growing Together' Quality Assurance Scheme.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

St Ambrose Pre-School provides its children with an outstanding experience. Staff work extremely hard and provide a safe and stimulating atmosphere in which children make excellent progress in all areas of their development. Children thoroughly enjoy their activities. One parent said, 'They love it so much the problem is getting them to leave at the end of the session, not to come at the start.' Parents are very happy with the quality and standards of care and education provided and are informed very well. Very effective planning ensures the varying needs of children are fully met. All children have access to, and are able to take full advantage of, all that the centre provides. The outstanding leadership not only sustains high standards but strives to make standards even higher. The capacity for further improvement is outstanding.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- improve outdoor resources to promote children's literacy and numeracy development.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children learn in a very safe and secure environment because safeguarding and health and safety arrangements are robust and regularly reviewed. Risk assessments are regularly undertaken, for example when older children use the gym facilities in the adjacent primary school. Children who may be at risk are quickly identified and effective arrangements exist to ensure their care and welfare. Staffing is generous and exceeds legal requirements. All staff hold appropriate qualifications and receive regular training to sharpen their Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) skills. The very wide range of resources that children find most interesting and stimulating are skilfully used to promote learning. The manager, staff and committee undertake regular, robust monitoring and evaluation, which provides them with a crystal clear view of the setting's strengths and areas for development. This leads to effective improvement plans. For example, to improve physical development, the outdoor learning area has been enlarged to provide more space for children to run round in and to use the fleet of toy 'taxis'. Staff recognise that further outdoor resources are needed to develop children's literacy and numeracy. This constant drive for improvement, together with its ability to maintain high quality provision shows that the centre has outstanding capacity to become even better.

Excellent links with outside agencies ensure children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those who are at the early stages of learning English, receive first class support. Parents are extremely pleased with the quality of care and education their children receive. They are well informed about their child's progress. The induction procedures that ensure children settle quickly in routines are most effective. Strong links with local schools ensure children make a smooth transition to Reception.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children thoroughly enjoy working in the centre's safe, bright and stimulating environment. Adults' expert knowledge of EYFS learning ensures children's experiences are very well planned and appropriate. The child's key worker is central to this provision. They use their regular assessments of children's development very well to plan the next steps in children's development. Planning is very flexible and is always based on play. There is an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Children's independence is promoted very well. For example, children are encouraged to make suggestions for themes so that activities can be planned that reflect their interest. Children often choose to work outdoors. Here facilities have been much improved recently and provide very well for most areas of learning. There is scope for more resources, such as numbers on the 'taxis' and word labels on apparatus to promote children's numeracy and literacy.

Children are challenged very well by their activities and make outstanding progress in all aspects of their learning. For example, a nervous child who had started at the

centre the previous week, was already talking to other children and sharing toys and resources, showing rapid gains in her personal development. The links with nature permeate much of the curriculum and other learning opportunities. Because the children's experiences are closely related to this, their knowledge and understanding of the world is greatly enhanced. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those at the early stage of acquiring English, make similar outstanding progress to other children because of the excellent care and support they receive. Polish speaking children make rapid gains in learning English because a member of staff speaks their home language and they are given books written in Polish. Information for parents is available in the home language too. Adults regularly talk to children to develop their language skills.

During group sessions children enjoy celebrating festivals such as Christmas, birthdays and joining in activities such as singing. Children are encouraged to understand their feelings. They behave extremely well and appropriate behaviour is praised well. Children's personal and social skills are developing very well as they begin to take turns to listen and respect each other and to share resources. Promotion of children's health and welfare are a priority and children are encouraged to develop high standards of hygiene. Healthy snacks and ready access to drinking water and the many opportunities to take physical exercise promote well children's gaining of a health lifestyle.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.