

# St Antonys Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 309463  
**Inspection date** 01/12/2011  
**Inspector** Jennifer Kennaugh

**Setting address** St Antonys Parish Centre Annexe, St Antonys Drive,  
Fulwood, PRESTON, PR2 3SQ

**Telephone number** 07503 498222

**Email**

**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 Anthony's Pre-School Playgroup is run by a committee of trustees and operates from a parish centre annexe in Fulwood, Preston. The group has use of a large room with access to a kitchen area, a coffee area, a large hall, a small room and toilets. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and may care for up to 24 children at any one time. The setting is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The playgroup sessions are Monday and Wednesday mornings 9am to 11.30am. The pre-school sessions are Monday 12noon until 3pm, Tuesday 9am until 12noon, Thursday 9am until 3pm and Friday 9am until 12noon. There are currently 43 children on roll attending for a variety of sessions. The setting provides funding for early education.

The playgroup employs five childcare staff, of these, three hold qualifications at level three. There is also one graduate practitioner in early years and a Qualified Primary Teacher. The playgroup is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The playgroup promotes children's welfare and learning well. Staff ensure that all children's individual needs are met and most aspects of recording their progress are good. Consequently, children experience positive outcomes and are happy and secure in an inclusive and welcoming environment. There are good working relationships with parents and there has been some success at helping them to contribute to their children's learning records. There are effective routes for communication with some other settings to promote continuity of care and education. The playgroup has good systems in place for self-evaluation and there is a positive attitude to extending these to continue improvement of provision.

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

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

- improve the recording of formative assessment and planning for individual children
- extend further the ways for parents to contribute to children's learning and development records
- develop further the systems of management to encourage continuous quality improvement and embedded effective practice.

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

Children are safeguarded and well protected because staff are trained in local safeguarding policies and have effective procedures in place to manage any concerns they may have about children. Staff are checked to ensure they are suitable to work with young children. Risk assessments are carried out for all outings and areas of the premises used by children in order to keep them safe. There is a procedure for daily inside and outside checks to ensure that the play areas and toilet facilities are safe for children.

Resources in the main playroom and outdoor area are easily accessible to children, and they select freely from these, encouraging independence skills. Staff have good individual knowledge of the children in their key groups and consequently support them well in their learning. Systems are in place to record children's progress, although children's next steps are not consistently documented in learning records. Additionally, formative assessments are not carried out at a frequency which enables progress to be readily tracked. This means that although staff have good knowledge of children's progress and next steps, the written records are not consistent with this. Detailed policies are in place to promote individual and additional needs.

There are weekly whole staff meetings where evaluation of practice is discussed, although systems to monitor the performance of individual staff and record keeping are not as well developed. Management of space and resources is strong and the staff and manager work hard to provide an environment in which children can learn effectively. They regularly review use of different areas, and have recently improved the outdoor play area so children can play out under an awning in all weathers. The potential for continuous improvement is good, as the playgroup uses the local authority quality scale for self-evaluation. As a result of this, some areas of strength and those for development are identified.

Parents praise the playgroup's work to develop children's independence and communication skills. A volunteer rota enables parents to play an active part in the day to day routine of the playgroup and they are consulted to inform the evaluation process. Information is sought when children join the playgroup to support their individual needs. Parents receive frequent verbal feedback with a yearly report to inform them of children's progress but systems for them to contribute to learning records beyond initial information are not consistently successful. Good systems are in place to liaise with other settings such as childminders and this leads to effective exchange of information about children's care and development. There has been only limited success in establishing links for children's transitions to primary school, so continuity of education and care is not fully developed in this area.

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

Children handle simple implements like safety scissors and play dough cutters competently, showing an awareness of their own need and that of others, to stay safe. Staff use good safety measures such as systems of gates and locks to ensure children remain supervised and accounted for. Parents are made aware of a rigorous code of conduct and procedures to be followed when volunteering in the playgroup to protect children and themselves. Staff ensure that there is plenty of space between activities indoors and out, so that children can move freely and safely. They remind children to only run when they play in the sports hall or outside, to prevent accidents. Children enjoy visits from the fire service to learn about safety in the home.

Children learn about foods that support a healthy lifestyle by bringing fruit for morning snack. Inappropriate snacks are replaced with dried fruit and this is discussed with parents. Pre-school children can attend for two sessions on a Monday and Thursday, bringing a healthy packed lunch to eat. This is stored in the fridge, to maintain good food hygiene practice. There is extensive provision to access outdoor play or play in the large sports hall with physical play equipment. Consequently, children have good opportunities to enjoy exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle. Taught physical education sessions are provided one morning a week and children participate in different activities to develop co-ordination and learn bodily awareness. One of these activities is accompanied by instructions and music to improve listening skills.

Staff carry out regular observations on children to inform planning and record progress. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals as a result of staff being fully committed to providing for their individual learning needs. Children paint absorbedly and develop independence skills by being able to peg their creation up to dry without help. They thoroughly enjoy modelling with play dough, to make 'cakes' and bring them to staff and visitors for them to 'eat'. The role play corner is well used, and children dress up as doctors, using toy first aid kits, developing creative and communication skills. A library scheme enables children to take home a book each week. They sit with staff in the cosy book area to choose one and talk about the previous week's choice. This helps to foster an enjoyment of books and an awareness that text carries meaning. In warm weather, children plant in the outdoor area, to learn about the natural world. They have access to a computer to develop information technology skills during some sessions. Staff use spontaneous opportunities in children's play, along with circle times, to develop problem solving and number skills. They support children using construction toys to make models and foster early counting skills with action songs.

Different festivals such as Diwali and Chinese New Year are celebrated using craft, dance, dressing up and food. Children participate in a lion dance at Chinese New Year and learn about the Chinese calendar. They make divas from clay for Diwali to help develop physical skills. Consequently, children have good opportunities to learn about cultural diversity. Children take on small responsibilities, such as

tidying up toys and clearing away at snack time to make a positive contribution to the routine. Behaviour is good due to clear boundaries set by staff. Children's artwork is neatly displayed and makes an attractive contribution to the range of displays from other groups who use the annexe, promoting the place of the playgroup in the community.

## 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	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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### 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