

# Cassio Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	130629
<b>Inspection date</b>	30/03/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Maura Pigram

<b>Setting address</b>	St Andrews Church Hall, Church Road, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD17 4PY
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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*.

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**

Cassio pre-school is committee led and was registered in 1993. It operates from St. Andrews Church Hall in Nascot Wood, Hertfordshire. The pre-school serves the local area and has strong links with local schools. It is accessible to all children and the church car park is organised to create an enclosed outdoor play area.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions on Monday to Thursday are from 9.15 am to 12.15 pm and an afternoon sessions operates from 12.45 pm to 3.45 pm. On Friday's the pre-school operates from 9.15 am to 12.15 pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 32 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 50 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The pre-school provides funded early education for two, three and four year olds. The group supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs nine members of child care staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications at Level 3 or above. One member of staff has an Early Years Foundation Degree. Two members of staff are working towards a Level 3 qualification and one is working towards a Level 2 qualification. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The management team and their staff are knowledgeable and committed, they are very well supported by the pro-active committee. Positive steps are taken to ensure children are safeguarded, fully included and have their welfare needs met. There is a close partnership with parents and they share valuable information that promotes children's learning and welfare. Partnership with other professionals involved in the children's learning and development is a key strength of the provision. Monitoring of the provision is ongoing and positive steps are taken to ensure outcomes for children are continually evaluated.

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

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

- develop opportunities to link the indoor and outdoor environments so that children can move freely between them and ensure writing for different purposes is available in all areas both indoors and outdoors
- promote and value children's linguistic diversity and provide opportunities for

children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning.

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

The pre-school leader and her staff have a good understanding of safeguarding issues which promotes children's welfare. Documentation to support this is easily available and all staff have a secure knowledge of procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child in their care. Clear recruitment procedures ensure that all staff working with children are suitable to do so. Robust procedures for arrival and departure ensure children are handed over safely to a known adult. Children learn about safety throughout their day and through purposeful activities which promotes their understanding of staying safe. Effective risk assessments for all areas ensure any identified risks to children are minimised.

The new management team have a clear sense of purpose about what they want to achieve. For example, systems are continually been reviewed to benefit the children such as the introduction of the well managed free flow snack time and the re-organisation of the layout of the resources. In addition, reflective practice is effectively used to assist with the completion of a quality assurance scheme. They seek support when necessary and act positively on suggestions made. Resources are of good quality and imaginative fundraising ensures new equipment such as a high quality play kitchen and accessories are purchased to benefit the children. A key worker system is in place and systems to ensure parents are aware of this are regularly reviewed. Staff are committed to the children's welfare and learning, they interact positively with children at all times. Many of the staff have worked in the pre-school for a long time. They keep up to date with knowledge and new initiatives through suitable training. Regular staff meetings and appraisals ensure training needs are identified and completed. Staff work very hard to ensure the environment is interesting and accessible to all children. For example, defined play areas are set up and cleared away each day and children's art work is attractively displayed so that they develop strong levels of self-esteem.

The pre-school actively promotes inclusive practice. For example, there is an extremely good partnership with outside agencies such as professionals from the children's centre and the area special educational needs coordinator. This enables the staff to support and meet children's and their families' individual needs. In addition, teachers from proposed schools visit the pre-school to meet their new children. This helps to ease transition times. Parents speak highly of the pre-school and they are happy to recommend the provision. They are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning through daily discussions, regular meetings with their child's key worker and by joining the parent rota.

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

The enthusiastic pre-school leader and her staff have a secure knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children make very good progress towards the early learning goals and one to one support is provided to ensure that an inclusive practice is provided. Children are highly valued and advice from supporting agencies is sought when necessary so that they can fully participate. Planning is regularly reviewed, it is flexible and linked to all the areas of learning. Children's interests such as superheroes and princesses are beginning to be implemented into the planning. A systematic approach is used to make sensitive observations of the children during the adult and child-led activities. These are evaluated and shared within the team to inform further steps in the children's learning.

Children arrive happily and engage themselves in chosen tasks as quickly as they can. Children play well independently and cooperatively in groups becoming active, curious and inquisitive learners. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities that fosters learning across all areas ensuring children are always well occupied in purposeful tasks. Activities are adapted or modified so that all children can fully participate. Children's health is effectively promoted. They are encouraged to adopt good hygiene routines and positive steps are taken to prevent cross infection. Dietary needs are well known and documentation to support this is clearly visible for staff. Rolling snack time is effectively managed and a good range of nutritious snacks are offered. This means that children develop a good awareness of healthy eating.

The thoughtful layout of resources means that active learners engage more in a variety of creative and mark making activities. For example, boys in particular love making individual character watches. They eagerly gather around a table set out with a selection of resources such as scissors, card, paper and sellotape. They confidently use the scissors and use pens and pencils to design their watches. On completion of their work they proudly show their watches to adults and children. This activity supports children's early literacy skills and helps them develop good skills for the future such as concentration on the completion of particular tasks. Children behave well when they are busy and engaged which occurs during the first half of the session. The manager is mindful that some children become restless during the organisation of the preparation for outdoor play time. She is reviewing this with the staff team. Staff work hard to ensure the church car park is suitable for the children's outdoor play which supports children's good health. They enjoy practicing skills such as riding bikes, kicking and throwing balls and rolling hoops. In addition, they can dig in a specified area to plant and grow a range of items including herbs. Creativity is well supported through the provision of a good range of imaginative play resources. Children help themselves to the wide range of dressing up clothes and some children enjoy sharing books in their pop up castle. There are a wide range of interesting books for children to read, a cosy area encourages this activity. This means that children understand that print carries meaning. However, dual language books are not available so that children can see their home languages during their play. Generally children's communication and literacy skills are well supported. For example, staff members speak a variety of

languages to support children who have English as an additional language. Some members of staff are also able to use sign language to help children express their needs. This is well used in supporting children's expressive language and in the settling in process. Children self-register and use their name cards during the rolling snack time. This helps them to recognise their own names and that of their friends. Mark making is available at easels and creative tables so that children can develop their emerging writing skills.

## 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>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
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	1
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	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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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