

# Abacus Pre-School@St.Michaels

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY412479

**Inspection date**

29/03/2011

**Inspector**

Beverley Blackburn

**Setting address**

St. Michaels C of E VC Primary School, Linden Close,  
Winterbourne, BRISTOL, BS36 1LG

**Telephone number**

01454 867285

**Email**

enquiries@abacuspreschool.co.uk

**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*.

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## Description of the setting

Abacus Pre-School@St Michael's is a private setting, which is run and managed by the owners. It was re-registered in 2010, after changes in the organisation. It operates from St Michael's Church of England Primary School in Winterbourne. The pre-school provides care for children from local villages and further afield. The children have use of a classroom and occasional access to the hall. There is a fully enclosed area suitable for outside play. The pre-school is open on Mondays to Fridays from 9am to 3pm during school term time. It is registered on the Early Years Register for a maximum of 24 children from two years to the end of the early years age group. Currently, there are 56 children on roll. The pre-school supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are five members of staff working directly with children, including the owners, three of whom have a relevant qualification in early years. A teacher from the South Gloucestershire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership provides advice on educational provision.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The enthusiastic owners are well organised and enjoy exceptional relationships with children, staff and parents. Children's knowledge of healthy lifestyles and the maintenance of resources are generally good. Staff demonstrate very good knowledge and understanding of Early Years Foundation Stage framework, and children make extremely good progress in their learning. There is a commitment for continuous improvement from the cohesive team who want the best for the children. There are excellent links with parents to ensure children receive the best possible support to develop and thrive.

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

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

- improve the cleanliness of the outdoor equipment and toys to make them more inviting for children
- support children to manage their own personal hygiene, particularly with regard to cleaning their own faces and noses.

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

Children are receiving a high standard of care and education at the Abacus Pre-school. Children's welfare is safeguarded and all staff understand the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child. All the records, policies and procedures that are necessary to safeguard children, and for the effective management of the pre-school, are well maintained. They are regularly updated and shared with parents. The owners and staff work together as a great team; they work cohesively to maintain high standards and drive improvement. The pre-school follows clear and effective recruitment, vetting and induction procedures to ensure the suitability of all those that work with the children. There is an effective system to evaluate the quality of the provision and to identify areas for improvement. All staff strive for improvement, which ensures children are happy, confident, safe and enjoy learning.

Risk assessments are detailed and are used effectively to ensure that all areas the children use are safe inside and outside. The staff also carry out daily checks for any potential hazards, which they immediately address. All areas are closely supervised. There is a wealth of good quality resources for the children to use, including technology equipment, which are skilfully and imaginatively organised to promote children's learning exceptionally well. Children benefit from an excellent learning environment where they can access a wide range of interesting and challenging learning experiences. Free-flow activities are very well planned for the enjoyment of all the children. Staff are enthusiastic and thoroughly enjoy making learning fun for the children.

The staff have an outstanding relationship with the parents of children. The setting has an 'open door' policy, where parents are always welcome. Parents are encouraged to contribute to the records of children's learning journeys by adding their comments. Two parents' evening are held each year to discuss the children's progress. Parents also receive a summative report. There is regular daily communication as staff give each parent a verbal feedback on their child's day. Parent questionnaires are very positive, and parents are extremely happy with the care and education their children are receiving. There are very good partnerships with other early years providers, including the host school, ensuring there is two-way communication to support children. Pre-school children thrive in the stimulating, relaxed environment that has been created for them by the experienced and enthusiastic staff. There is an excellent balance between what the children want to do and what the staff plan and set out for them. Children play well together; they share equipment and help each other. Resources to enable children's understanding of differences are well used, For example, labels on equipment are multi-lingual, showing children there are different languages and ways of writing the same word. Staff talk with children about people from other countries and the differing ways we all live. Through group discussions, children learn that some children across the world do not have a warm home to live in, or access to clean water to keep them healthy.

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

The children's learning is very well supported through the provision of an excellent range of toys and resources and a well-planned, interesting environment. There is very good interaction with supportive staff who enable children to learn through play. There is an excellent balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Children enjoy a variety of interesting activities both indoors and outdoors. They also have good opportunities to develop their physical skills through exercises such as balancing on beams and tyres, riding bikes and using the climbing equipment in the school hall. Children enjoy the outside space in the field, where they can run freely. They negotiate their way around the indoor and outdoor space with confidence as they go in and out during free-flow play. Children enjoy a wide range of activities, including cooking, which helps develop their understanding of problem-solving, reasoning and numeracy through weighing and measuring ingredients. Children enjoy playing outside with construction toys, using boxes and pretend bricks to build their houses. They show great enthusiasm in learning, and exploring their environment. They show interest in books and listen attentively at story time, which helps to build their concentration and their interest in reading.

Children enjoy the experience of making marks and using art and craft materials. They use their imagination and creative skills during imaginative play, such as when building a tent in the garden. They have fun pouring different colour jellies down tubes and experiencing the texture. Children develop their communication skills well because staff spend time talking to them. Staff use effective open-ended questioning during play to help children think critically, such as, 'What do you think is going to happen next?' They encourage children to ask questions and to develop their confidence in participating in conversations. Activities are extended well to challenge children's learning. Children have experience of using real money collected for charity, sorting coins by size and denomination. They sign themselves in on arrival using the computer linked to the white board. This is an excellent opportunity to help children develop skills for the future.

Staff carry out regular observations and assessments on each child and plan activities according to their interests and ideas. They maintain a record of each child's learning journey, with photographic evidence of them participating in a range of activities. Children's progress is regularly monitored through observations, which are recorded in the learning journey record. All activities are linked well to the six areas of learning and any gaps are identified. Through these observations, next steps are planned for each child's learning and development. Staff have a very strong knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage learning and development requirements.

All toys and resources are easily accessible to the children. The learning environment is adapted well to meet the individual needs of each child, enabling their personal learning experiences. Staff successfully identify any child needing additional support and are able to use strong links with other professionals and their outstanding relationships with parents to ensure that the child receives all the support they need. Free-flow planning is effective and children have an excellent

choice of activities both indoors and outdoors, although some outdoor toys are not cleaned regularly, making them uninviting. Children play a very good role in their own learning and development and respond to challenges with enthusiasm. Their independence is extremely well supported. They take on responsibilities and show confidence when eating their lunches with the older children in the main school dining hall. They are learning to take turns, share and play cooperatively together, and are beginning to work as team. There are very good strategies in place to manage children's behaviour according to their age and stage of development.

Children are helped to manage their own personal hygiene with good support from the staff. Tissues are available to children, although staff do not always encourage them to clean their own noses. Children learn how to keep themselves safe through the frequent practice of the evacuation procedures. They are taught about 'stranger danger', making them aware who is a safe person to ask for help if they are lost or afraid. The children show a strong sense of security and feel safe within the setting. They are confident and contented and have developed an excellent relationship with the staff and their friends, and play harmoniously with each other.

## 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	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
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	1

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

<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	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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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