

# First Friends Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	305057
<b>Inspection date</b>	01/03/2010
<b>Inspector</b>	Rachel Ruth Britten
<b>Setting address</b>	Vincent Street Hall, Vincent Street, Crewe, CW1 4AA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01270 251912
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Type of setting</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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## 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*.

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## Description of the setting

First Friends Pre-School was registered in 1991. The setting is committee run and operates from Vincent Street Hall, situated in the centre of Crewe. Children are cared for in one large room located on the ground floor. There is a secure area available for outdoor play. A maximum of 20 children aged two to five years may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open three days a week from 9.15am to 2.45pm during term time. Children attend from the local community and surrounding areas.

There are currently 21 children on roll aged from two to four years. All of these are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting receives funding for nursery education. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and is also able to support children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs five members of staff including the manager. All staff are qualified to level three in early years. The manager is qualified to level four and is undertaking the foundation degree in early years. The setting receives support from the local authority early years advisory team.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The setting successfully meets the needs of each child, recognising each child as an individual and their personal family circumstances. Experienced, motivated staff provide excellently for children to make a positive contribution and learn skills for the future. Overall, the children's welfare and developmental progress is good. The children are well safeguarded overall within an exceptionally enabling environment. Partnerships with parents are good, but links are less well developed with schools and other involved providers of childcare or specialist input. Self-evaluation tools, early years advice and training are enthusiastically used by the whole staff group to continuously improve the already good provision.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- build upon partnerships with other pre-schools, nurseries and specialists to promote consistent care and education for each individual child who receives childcare in other settings or input from other professionals
- ensure that summative assessments and next steps plans are clearly documented using the observations so that they can be used and shared to promote ongoing good progress
- ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibility to inform the provider of any circumstances which may affect their continuing suitability to work with

children.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

The setting safeguards children and promotes their safety well without reducing their sense of belonging and independence. Staff are warm, vigilant and consistently employ robust arrival and departure, registration, emergency evacuation, accident and medication administration procedures. The indoor and outdoor activity areas are checked daily by staff using suitable risk assessments, so that play areas are accessible, stimulating, and are adapted to minimise risks. For example, the outside store now has a high hook to prevent child access during sessions and the door to the outside is adapted to reduce the risk of children jamming their fingers as they regularly choose to play outside. The checking of visitors and collectors also assures children's safety effectively. Outings are not routinely undertaken, but staff risk assess all outings, organising parent helper support as appropriate. Child and staff records and documents are well organised, reviewed and available for use and inspection. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and are given to parents. All staff are trained in first aid and food hygiene and the manager is presently the named safeguarding person. Evidence of vetting is available for all staff, but there is no evidence that they are made aware of their responsibility to declare any subsequent matters which could adversely affect their continuing suitability.

The manager and staff together communicate their vision for implementing the Early Years Foundation Stage with great enthusiasm and commitment. The setting displays excellent child and parent information so that everyone can understand how the setting works and feel both welcome and at home there. A wealth of new, robust and versatile resources are both in place and on order. These allow children to make play choices, discover, and be active from the moment they arrive. They also ensure better support to the play and development needs of the increasing number of two-year-olds coming to the setting. Displays, using posters, photos and simple words, convey the setting's commitment to healthy lifestyles, good social behaviour, literacy, numeracy and safety. All staff work together evaluating the layout of the setting and the success of adult-led activities. They attend frequent training and work together on six monthly plans which capitalise upon funding for continuous improvements and develop their own expertise as childcare professionals. Technological equipment, including cameras and computers benefit children's knowledge and understanding, as do working with a range of messy materials, natural and domestic objects. The priorities are met and are continuously under review as the staff evaluate how well they are meeting children's individual learning needs and the expectations of the government's 'Every Child Matters' agenda. For example, they are currently focusing on improvements to better provide for communication, language and literacy.

