

Arnold St Mary's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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03/11/2011

Inspector

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Setting address

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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

Arnold St Mary's Pre-School is a committee run group, which opened in 1969. It operates from the Family Centre of St Mary's Church in Arnold, Nottingham. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9.15am to 11.45am during school term times. On Wednesday the pre-school runs a lunch club from 11:45am to 12:45pm, and an afternoon session from 12.45pm to 3.15pm. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 56 children in the early years age range on roll. Of these 10 children receive funding for early education. Children attend from the local community and for a variety of sessions. The pre-school employs seven members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications, the other three staff members are working towards a qualification. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receive support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children's care and learning needs are met generally well as the setting establishes close working relationships with parents and relevant professionals. Methods for assessing and planning for children's learning are developing adequately. As a result, children make satisfactory progress in relation to their abilities. On the whole routines, space and resources are used creatively to provide a suitable range of activities that children enjoy, enabling them to learn whilst they play and explore. Children's welfare is protected through some secure practices. Staff present a positive attitude to continually improving the setting and methods of self-evaluation are beginning to contribute to this.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve induction procedures for new staff to help them have a greater understanding about matters such as safeguarding procedures
- develop more robust methods for highlighting and recording next steps for children's progress, linking this to future planned activities to help children reach their full potential
- improve the two-way flow of information with parents providing increasing opportunities to discuss next steps for children's progress, ensuring greater continuity in children's education
- review the organisation of snack time to better meet individual children's needs.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The staff team have a general understanding of their responsibilities to safeguard children from harm or neglect. Although some are less confident in describing required procedures for reporting concerns to relevant authorities as the induction process for new staff is less well established. Appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that staff are suitable to be working with children. The team have a positive attitude to improving their knowledge and skills for the benefit of the children through achieving or working towards higher qualification levels. Staff implement a range of procedures to maintain a safe and hygienic environment for the children. They undertake daily checks of the premises to ensure they are safe and suitable and children are supervised well to further reduce the likelihood of accidents. The staff team demonstrate a positive attitude to raising standards. This enables them to focus on relevant areas for development. Through methods of reviewing practice and through working closely with relevant early years professionals they take on board advice to make improvements. For example, after securing funds the setting are moving forwards in their improvement of the outdoor play area, offering wider learning opportunities for the children. This positive attitude to improving ensures that satisfactory progress has been made in addressing issues raised at the last inspection. The methods for assessing and planning for children's progress continues to be a recommendation for further improvement from this inspection.

A welcoming child friendly environment is provided. Children come in to access a range of activities set up by staff to help them settle quickly. During the session children can choose to play indoors or outdoors to extend their enjoyment. Staff successfully include all children in the setting. They show a genuine interest in the children taking time to listen and respond to them. They use their knowledge of children's interests, gained through discussions with parents and use of 'all about me' records, to plan activities that they know the children will enjoy. Methods of assessing and planning for children's progress are improving. Staff observe children at play to record and assess their developmental stage, they begin to consider next steps for children to work towards. However, as this information is not yet documented this impacts on the ability of staff to share the information with each other or parents, making it more difficult for all to work together to support individuals progress and to monitor if children are reaching these next steps and making greater progress. As a result, children make satisfactory progress through the activities they encounter. The number of staff available at each session ensures all children are well supported. Those new to the group receive individual attention and comfort from their key worker, helping them to develop confidence to begin to play.

The staff team have secure relationships with parents and spend time each day verbally sharing relevant information about the care and children's learning. Those parents spoken to during the inspection express that their children are 'happy' and they find the staff 'approachable' enabling them to discuss their children's needs or share any concerns. The setting is updating their prospectus to aid communication and information is displayed in the setting. Records required in relation to

children's personal details are maintained enabling staff to cater for individual needs. Partnerships with other professionals are generally effective in ensuring that children receive the support they need from an early age. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and making progress in relation to their starting points. The setting is establishing links with local schools to aid children's transition as they move on in their education.

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

Good relationships are evident between the staff and children. Children are warmly welcomed and those less confident or new to the setting are appropriately comforted and supported. Staff engage in activities with children and many confidently use their own language to extend children's ideas and thoughts. Children discuss and express their ideas as they draw pictures, or when pretending to be builders in the role play area. Books are used to begin to support language and literacy skills and children enjoy large group story time or sharing books individually with staff. Opportunities to see and recognise letters or text in other areas of play are less well considered. The setting is aware of this and plans are in place to reintroduce the method of using children's name cards in the setting and labels outdoors. Children make choices throughout the morning accessing activities set out by staff. Individual preferences are respected as children can choose to free flow between indoor and outdoor play for the majority of the session. They have some opportunities to select different materials to extend their learning. For example, during craft activities children can access glue, chalks, pens, scissors and a range of paper from accessible storage boxes to extend their creativity. These activities also help children develop hand control needed for future writing skills. Children make some progress and develop skills for the future as they play and explore, developing their early mathematical skills as they name shapes and count blocks during a building activity. The younger children benefit from visual aids used during singing times as they join in the counting songs. Staff plan activities to offer variety during the week and plan some adult-led activities to introduce new experiences.

Children's health is well promoted as they have daily opportunities to use the outdoor area, benefiting from the fresh air and exercise. They develop a range of physical skills using balancing blocks, hoops and wheeled toys, moving in a variety of ways. Outdoors they also begin to explore aspects of the natural world as they play out during different seasons and explore natural materials, such as, leaves and sand. Healthy snacks and refreshments are provided and children learn about good hygiene routines as they clean their hands carefully before eating. Snack time is not always well organised, consequently not all children are able to benefit from the learning opportunities and social skills this time can offer. Most children behave well in the setting keeping themselves and their friends safe. Children new to the setting respond well to staff guidance of keeping the bikes on the patio area outdoors to maintain their safety. Children begin to understand about expectations to share and take turns and staff reinforce and reward this positive behaviour as they talk about the 'pre-school promises' with children. Children are supported to develop a positive self-esteem and positive attitude to others as they use some

books and toys that reflect positive images of our diverse society. A range of festivals and special events are covered through craft and food tasting activities to extend children's interest in their own and wider cultures.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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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