



## St Alban's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	305313
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 September 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Sarah Taylor
<b>Setting Address</b>	Priory Lane, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK10 3HJ
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<b>Registered person</b>	St Alban'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 Alban's Pre-School opened in 1981. It is located within the grounds of St Alban's Catholic Primary School in a semi-rural area of Macclesfield. The pre-school accommodation is a purpose built building of three activity rooms and an outdoor play area. It serves the local community and beyond.

There are currently 85 children aged from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 37 funded children who attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children

with special needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school opens five mornings and five afternoons each week during term time only. Times of opening are 09.00 to 11.30, and 12.30 to 15.00.

There are seven members of staff and the majority hold relevant early years qualifications and have experience in child care. The setting receives support from a teacher from Sure Start Cheshire.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children access outdoor activities daily which contributes to their good health. They run and play in the fresh air and practice physical skills on equipment such as the climbing frame, wheeled vehicles and tunnel. They understand that exercise is important as staff promote physical activity on a daily basis through dancing sessions and outdoor play.

Children are well protected from infection through good hygiene routines which include wiping tables before and after snack time and the cleaning of toys and equipment. Staff knowledge of food hygiene practices contributes to the prevention of infection. Children are reminded of the importance of personal hygiene before snack time when they are asked to wash their hands and given the reasons why. They are protected from cross infection as the provider has a very good sick child policy which is shared with parents.

Children's health is fostered through the provision of a good choice of healthy snacks. They are able to make selections from beautifully presented food, such as strawberries and apples and often help in the preparation and serving of the snack. This promotes independence. Their dietary requirements are well catered for. Children have an understanding of a healthy lifestyle as staff promote healthy living through visits from the dental nurse and topics on healthy food and exercise. They do not benefit from continuous hydration as drinks are only offered at snack time.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in well maintained premises. Spacious and welcoming facilities are provided which help children to feel settled. Displays of children's work are bright and attractive helping to develop children's sense of belonging. Children are able to move around safely in the well organised environment. Rooms are arranged well to provide different areas for play and for rest. Children benefit from enough space and suitable facilities indoors and out of doors. Risk assessments take place at the beginning of each session. Any issues are noted and addressed immediately, for example, staff check outdoors and clear the area before play and this helps to protect children from harm. The children are well safeguarded within the setting as doors are

kept locked with a secure entry system.

Toys and equipment conform to required safety standards and are checked for their suitability. This ensures that children have a sound selection of toys and equipment to choose from. Safety equipment is in place such as smoke alarms and grid covers. This effectively maintains children's wellbeing.

The welfare of children is maintained as staff have a clear understanding of the area child protection committee guidance. They know how to safeguard the child. A nominated member of staff takes responsibility for the handling of concerns and staff are clear about monitoring and who to contact for advice and with concerns.

Children's safety is maintained when going out of the setting through staff vigilance and very good supervision. Visits take place through the year from the fire service and the police and children learn about fire safety and personal safety. Through this, they are learning how to protect their own wellbeing.

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

The provision is good.

Children happily greet the staff and each other on arrival and eagerly join a group activity or choose their own game. They are all relaxed and confident in the secure, caring environment. Children with additional needs are offered one to one support so that they feel happy and secure in the group. Children chatter excitedly and converse easily with their friends and with all adults. Good settling in procedures are in place and are adapted to each child's individual needs to ensure a smooth transition from home to pre-school. For example, one mother stays with the child as the parents and the child have agreed that this is the best method for this child at this time.

The group have recently acquired the Birth to three matters framework and the staff are attending training to enhance their current good practice. They already include many of the recommendations and provide good quality care and education for young children.

Children under 3 years learn about pattern through the Rainbow Fish topic. They are expressing their imagination in the role play area and through the creative activities, such as making a planet and a rocket for the topic on space. They are learning well in all areas of development. They develop physically through dancing and outdoor play, intellectually through number rhymes and literacy opportunities and socially through the expectations of behaviour and values such as caring and sharing within the group.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children have a positive attitude and are strongly motivated to learn in an inviting play environment. Staff have good knowledge and understanding of early learning goals which provides a firm foundation for the whole curriculum. A variety of teaching styles is used from individual, groups and whole class. Consequently, children make good progress in

relation to the stepping stones. Every child is involved in the inclusive setting where good planning systems are in place and activities are adapted to include younger children and those with special needs. Staff have a good awareness of each child's ability level as they successfully identify ways to extend their learning. Written observations and assessments link successfully with planning to predict the next steps in development for each child and to provide relevant information for parents.

