

# Elm Street Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	316404
<b>Inspection date</b>	12/05/2010
<b>Inspector</b>	Helene Anne Terry

<b>Setting address</b>	Elm Street Community Centre, Elm Street, Middleton, Manchester, M24 2EG
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<b>Type of setting</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
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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

Elm Street Pre-School was registered in 1991. The pre-school is organised by a voluntary committee of staff and parents. It operates from two rooms within Elm Street Community Centre in Middleton near Rochdale, Lancashire. The pre-school has sole use of the building during session hours, but the premises are also used by other community groups. The group serves the children and families living within the local community and surrounding areas. Children have access to an outdoor play area.

The pre-school is open each weekday during term time from 9.15am to 12.15pm. A wrap-around service is also offered from 12.15pm until 1.15pm. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 32 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 32 children from two to five years on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. There are six members of staff, four of whom hold relevant qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority and is part of their quality assurance scheme.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children's uniqueness is valued as they thrive and flourish in the extremely inclusive and child-centred environment. High quality resources, stimulating activities and well-planned play opportunities ensure that children are extremely motivated in all areas of their learning. Skilled staff work closely with parents and other early years professionals to ensure children make rapid progress in their learning and development. The setting has continued to identify their strengths and areas for improvement since the last inspection, ensuring high quality care and provision for all children. They have robust procedures in place to maintain an excellent ability to continually improve.

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

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

- providing challenging opportunities for the more able children children to climb and slide.

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

Staff have an extensive understanding of their role in safeguarding children. All relevant records are maintained and staff frequently keep their knowledge of appropriate procedures up-to-date, in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The setting is thoroughly secure and robust recruitment procedures ensure

that all staff are vetted appropriately to work with children. Staff benefit from in-depth induction procedures and they are further supported by regular appraisals and ongoing peer observations. This highlights their strengths and any areas for development. Risk assessments are comprehensive and cover all aspects of the provision, ensuring children's health, safety and welfare.

Children benefit from the warm and welcoming environment that is organised extremely well, considering that they do not have sole use of the building. Staff have recently developed the outdoor play areas and, as a result, children freely move between indoors and outdoors throughout the sessions. All activities can be experienced outdoors and this is particularly beneficial for children who learn through more physical activities. Children have access to an abundance of high-quality toys and resources. The displays of children's work, interesting signs and posters are at eye level and stimulating.

Practitioners provide a fully inclusive environment for the children and families in their care. The key-person system works exceptionally well to support all children, as positive and caring relationships have been established. Consequently, there is good communication with parents to ensure children are valued as individuals and their uniqueness is fully fostered. Information gathered from parents at their child's induction is used to promote individualised care and learning. Each child's religion and background is fully considered and the setting is adapted to accommodate all children. There are resources and activities that reflect diversity to enable children to understand and respect people's similarities and differences. The staff team consists of male and female practitioners, which further promotes equality of opportunity and positive role modelling for the children.

Parents receive a wealth of information about the setting via the notice board, a welcome pack and the information supplied from the awards and achievements the setting have accomplished. Parents regularly access their child's development records and are fully involved in the activities. They are also given information on how they can extend their child's learning at home; for example, they help their children with phonics, by finding pictures at home linking to the sounds of letters of the alphabet. Practitioners are proactive at engaging with parents and other key agencies to ensure continuity in children's care. The setting has close links with the local schools to ensure there is a smooth transition when children begin reception classes. The setting also works closely with childminders by sharing information about children's development, with parental consent. As a result, continuity of care and children's development is exceptionally well enhanced.

Self-evaluation and the monitoring of the setting is robust. Systems are in place to gather the views of practitioners, children and parents about the setting. The management oversee this process and it enables them to identify the setting's strengths and areas for improvement. They have recently developed the outdoor play area to ensure that children can access this area in all weathers. They are currently in the process of developing a vegetable patch and children are monitoring the progress of the tomato and strawberry plants.

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

Children engage in a wealth of experiences, both adult-led and child-initiated. All activities work exceptionally well to ensure that learning priorities are addressed and that children engage in activities that respect their interests and abilities. Practitioners have excellent knowledge of children's starting points and capabilities. They use effective observations of the children to support their learning very well. These are linked to children's stage of development within the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and are consistently used to identify learning priorities for each child. Parents are able to contribute to the assessment system, for instance through giving feedback on children's achievements and interests at home. Children's communication skills are developing well through the consistent engagement the practitioners have with the children, as they listen and respond to them. All children have an excellent sense of belonging through the caring relationships that have been established. Children thrive in the cuddles they receive and they have a positive self-image. Children are enthused by the interesting activities available inside and outside. They delight in digging in the soil, using a variety of implements, as they replicate what they see on the building site next door. They enjoy finding treasure and examine the rocks and stones that they uncover, to see whether they are smooth or rough. They find insects and examine them under the magnifying glass as they play in the nature area. They learn about lifecycles when they plant and grow sunflower seeds, tomato and strawberry plants.

Children's literacy skills are developing extremely well. They mark make using a wide range of resources, such as pens, crayons and paint. They also enjoy painting with water on the fencing, using large brushes and watching their marks evaporate in the sun. Children link sounds of the letters of the alphabet very well, for example, they enjoy singing the 'phonics song' and find letters of the alphabet in the sand. More able children are writing their own names, with younger children making squiggles and marks to represent letters and words. They use mathematical language in their play, such as, building a tower from large bricks to see which is the tallest and smallest. They count well as they gather their fruit and bread sticks at snack time. Children are confident and very independent within the setting. They self-register when they arrive and put their packed lunch into the fridge to ensure it stays fresh. They dress themselves in their coats and dressing-up clothes, and help themselves to activities. Children have friends they like to be with and older children help the younger ones as they complete activities by showing them what to do. Children are extremely active in enhancing their own learning and this is supported very well by staff. A child who finds a seed in their apple asks for help to plant it, and the recycled boxes available to use for modelling activities are quickly turned into a shop by the children.

Children are developing an excellent understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and how to keep themselves safe. They confidently wash their hands when they come in from outdoor play and before they eat their snacks, saying that they are getting rid of the germs. Pictorial reminders are displayed in the bathroom and steps to help them reach the sinks are available. Children are aware of safety

in the sun and talk about the need to put on cream so that they do not get sunburnt. They learn about food that is good for them and how to keep their teeth clean when they have a visit from the dentist. The setting has achieved the 'Golden Grin Award' and is a sugar free zone. Children also take part in the regular fire drills and learn how to cross roads safely. Staff give good explanations for the younger children to increase their understanding of staying safe. Children are encouraged to think about the importance of exercise and enjoy daily opportunities to play outdoors in the fresh air; they enjoy running, jumping and balancing on the various equipment. Although, there are opportunities for climbing and sliding, this is not challenging for the more able children.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They are extremely polite and well mannered, and are developing excellent relationships with their peers and the staff. Children confidently talk about their families and show interest in each others lives. A child talks with the staff about his holidays and things that he did at the fair, going into great detail. Everyone shows a genuine interest in what the children say, boosting children's self-esteem and confidence. Staff are extremely good at praising children and use a wide variety of methods to support children's understanding of right from wrong. Through high quality interaction by practitioners and activities available, outcomes for children are excellent.

## 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>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

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

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

### 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>	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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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