

Southdown Methodist Pre-School

130a Southdown Road, Harpenden, HERTFORDSHIRE, AL5 1PU

Inspection date	14/11/2013
Previous inspection date	22/03/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Children's progress and achievements are exceptional, given their starting points and capabilities, because teaching is inspirational. Well qualified staff make excellent use of precise assessments, which enables them to plan activities which are exciting, varied and incorporate children's interests.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. The well-established staff team are highly motivated by the management team who work very closely to inspire the drive for continuous improvement. Highly effective self-evaluation enables staff to quickly identify and consistently improve their already first rate practice.
- Children's safety is extremely well-promoted because staff continually promote their understanding of personal safety and give safeguarding the highest priority. Children learn about keeping themselves safe during outings to the pre-school allotment where, additionally, their learning about healthy diets is developing extremely well.
- Excellent relationships between children, peers and staff are forming beautifully. Key staff work extremely hard to promote bonds and attachments with children and their families. Children's self-confidence and independence are extremely well promoted and all children show high levels of concentration.
- Partnerships with parents, carers and others are outstanding and enhance all aspects of children's overall care and well-being. Parents are hugely involved in the pre-school and speak very highly of all staff. As a result, children receive a consistent approach to learning.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed a range of activities in the main room of the pre-school.
The inspector looked at a selection of documentation, including policies, procedures,
- children's learning journals and additional photographs of children taking part in a variety of activities.
- The inspector spoke with the chair person, manager, deputy manager, staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the deputy manager.

Inspector

Jo Rowley

Full report

Information about the setting

Southdown Methodist Pre-School opened in 1983 and was registered in 1992. The pre-school is located in Harpenden, Hertfordshire and is managed by a committee. The pre-school is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from a church hall situated on the first floor and is accessed by stairs and a lift. There is no outdoor play area, but an additional hall is used for physical play and an allotment is used on a regular basis.

The pre-school serves the local and surrounding areas and is accessible to all children. The pre-school opens on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays during school term times only. Sessions are from 9.10am to 12.10pm and children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 31 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The pre-school provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds.

The pre-school employs seven members of child care staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at Level 3 or above. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- enhance children's already excellent opportunities to self-select by providing additional photographic evidence of what is available.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children are learning and developing exceptionally well because staff have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teaching is inspirational and children are extremely well engaged in activities that capture their interests completely. For example, on an interest table, children practise their early writing skills as they independently and spontaneously write cards and notes for their parents. Staff fully involve themselves in this activity by asking open questions, challenging children to talk about what they have written and support children in looking for additional examples of various letters, around the pre-school. Additionally, children's communication and language skills are superbly encouraged through a range of visual prompts and timelines around the pre-school. Furthermore, staff work very closely with parents to encourage the creation of home video diaries to support children with limited

speech. As a result, all children's communication and language development is extremely well promoted. Staff carry out quality observations and assessments on every child and are clearly able to incorporate their next steps extremely well into future activities. Consequently, children are making excellent progress. Staff interaction with children is excellent and extremely meaningful, because they encourage children to explore and develop their own ideas. For example, a group of children are engaged in an activity that they have created on the climbing frame. A member of staff talks to the children about what they are doing and instantly joins in by crawling on the floor with them and becoming part of their game, which they clearly thrive on.

Children are exceptionally well challenged in their learning and development and their interests and motivation for learning is very well promoted. Staff provide a wide range of activities, which enables children to explore them further. For example, children extend their own learning as they explore a wide range of dinosaurs. Staff ask challenging questions and encourage the children to think further, as they develop the activity to include the use of water and boxes for the dinosaurs to hide in. Additionally, their speech and language is hugely promoted as they use words, such as, 'gooey, slimy and rough'. The progress of children's personal, social and emotional development is excellent because staff work consistently to promote opportunities for children to build positive relationships with their friends. Children behave exceptionally well and are very aware of the pre-school boundaries, because staff use a range of gentle reminders. Additionally, staff monitor children's engagement in activities and know when to intervene without obstructing their learning. Children are making outstanding progress and have excellent opportunities to develop their physical skills as they take part in freely chosen and well planned physical play. For example, they clearly enjoy music and movement sessions where they get to dance, move their bodies to the sound of the music and follow instruction as they move. As a result, children's development in the prime and specific areas of learning is excellent and their overall learning and development is enormously promoted.

Partnerships with parents and carers are exemplary. Every parent is encouraged to contribute to their children's settling-in plan through discussion and settling in visits. Consequently, children settle easily and extremely quickly. They leave their parents and carers with ease, demonstrating significant feelings of security. Staff work extremely closely with parents to ensure that they have a full picture about each child, which enables them to clearly plan from their initial starting points. To further support the holistic view, every child's parents are supported from the onset with detailed information about the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. This means that parents have a clear understanding of how staff are preparing their children for future learning and success. They contribute regularly to their children's learning because staff encourage them to share specific learning they have observed at home. Consequently, children are working securely within the typical range of development expected for their age and some are exceeding expectations, making very rapid progress in all areas, which ensures that they are ready for school.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children spend their time purposefully and are exceptionally happy at this wonderful pre-school. For example, they are observed laughing, giggling and enjoying their play in small and large groups. Staff organise excellent resources to enable children to explore their own ideas and creativity. For example, children in the home corner interact with staff, as they make up their own play and include staff in their games. Additionally, staff show a genuine enjoyment of their role and value what children say and do. For example, a group of children take a book to a member of staff for her to read to them. She stops what she is doing, sits on the floor in the middle of the pre-school and reads to them. This spontaneous activity promotes children's self-confidence and supports their excellent emotional well-being. Although, opportunities for children to self-select could be further enhanced through the use of more photographic books. Children behave exceptionally well at pre-school. They are very aware of the boundaries, because staff use a range of gentle reminders. The children clearly get on wonderfully as they are observed to regularly walk around holding hands as they move between activities. Additionally, staff monitor children's engagement in activities and clearly recognise when to intervene without obstructing their learning.