Children benefit from the strong emphasis on the enrichment of language and communication that is promoted throughout the setting. A form of sign language is used effectively to supplement speech and develop understanding for children with special needs and with English as an additional language. Children enthusiastically jostle at circle time to be included in the register or the pass the pig activity. They are beginning to speak clearly and confidently and listen respectfully to everyone in turn.

Children are attentive and responsive to the staff's good use of questioning and explanation which is pitched at the right level for each child. Language is effectively reinforced and extended in many play situations such as in the rice play the child states, 'It is liquidy' and the staff reinforce the use of the word liquid. There are many opportunities for mark making in the role play area. Small groups of children invent and develop imaginative play situations with exciting role play as they dress up as a princess or create a home. Staff skilfully join in children's games and sensitively extend play or introduce new ideas, such as writing an appointment. Children enjoy looking at books and sharing stories in the book corner. Every child's attention is maintained throughout a lively story session where children are encouraged to be involved in predicting what happens next or joining in with well known lines.

Children learn basic concepts and solve problems as staff skilfully include mathematical language and calculations at every opportunity, such as counting how many children there are altogether. They enjoy counting back through interactive songs using props, such as hats and ducks and all children are fully involved. Children learn to sort, classify and compare shapes and sizes as they explore with the fuzzy felt or help to tidy away.

Children learn to predict and investigate although they do not have many opportunities to extend learning about the world. They have access to basic information and communication technology and confidently use maths and literacy programs with little support. Interesting sensory and creative opportunities enable children to experiment and explore shape, colours, textures and sounds in a variety of different mediums.

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

The provision is good.

Children make free choices from all toys. Their experience of the wider world is promoted through topics and the celebration of different festivals and on people in the community. There are positive images of race, culture, religion, gender and disability and there are plans in place to promote anti-discriminatory practice. The pre school follow the Catholic religion curriculum 'Here I am' which is used in the primary school where the majority of the children will go on to attend. This positive approach fosters

children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Children are extremely well behaved. They know what is expected of them because staff skilfully use consistent methods of behaviour management. Staff are excellent role models of behaviour and manners. There is a clear policy of dealing with behaviour and bullying issues and this helps to promote children's self-esteem.

Children with special needs integrate very well into the group. Activities and equipment are adapted with ease to ensure all children are able to participate fully. Children with special needs are very well supported and therefore gain the best from their time with the group. Regular meetings with parents and other professionals ensure that the care of each child is appropriate.

Partnership with parents is good. Continuity of care for the children is promoted as the group operate an open door policy. Parents know they can discuss any issues when necessary and can make appointments for confidential meetings about their child and any issue that concerns them. Staff discuss necessary issues with parents when appropriate.

There is a wide range of good quality information available to parents about what is on offer at the group and how the Foundation Stage curriculum is promoted. Parents feel fully informed of the progress their child is making and of developments in the group in general. The group write yearly reports on the progress of each child and there is a parents night which is held at the same time as the school parents evening. Parents receive information about how to make a complaint. The effective communication between parents and staff helps to promote children's welfare, safety and learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good. Children benefit from the good leadership of the pre-school. The manager, committee and staff work well together to ensure that children are provided with good quality care and education. They work to promote the group's aims of caring, sharing and respect. This ethos is reflected in all areas of the nursery and is visibly promoted by staff. This means that children are cared for in a positive and supportive environment which effectively promotes their social and moral development. The strong commitment to improvement is reflected in the programme for staff training. This maintains and improves the quality of care and learning for all children.

Children benefit from the smooth running of the group and the clear routines which make them feel secure. The managers use good induction procedures and ensure that staff are appropriately vetted and qualified. Staff are aware of their role within the group and they work well together to promote the effective running of the pre-school.

Records detail the individual requirements of each child and include relevant consents and contacts. Very good policies and procedures are in place to promote the safety and wellbeing of the children present in the group.

The provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the group were asked to involve children in the preparation of snacks and update child protection and complaints procedures.

Children now help to prepare snacks which fosters their independence. The child protection and complaints procedures contain the necessary information and are appropriate. This helps to maintain the welfare of the children.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There are no complaints to report.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

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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):

- ensure children have access to fresh water throughout the session.

#### **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):

- increase opportunities for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)