

# St Nicholas Pre - School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY417834  
**Inspection date** 09/05/2011  
**Inspector** Tim Butcher

**Setting address** St. Nicholas C of E Primary School, Kilmersdon Road,  
RADSTOCK, BA3 3QH  
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**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

St Nicholas Pre-School opened on its current site in 2005 and has operated under this registration since 2010. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from a purpose built modular building which is attached to St Nicholas Primary School in Radstock, Bath and North East Somerset. A maximum of 24 children between the ages of eight years and two years may attend the provision at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 8.30am until 4pm during term time. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area, and are able to use the school playground. The setting has good links with the school. There is disabled access and disabled facilities within the setting.

There are currently 48 children aged from two to under five years on roll at the pre-school. The setting receive funding for free early education. Children who attend are from the local area and surrounding villages. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school has close links with the school and has close links with support services. The setting is privately owned and employs five members of staff of whom two hold level 3 qualifications in childcare and two hold level 2 qualifications in childcare.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

St Nicholas Pre-School provides outstanding provision and care for its children. Children have good and often excellent levels of achievement because the whole staff team work extremely closely together to provide high quality provision at all times. Key workers know their children extremely well and are very effective in ensuring the children's needs and interests are fully met. The outstanding partnerships with parents and outside agencies ensure that all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are included in all aspects of the setting. The highly motivated staff team are fully committed to ongoing professional development and improving practice and are open to testing out different ways of working, such as in the provision of information and communication technology. Therefore, the setting has excellent capacity to maintain the high quality of the provision and to continue to 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:

- reviewing the provision of information and communication technology to provide further opportunities for children to explore the uses of everyday technology through creatively presented activities.

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

The whole staff team place paramount importance on the promotion of children's safeguarding and welfare. A comprehensive awareness of safeguarding issues is held at all levels. Comprehensive policies and procedures are robustly implemented so that the safety of children is ensured. Children enjoy excellent facilities that are safe, free from hazard and well maintained. High levels of communication between staff and their strategic deployment ensure the excellent support and supervision of all children at all times. Arrangements for the arrival and departure of children are particularly strong. Children show an excellent awareness of safety issues as they are strongly encouraged to adopt safe and responsible practices such as the right footwear when playing outside. They are encouraged to test their skills and to take acceptable and supervised risk such as when rolling small logs across the grass.

A particular strength of the setting is the highly positive relationships that are established with parents and carers and there is excellent continuity of care for each child. Parents have regular discussions with key workers and make regular comments in the learning diaries. Parents report very positively about all aspects of the pre-school. They are kept very well informed about all aspects of their child's day, achievement, well-being and development. Parents receive regular information about the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and how the planned activities are linked to each area of learning. Highly inclusive systems of communication provide excellent opportunities for parents to meet both formally and informally with their child's key person. As a result, parents are able to be highly involved in their child's learning, information about the child at home and at pre-school is shared and there is excellent continuity of care for each child.

Effective partnership working takes place such as with the school and with other agencies involved in the support of children, such as health professionals. The setting places the promotion of equality and inclusion at the centre of all that is done. They are highly successful in closing the identified gaps in children's achievements and work very cooperatively with parents and others to achieve this, for example, by sometimes taking the lead role in shared assessment processes.

The established staff team have been highly effective in transferring their previous experience of outstanding provision to the temporary premises. As a result, children have continued to make significant gains in their learning and the high quality of care has been maintained. High standards are embedded across all areas of practice and endorsed by a highly motivated staff team. The processes of evaluation are rigorous and provide an accurate diagnosis of the strengths and weaknesses of the setting, building on previous action planning. The accommodation, resources, furniture and equipment are of a consistently high quality and are well managed. Outcomes for children are clearly attributable to the excellent use of resources and to the staff's secure understanding of child development. Staff are very responsive to children's play and provide a very stimulating learning environment that closely follows children's interests. The

provider is taking steps to ensure resources are fully sustainable. Welfare requirements and general care of the children are outstanding.

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

All children at St Nicholas Pre-School achieve extremely well because of the excellent provision for them. They are eager to attend and all make significant gains in their learning and development. The overall quality of the observational assessment and planning for individual children is excellent because key workers make high quality observations of children and rigorous assessment leads to a comprehensive picture of children's abilities and their next steps in learning. This information is used effectively to guide planning that is securely based on children's interests. High levels of communication between the staff ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of how to progress children's learning and development.

Children play a dynamic role in their learning because a wide range of high quality and creatively presented activities are offered that are focussed on their interests. Children have very good opportunities to exercise choice and contribute very positively because they freely explore and learn at their own pace. As a result, they are very active and inquisitive learners. All children benefit from the vibrant learning environment that is created, both inside and outdoors, because the highly skilled staff team have an excellent understanding of the individual needs of children and support children's learning well. Most children make very good progress in communication, language and literacy. They practise phonic sounds through high quality activities such as 'the sound pot' and have some easy access to the wide range of books on display. They mark make in a wide variety of ways throughout their play, such as with check lists at registration time and when labelling their own seed pots in the garden. Children have free access to a covered outdoor area where they can make marks on boards, plant seeds and join in with imaginative role-play activities. They have great fun pouring, tipping and filling green bubbles at the water tray. They count, explore capacity and problem solve and learn how to attach spouts, funnels and pipes as they do so. Two children choose to role play 'having a meal' together and spontaneously extend their play to 'washing the car'. They find the brushes and use the bubbly water to paint the wheels of the scooter they have used as a prop. Children work extremely well independently and develop excellent negotiation and cooperation skills in working alongside each other. The staff team are very quick to support children's play, for example, by making a ticket from paper during imaginative play that involved construction with train tracks and small world farm animal figures. There is a very good balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities. Sessional routines such as registration time and circle time provide excellent opportunities for children to fully participate and to become confident in the group. Staff show great respect for the children and very skilfully provide space and support to each child; ensuring that children are able to listen, develop personal and social skills and have their contribution valued. Children learn about technology through a good range of activities including the computer, electronic equipment and programmable toys.

The staff team innovatively reviewed children's use of computers and are currently exploring further ways for children to use everyday technology through creatively presented activities. Overall, children demonstrate outstanding progress in developing the skills that will help them in the future.

Children have a very strong sense of belonging and security because relationships are excellent at all levels. The welcoming environment fully reflects children's backgrounds and the wider community. They demonstrate very positive behaviour, show a mature response to taking responsibility and know what is expected of them. For instance, they enthusiastically help each other to carry out boxes of resources that they have chosen to play with and help tidy away before snack time. Children engage in a wide range of activities and experiences which help them to value diversity and to learn about their community. They celebrate festival days for around the world and parents are invited to share their occupations and experiences from the local community. Children engage in a wide range of physical activities and gain a secure understanding of the importance of regular exercise. For instance, they have regular opportunities to use the scrap store of large recyclable materials in the adjacent school playground. They set themselves physical challenges using the climbing frame, and sit-on equipment. Highly effective arrangements exist to ensure children's safety, health and welfare. The staff are well deployed to support children to develop their self-care skills and independence.

## 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>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

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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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## **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