The key person system is highly effective in promoting excellent relationships and very strong bonds between staff and children. Staff are highly supportive of children, know them exceptionally well and fully encourage children to promote their self-confidence. For example, during registration time children confidently join in with a 'good morning' song. For the less confident children, staff are there to support and nurture them, sitting together and helping them to feel secure. Additionally, during whole group activities opportunities to promote children's independence is exceptionally well encouraged. For example, as individual children share things from home their discussions are hugely valued and listened to by all staff and children. Parents and children are exceptionally well supported in feeling secure and settled at the pre-school, because each and every member of staff know individual families very well. Parents express their high opinions of the staff team and are clearly content in leaving their children at the setting, knowing that their care and overall well-being is highly promoted. Children obtain an exceptional understanding of safety and risks to others as staff encourage children to think about their safety. For example, staff ask children why they think its important not to run inside the pre-school. Clearly children respond knowingly that they may hurt themselves or others. Additionally, children's understanding of safety is promoted further as they discuss road safety during their outings to the allotment.

Children develop an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles as they take part in regular outside activities at the pre-school allotment. They learn about the importance of growing foods and take part in planting and watering specific foods that they help to grow. For example, children plant carrots, help them to grow by regularly watering them, pick them, clean them and eat them at snack time. They are very well supported by staff who use effective questioning to develop their thinking further. Furthermore, after physical exercise staff question children about how their bodies feel. Children learn very quickly that exercise and physical activity makes their 'hearts beat faster' and makes them 'hotter'. At snack time children benefit from a range of healthy and nutritious food which they clearly enjoy. Their independence is highly prompted as they serve their own snack, pour their own drinks and find their individual name card beforehand. Additionally, as observed throughout the inspection staff use sign language to communicate with children

as well as using their voice. As a result, children's individual needs are consistently met. The move from pre-school to primary school happens effortlessly because children awareness of school is exceptionally well known to them. There are photographs of inside the closest schools, pictures of teachers and discussions around moving on are not just promoted before the move. This is because staff understand the importance of ensuring that children are well prepared emotionally and physically.

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

The extremely established staff have a management team that lead and manage them excellently. They work exceptionally well to ensure that every child is safeguarded and protected through consistent vigilance. Recruitment and induction procedures are hugely robust to ensure that each and every member of staff is suitably checked and safe to work with children. Thorough Disclosure and Barring Service checks are completed with a comprehensive list in place of all staff disclosures to further protect children at pre-school. Two members of staff take the designated lead for safeguarding and each have an excellent understanding of their roles and responsibilities in protecting children. Additionally, all staff have completed basic safeguarding training and keep up-to-date with current practice through regular staff meetings. The management team ensure that their well-established staff team are exceptionally well qualified and experienced to ensure that the quality of the pre-school learning environment is first rate. For example, all staff have a wealth of experience and undertake regular training to improve. All staff take responsibility for their role and show a genuine love for what they do. Excellent staffing and supervision ensures that the setting's staff to child ratios are always well met and the highly effective signing in and out by parents further safeguards children. All visitors to the pre-school are required to sign in, parent helpers are reminded of their restrictions and staff ensure that the keypad to gain entry is only used by staff. As a result, the safeguarding and welfare requirements are exceptionally well met and children are highly protected.

The manager monitors the effectiveness of teaching and learning by regularly observing staff practice in the pre-school. She speaks to staff and children on a daily basis and is integral to their learning and development. Most staff have been at the pre-school for a number of years and demonstrate a sense of achievement, they are clearly happy and thoroughly enjoy teaching the children on a daily basis. Furthermore, through safer recruitment, regular supervision and annual appraisals, the management team are clearly able to support, encourage and promote the best learning environment they can for each child. As a result, the impact on children's learning and development is outstanding. All staff display extremely high levels of enthusiasm for their role and speak particularly well of each other. The very strong team ethic reinforces this approach and clearly contributes to the pre-school's excellent success. Educational programmes continue to provide optimum challenge in meeting children's individual needs. As a result, possible gaps are limited and very quickly identified so improvements are rapidly made.

The pre-school work enthusiastically to ensure that self-evaluation is used to see where improvements can be made. The team work together to ensure that evaluation is accurate

and results in effective plans for the future to secure continuous improvement. Consistent feedback from parents is encouraged through regular questionnaires and discussions with children provide staff with a holistic view of the pre-school. As a result, improvements are focused and strongly accomplished. Partnership with parents is fantastic and parents cannot speak highly enough of the staff. They eagerly want to provide their feedback to the inspector during inspection and stress how enormously satisfied they are with the pre-school as a whole. Parents speak of the rapid progress their children are making, the confidence they have grown in and how fantastic their speech and language has progressed since they started. Partnerships with other professionals, such as the local children's centre are also excellent. Staff work closely to promote the children's care, learning and well-being and support families as a unit which, promotes children's overall growth and development. Additionally, pre-school staff have been proactive in developing excellent links with local schools, including regular visits to meet primary school teachers. As a result, effective communication is highly promoted and this influences the ongoing contribution to children's individual needs.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	123615
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	870956
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	28
Number of children on roll	31
Name of provider	Southdown Methodist Church
Date of previous inspection	22/03/2011
Telephone number	07950614504

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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