Many parents are involved on the committee and some assist in sessions as adult volunteers. All parents come into the setting at the beginning and end of sessions when key-workers are available to liaise and facilitate a secure handover. Displays of the children's activities and information about the staff convey well what

children are doing and home books detail what individual children are doing in sessions. Parents are encouraged to give detailed information about their child's starting points when they begin at pre-school and this is used to help the child to settle and to plan activities which interest them and promote their development. Key-workers provide initial assessments of children's progress and make regular observations in written and photographic form to provide evidence of this which is logged in a tracker document. However, parents do not regularly look at their child's 'learning journey' file and there are no regular summary assessments or next steps plans there for reference. Nevertheless, staff do plan and provide for the next steps each child needs to take, based upon their own evaluations of group activities. Some children attend more than one setting or have specialist input, perhaps regarding speech therapy. All children move on to local schools or nurseries. Links with these other providers are presently in place, but specific individual plans are not being shared two-way to ensure the most consistent and complementary care. The manager and staff have identified this as an area for development and are committed to establishing more effective links for every child's individual needs to be best met.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

The Staff support children's learning and development with great success. Key-workers plan a simple daily routine which provides a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activity both indoors and outdoors. Adults interact closely with children, joining in with their play choices and extending and challenging them to work things out and be creative. For example, they show children how to use the sieves to make the flour free from lumps and they help find enough suitable dolls and fill the role play baby bath with water and bubbles for children to bathe them. Outdoors, key-workers give children time and support to plant their polyanthus flowers, practise using the small trowel, fork and spade and learn the names of each tool. As a result, children are active, inquisitive learners, developing a knowledge of how things work around them. Every child is making good progress and the particular needs of individuals, perhaps for additional help with speech or toilet training, are well catered for by understanding and vigilant staff.

The learning environment is outstanding because a wealth of versatile resources are available for children to choose and use. Labelled clear boxes, photographic cues, open baskets and trays make stationery, creative craft items, counting, sorting, threading, domestic play and books easy to choose. Rugs, comfortable seats, large trays and small designated areas provide inviting places to construct, mark-making, look at books, role play, experiment, and use the computers. They provide challenges for all children to learn through their own choices. Photographs all around help children to feel at home in the setting as they see themselves and their friends in action and the pictures remind them of what they can do with the resources. As a result, children dress up, make necklaces, paint with water on the easel outside, investigate the fruits in the basket, and build the car track. Staff take every opportunity to observe and encourage children, weaving in questions and teaching about all six areas of learning and using the overriding principles that children should find out through taking part and doing things for themselves.

Staff carefully plan small group activities which are based on the interests and needs of the children in their key group. They take time to let children talk about what they have done during free play, using laminated pictures of the resources to help them remember and make choices for future play. For example, one key group undertakes play dough making today because one of the children particularly enjoyed doing this at another setting, while another member of the group enjoys baking activities at home. The key-worker then uses the planned activity to help each child in the group develop according to their known learning needs. Each staff member skilfully weaves questions about number, letter, colour and shape into the activity, developing children's problem solving, numeracy and literacy. For example, one key group plays a fishing game, using small nets to fish out different numbered and coloured frog pictures. They count them and identify the colours and shapes before adapting the game to focus on physical skills, using their nets to practise catching other items which they wanted to put into the water.

The children are acquiring excellent skills for the future and are making a very positive contribution because the staff create an atmosphere where children can be confident, included and independent. They see the consequences of their activities and see them through to the end. They help to refill the water jug when they are thirsty, help to sweep up the spilt flour and they hang up their coats. They learn to wash up after snack time. They learn to wait for a turn and to walk and play safely. The children behave well because they are taught appropriately about what is right and wrong and they are involved and excited by their play and activities. They are always listened to and have the chance to be special, for example, as the snack monitor who helps get the snacks ready and announces snack time to everyone. Two-year-olds are becoming independent to use the toilets, wash their hands, find the tissues and put them in the bin after use, put on their coats, and share dolls and computers alongside their older friends. Kind, patient, consistent staff provide help and time for children to try things for themselves, perhaps putting on the dressing up clothes or getting up and down the slide. The children are being well prepared for school and the world they face as they learn to care for one another and their toys and resources.

## 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*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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