

Aldbourne Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 146021
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Inspector Rosemary Davies

Setting address St Michael's C of E School, Back Lane, Aldbourne,
Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 2BP

Telephone number 07919 808641 (m)

Email

Type of setting 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*.

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.

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Description of the setting

Aldbourn Pre-school opened in 1962. It moved to a site at St Michael's Church of England (Aided) School in 1997, in village of Aldbourn near Marlborough in Wiltshire. The pre-school is privately owned. It operates from a self-contained room with kitchenette, toilet and cloakroom facilities. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register for a maximum of 24 children, at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 7.45am to 3pm, term time only. This incorporates a breakfast club for children aged from four to eleven years, attending the adjacent school. This club is registered on both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 30 children aged from two years to under five years on roll at the pre-school. Of these, children aged two, three and four years can receive free early education. Children are drawn largely from the village itself and others in this rural locality. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The pre-school employs six staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least level 3; one owner is a qualified teacher who holds Early Years Professional Status and her co-owner is presently undertaking this.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

All children flourish in this welcoming pre-school. Recognition of their individuality is at the heart of the provision. Staff provide care and education tailored precisely to the individual needs of each child exceedingly well. As a result, the progress made by all children is at least good and in some areas exceptional. Partnerships with parents, the adjacent school and outside professionals contribute significantly to the high quality provision, particularly in promoting inclusion. The owners monitor and evaluate the provision accurately, making exciting and worthwhile plans for the future. The pre-school is extremely well placed to maintain the high standards achieved.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- enhancing the engagement with parents through encouraging them to contribute to their children's learning records across all areas of learning
- enhancing children's healthy lifestyles during the warmer months of the year, through the provision of more shade in the outdoor area.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The owners use a quality assurance scheme extremely well to check they meet the required duties and promote the well-being of all children successfully. Staff implement policies and procedures effectively to maintain children's health and safety to a high standard. The designated person for child protection is knowledgeable about her role; she works closely with other agencies to protect the welfare of children. Safeguarding is discussed at each weekly staff meeting to highlight possible concerns and to keep staff up to date with requirements. All staff are first aid trained. Lunches are prepared in a kitchen with a five star environmental health rating. Risk assessment minimises potential hazards. Staff are careful to check that indoor and outdoor areas are staffed appropriately, so that children can be supervised closely. As a result of all these measures, children are safeguarded extremely well.

The owners maintain their established high aspirations for the future of their provision. They recognise and promote the importance of gaining higher qualifications. They set excellent examples by working towards and obtaining Early Years Professional Status. They make full use of new knowledge to improve the skills of the staff team and thus improve outcomes for children. They use innovative training methods to do so. Evaluation methods are highly effective. Since the previous inspection, of their own volition, the owners have improved the outdoor area and introduced 'free-flow' play. Staff make excellent use of resources to meet children's needs. Every inch of space is utilised fully and effectively. The owners involve all concerned with the provision in evaluating it. Parents' views are sought through questionnaires targeted at aspects of the curriculum, for example, music provision. Their input results in improvements, such as parents playing instruments for the children. Other more general changes result too, such as longer opening hours.

Partnerships with parents are extremely positive. Parents receive a range of useful information. Staff work hard to make the pre-school feel welcoming to all, so no parent need feel excluded. All contribute to providing staff with 'wow' moments from home for their children's 'learning journals'. These arise mostly from children's personal, social and emotional development. Parents do not contribute across all areas of learning, so some points of success or developmental need may be overlooked. Wider partnerships are excellent. They contribute substantially to promoting the learning and well-being of all children attending, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff go to considerable lengths to provide the right support for each child, travelling to special meetings at weekends, for example. They work extremely closely with parents to do so. Staff use innovative methods to meet children's needs. They utilise information from the local children's centre to identify families who need additional help. The pre-school staff liaise very well with the school staff to aid children's move to formal education. Staff work hard to help all children achieve as well as they can. The excellent outdoor environment helps those children who learn better when outside. Staff are mindful of equality, providing outdoor clothes to suit the weather for any who are not dressed appropriately.

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

Children's eagerness to enter this pre-school is evident. They progress so well because they clearly feel exceptionally safe and happy, owing to excellent relationships with staff. The key worker system is effective, with staff forming close bonds with families, but in this small pre-school, all staff know each child extremely well. Staff gain detailed knowledge of children's interests from parents. They use this information innovatively to evolve new ways of provoking children's interest, so they are keen to have a go at new things. Staff recognise that many boys are reluctant to try early writing. An excellent range of suitable materials outside encourages them to have a go. Additionally, staff use interests in dinosaurs, racing cars and darleks to spark imaginations and creative urges. This leads to children thinking creatively and producing exceptionally imaginative work. Children are spurred into writing to let Father Christmas know their particular desires. They listen avidly to gripping stories read vividly; eagerly joining in familiar refrains about an ogre. They solve problems such as how to stick up a sign detailing the cost of the 'car wash', making decisions about whether glue, tape or another fixative will be best. They gain excellent skills and attitudes towards learning that will be extremely useful in their future lives.

Children receive frequent, valuable one-to-one support. Staff understand how children learn, what they need to know and what inspires them to do so. They have an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and its requirements. They provide enticing, exciting environments, indoors and out, planned with extreme care so children take charge of their own learning. A get-together for every one, including parents, at the start of each session, provides an overview of any special or new activities, such as making gifts for Mothers Day (Mothering Sunday). Children listen attentively. All are included through the use of signing. Sessions run smoothly. Staff move around supporting individual children and small groups as necessary. They ask frequent questions as children play to prompt thinking in all areas of children's learning. Children are curious, active learners who show concentration and growing independence. Staff encourage them to use resources as they wish. For example, children who want water in the sand, go indoors to fetch it. They persist to turn on taps, then carry water carefully outside, so none is spilt. Children delight in building sandcastles. They think about the questions asked by staff: 'What's happened to all the water you put on that sand? Where's it gone?' and decide 'it's gone into the sand'.

Many children show excellent personal independence. Most manage their own clothing when going outside. Any who cannot make a good effort, before seeking help. More capable children change into outdoor footwear quickly and know they will not need a coat because it is a warm day. There is little shade in the outdoor area, which means its use is limited during very hot times. Children treat resources with care. They know they do not walk on the 'garden boxes'. They grow some fruit and vegetables, so stimulating an early understanding of caring for the environment. Children are able decision makers. They decide whether to play indoors or outside. They choose from the wealth of materials available. They

decide when to take their mid-morning snack. They thoroughly enjoy taking on small responsibilities. More capable children spread their crackers, using suitable knives carefully. Some pour their own drinks, whilst others are given support. They learn to behave in safe ways extremely well. They use real bricks carefully when 'building' in the sandpit. Behaviour is exemplary because children are treated with respect, know what is expected of them and are extremely busy concentrating on highly enjoyable activities.

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

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	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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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