

St Anthony's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 130719
Inspection date 06/06/2011
Inspector Susan McCourt

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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 Anthony's Pre-School first registered in 1989 and is accommodated in a church hall situated in the Poets' Corner area of Hove. It is privately owned, and the provider, who holds a suitable level 3 qualification, works as the manager. It is open Monday to Thursday from 9am to 4pm and from 9am to 12pm on a Friday, during term time only.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is registered to care for 28 children aged two years to eight years. There are currently 65 children on roll who attend a variety of sessions, of these 44 receive funded nursery education. The pre-school cares for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those for whom English is an additional language. The children attending are representative of the local community.

There are 11 members of staff including the owner, of these nine hold suitable qualifications in childcare and two are currently undertaking a suitable qualification. The premises consist of a large playroom, a small kitchen off the main room and separate toilet facilities. The pre-school has access to a small outdoor area. The setting receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The group is accredited by Brighton & Hove QUILT (Quality Improvement in Learning and Teaching), a quality assurance scheme for the Foundation Stage.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The setting provides good care for children because the staff team works consistently to ensure they know each child individually and are committed to meeting their needs. They have created a relaxed and purposeful atmosphere in which children can flourish, with some minor weakness in the learning environment and staff deployment. The manager's positive approach to evaluating their practice is focused on improving the outcomes for children, so the capacity for continuous improvement is good.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review staff deployment at group times to support children in engaging with the activity
- increase the visibility of the written word in the learning environment.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded well. There are clear policies and procedures in place and staff understand their roles and responsibilities. All staff are checked prior to working at the setting, and the locked doors ensure that no-one can gain access to the rooms without the staff's knowledge while children are present. Risk assessments are thorough and reviewed regularly so children's safety is given a high priority. Staff also understand that children must take manageable risks when learning new skills, and help them to do so as safely as possible without hampering their progress. Children's records are well maintained to support their welfare and staff are very careful to monitor children's well-being through the day and contact parents quickly if a child becomes unwell in their care.

The owner of the setting is also the manager and she works alongside staff in all aspects of the work. They have a clear shared vision to support the children in their play and maximise their learning and enjoyment. The manager involves staff, children and parents in the self-evaluation process to ensure that the setting meets everyone's needs. Strengths and weaknesses are accurately noted and the whole team works towards achieving their goals. The manager's positive approach provides an exemplary role model for her team, and their drive for improvement is always measured in the impact it will have on the outcomes for children. The setting manages their resources well in terms of the toys and equipment, and staff are observant of what is holding the children's interest. If an activity is not being used, it is quickly replaced with something else, which ensures children always have good choices available. Staff deploy themselves well when playing alongside the children and supporting their learning. However, the whole group times are supported less well, as only one member of staff is with the children, meaning that if some children are not engaged with the activity, they are not supported to re-engage.

Staff gather essential information about the children and use it to good effect in meeting their needs. Children who have English as an additional language can have one to one workers to support them and staff use sign language and visual timetables to help all children take part. Any additional needs are quickly identified as a result of the close attention staff give to children's progress. Staff are aware of each child's particular learning preferences so that children who are very active are given enticing activities to support their writing for example, which helps to close any achievement gaps. The setting works closely with the main receiving schools so that the children's attainments in the Early Years Foundation Stage are known to teachers when the children transfer. Staff also work closely with the local authority, children's services and other professionals to ensure that they are giving the children consistent care. Parents speak very highly of the setting's approach and how well their children have progressed in their sociability and understanding. Parents have daily verbal feedback as well as half termly meetings with the key worker to share the child's progress. The manager also regularly asks parents for ideas about themes and their child's current interests so that she can incorporate them in the planning. Ideas about how to extend children's learning at home are also posted next to the week's plans, to encourage a true partnership of support

for the child's development.

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

Children are very well settled in this caring and relaxed play environment. The staff know the children very well and have established a routine which ensures that children have time to explore their play as well as have regular breaks and quiet times. Activities are based along different themes each week such as rain forests, people who help us or letters of the alphabet. The learning environment provides ample choice for children to choose and they can be very independent as they move between activities and create their own challenges. However, there are very few written words visible to the children in the room, which reduces their ability to be familiar with print and its meaning. Staff ask the children what they have enjoyed playing with the most at the end of every week, and these ideas are taken into account in the planning, to ensure that there is always an activity to entice and interest any child. Staff have a good knowledge of children's starting points, and make regular observations of their achievements as they progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Key workers note the children's next steps and ideas for future activities, and the manager takes careful note of this information when creating the short term plans. This means that activities are well targeted and maximise children's learning, while still being fun and playful.

Children are absorbed and happy in their play, showing good concentration and problem solving skills. For example, children playing with construction materials modify what they make continually to see if they can make their flower stand up, or if they can make it very tall without it falling over. The setting organises frequent visitors from the community or from the parent body to share what they do, and the children respond with confidence as they learn how to 'stop, drop and roll' with the fire officers and explore the fire engine, for example. Children enjoy a good variety of activities through the day that supports their growth and development, and the themes are carefully chosen to introduce children to the wider world as well as their local community. Children build good friendships at the setting and their cooperative play is very good. Children understand the importance of taking turns and sharing and enjoy their turns at being monitor and helping prepare the snack for their friends. Children's behaviour is very good and they are confident to talk to the whole group when they show what they have brought from home. These skills support their transition to school and give them good skills for the future.

Children learn about healthy lifestyles as they enjoy snacks of fresh fruit or cheese and crackers. They have lots of opportunities for physical play and games, but limited access to playing in the fresh air, as the outdoor area is very small. Staff minimise the impact of this by ensuring that children use it whenever they can. Children know that they must wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet, and know why it is important because they refer to the 'Remember' book which is a very child-friendly reminder of different health and safety rules. Children look at the pictures and remember the rules easily, which helps them take care of

themselves and each other in the setting. Children also feel safe because the staff who care for them build warm and friendly relationships with them and their families, and children clearly feel very secure in their care.

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

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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|--|---|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources | 3 |
| 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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| The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 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