

St Andrew's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	301698
Inspection date	14/10/2011
Inspector	Ms Jennifer Kennaugh

Setting address	134 Brookway, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB2 4RE
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Type of setting	Childcare - Non-Domestic
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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. Andrew's Pre-School opened in 2001 and operates from a terraced house belonging to Twin Valley homes, situated in the Livesey area of Blackburn. It is registered on the Early Years Register only. A maximum of twenty children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are seven children on roll aged from two-to four-years-old and of these, three receive early years funding. Children come from the local area.

The pre-school employs three staff including the manager who has a relevant level three qualification. Of the other staff, one is qualified to level two with experience and one is working towards a level three qualification. In addition, they accept placement students from local colleges who are working towards relevant qualifications.

The setting is open from 9am to 12pm term times only and also provides a "lunch club" from Monday to Thursday 12pm to 1pm. Both floors of the house are used for the provision and there is currently no lift access to the first floor, where the toilet and changing facilities are situated. There is a secure play area in the rear garden, accessed from the main play room.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children's welfare and development are promoted to an exemplary standard. Excellent systems are in place to ensure that individual needs are understood and met by all staff, who display an excellent knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Consequently, children make good or exceptional progress in learning and development. Children are very happy and secure because of the work of skilled and motivated staff. There are strong relationships with parents and carers, who are kept very well informed of children's daily routines, successes and progress although they have few opportunities to contribute to children's learning records. Highly positive partnerships are formed with other professionals and agencies to promote welfare and continuity of education for children.

Staff demonstrate a dynamic attitude to continuous improvement, monitoring and reviewing the provision as an ongoing process, in order to improve outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- providing opportunities for parents to contribute towards children's learning and development records.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safe and secure in the setting because of the active contribution made by all staff to making children feel welcome and valued. Staff have a robust knowledge of safeguarding and the local guidelines in case they need to report concern regarding a child. Staff induction ensures that all adults are familiar with safety procedures, including arrival and collection of children, evacuation and dealing with intruders. All staff are suitably vetted and qualified. Risk assessments are frequently reviewed to maintain children's safety, and all areas of the provision are checked daily for potential hazards. Excellent procedures are developed from thorough risk assessments, such as one member of staff walking the route to be taken for an outing on the morning before children do this, to check for new hazards.

Documentation is exceptionally well maintained to manage the setting effectively, so that children make very good progress in each area of learning. Children's progress is recorded in detailed profile booklets which are passed to parents when children leave, and copies of them are passed onto their next setting. The quality of recording is reflected in planning, enabling the children to achieve through enjoyable yet challenging experiences. Parents can look at individual progress folders of annotated photographs in the entry area to see children's development, however there are currently no systems in place for parents to contribute to these records so learning that occurs away from the pre-school is not recorded. The setting operates a weekly "library" to help parents share books with children although the outcome of this is not recorded in children's learning journals. The views of parents are regularly sought, using informal coffee mornings as it has been found to be effective for gathering information to improve provision. Parents can also discuss children's progress with key workers on these occasions, and look at the profile booklets. When children are going to transfer to reception classes, staff from primary schools are welcomed to observe children and look at records so that continuity of welfare and development is promoted.

Deployment of staff is excellent, in all areas of the setting, leading to children always having the encouragement of an enthusiastic and interested adult. Training for staff is very well used, and reflects the needs of children in the setting at the time, leading to a continuously improving practice. Staff and children are careful to look after the setting's resources, and sustain them. Toys and resources are organised to provide a rich and varied learning experience for children, especially with regard to celebrating festivals and reflecting cultural diversity in the setting. This promotes equality of opportunity and a positive attitude towards diversity.

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

Children show they enjoy and achieve by becoming engrossed in their play, indoors and out, with enthusiastic support from staff. Whether tricycling in the

secure rear play area, calling out as they pass by, or pretending to shop at the supermarket in the role play room, they receive superb responses from staff. The atmosphere is vibrant and play is intensely purposeful as a result of staff interactions which are sustained to cover as many areas of learning as possible whatever a child is involved in. Children are very keen to arrive in the morning and are delighted to tell them news from the previous day. Staff ask questions to extend communication skills using children's chosen familiar topics. Children become immersed in quiet activities too, as one child chooses not to play out and spends time meticulously tidying the dolls' house, then successfully completing the lacing cards, before going out to play.

The playroom has plenty of space between activity areas so that children can move freely in their play. A large display of a collage elephant made from felt squares also shows annotated photographs of children and some of the comments they made whilst working on the collage, to show how their contribution to the setting is valued. Clear plastic folders with annotated photographs of children and summaries of their progress are kept on named pegs in the entry area, so that children can access them which helps to extend their concept of time. This also enables information sharing with parents in an accessible form, and helps children to feel valued.

The downstairs room provides opportunities for small world play, sand play, gluing and creative modelling to extend development in many areas of learning, combined with the consistently highly effective practice of staff. Checks are carried out daily, for inside areas and the rear garden to keep children safe. The outside provision contains a wide range of physical play equipment and a bench for quiet sitting to provide for a range of needs. Staff are flexible about which toys can be taken outside and the children ask for simple percussion toys to perform a show for staff, who praise them enthusiastically. Staff reassure children who are concerned about getting turns on outdoor equipment, raising their self-esteem. Children are encouraged to think about whether they are warm enough outside or if they need to get their coat, to extend self-care skills.

Children have access to a computer with a variety of games to improve mouse control and early numeracy and literacy skills in the room with a focus on early number, technology and knowledge and understanding of the world. The other upstairs play room provides opportunities for role play situations such as the supermarket and being at a car wash or car park. Staff regularly change resources to maintain challenges to children's creativity.

Children have outstanding opportunities to learn about a healthy lifestyle and can say whether a snack is healthy or not. They enjoy selecting from a range of healthy options as part of the setting's participation in the local dental health scheme and if able to, pour their own drink of milk or water. Sometimes, they prepare their own snack by making small cakes or pizzas to promote numeracy by counting and weighing out ingredients. This activity also teaches children the ingredients in common foods and develops understanding of healthy eating. Children observe very good personal hygiene measures, and are praised for this by staff.

Staff constantly observe and note aspects of children's play and then use these to inform short term and longer term planning. Planning is easily accessible to all

staff, along with children's profile booklets to make recording and checking progress quick. Staff have a robust knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage due to training and discussion at planning meetings. Some three-year-olds have met most of the early learning goals in the past year they have attended, which is very rapid progress given their baseline on entry. Staff have clear procedures for what to do if they have concerns for a child's development and also if a child's needs require them to liaise with other agencies or professionals.

Children enjoy a variety of visits and visitors to extend their knowledge of the world. Staff arrange for the fire service to bring a fire engine and talk about safety and a dental health talk is provided to help children look after their teeth. Children visit a local farm in the summer term to extend knowledge and experience of the natural world. Festivals from diverse cultures are imaginatively celebrated and the children help to make a Chinese dragon for Chinese New Year from large cardboard boxes. Staff work hard to incorporate the cultural heritage of children into the setting by introducing foods and items from their culture into play, promoting equality and valuing diversity.

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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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