

# St Ambrose Pre-School

School House, Leswell Street, Kidderminster, Worcestershire, DY10 1RP

<b>Inspection date</b>	13/11/2013
Previous inspection date	11/12/2008

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	4
	Previous inspection:	1
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is inadequate

- Risk assessments are ineffective as they do not identify all aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis and do not detail how the risk will be removed or minimised to ensure children's safety. This particularly refers to equipment in the outdoor area. As a result, children's safety is compromised.
- Manager and staff do not have a secure knowledge of safeguarding procedures relating to the use of mobile phones and are not confident of the procedures to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff. As a result, children are not safeguarded at all times.
- The quality of teaching is poor. Ineffective monitoring of staff practice results in staff not making the most of teaching opportunities to engage children's interest and extend their learning.
- Children are not always engaged in their learning, because some activities are not well planned to provide children with challenge and enjoyment.
- Assessment and observation are not being carried out consistently, this means that children's next steps in learning are not being accurately identified and targeted to close any gaps in their learning.

### It has the following strengths

- Parents are welcomed into the pre-school and are encouraged to provide information about their children's starting points on entry.

## 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 play and learning activities and spoke to staff and children in the indoor and outdoor environment.
- The inspector carried out two joint observations with the manager in the outdoor area.
- The inspector looked at a selection of children's assessment files and progress tracking information and spoke to the key person.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.
- The inspector carried out a meeting with the manager and looked at and discussed a range of policies and procedures.
- The inspector looked at a representative sample of documents, such as children's records, medication records and the risk assessment file.

## Inspector

Kerry Wallace

## **Full report**

### **Information about the setting**

St Ambrose Pre-School opened in 1982. The group is committee run and operates from a self-contained building in the grounds of St Ambrose's Primary School, a Roman Catholic school close to the town centre of Kidderminster. The pre-school serves both the local and surrounding areas. It is open from 8.55am until 3pm each weekday during term time only. Children may attend for a variety of sessions between these times. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area, and older pre-school age children attend physical education sessions in the school hall. The setting is on the Early Years Register, the compulsory and voluntary part of the Childcare Register.

There are currently 39 children attending who are in the early years age range. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four year old children. The pre-school also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs one full-time member of staff and seven part-time members of staff, all of whom have early years qualifications to level 3, with one enrolled on an Open University course to gain BA in Early Years, work with the children. The setting receives support from the local authority and is involved in local early years partnership group and providers' forums.

### **What the setting needs to do to improve further**

**To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:**

- ensure safeguarding policies are updated to include mobile phone use and ensure that all staff have a good understanding of all of safeguarding practice including the procedures to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff
- ensure the outdoor area is fit for purpose and equipment and toys are safe and suitable for children to use. This particularly refers to the wooden train and the storage of broken toys and equipment
- ensure risk assessments identify all aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis, when and by whom those aspects will be checked and how the risk will be removed or minimised to ensure children's safety
- improve the quality of teaching by; monitoring staff practice to ensure their interactions effectively extend children's learning and build upon their interests, ensure training is focused on raising staff's knowledge of how to promote the characteristics of effective learning
- ensure the two year old check is completed for all children in a timely manner so that parents are provided with an accurate summary of their children's development
- improve the effectiveness of observation and assessment by; developing staff knowledge of how to use observations of what children can already do to identify and target their next steps, so they make good progress in every area of learning
- improve educational programmes to; ensure they have depth and breadth across all seven areas of learning, include regular opportunities for children to learn about information, communication technology, and provide interesting and challenging experiences that meet the needs of all children.

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

- review large group circle time and consider small group sizes to ensure that all children are participating and included, especially those who speak English as an additional language.

## Inspection judgements

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

The quality of teaching is poor. Staff plan some basic activities covering most of the areas of learning. Adult-led activities do not always take account of individual children's interests or monitor children's participation. As a result, children are not always engaged and challenged by the activities provided. Whole group activities are not well planned so staff are not able to make most of teaching and learning opportunities. For example, during circle time one member of staff unsuccessfully tried to engage a large group of children, who became bored and disengaged. Staff do not always use appropriate teaching methods to communicate effectively with children to engage and extend their play. Children explore the wide selection of resources on offer, but they are not always well-maintained or easily available to support children's play. The outdoor area is poorly laid out with broken toys stored in front of plant pots preventing children to access them. Children wander around with no real purpose and their learning is not supported by appropriate resources to extend their play. For example, a child walking around pushing an empty pushchair informed the inspector that she did not have a dolly. When staff produced dolls from inside, these had no clothes on and the child commented that her dolly was cold. However, staff failed to exploit the child's comment as a teaching opportunity to extend their learning. Attempts to improve numeracy outdoors have been made following the previous report, for example there are number ducks tied to the fence and numerals have been erected on tree trunks but these are worn and peeling off.

Observation and assessment are not consistent in quality and are not accurate enough to build on children's progress. Assessment is ineffective as it does not clearly identify children's next steps and how staff can target any gaps in children's learning. As a result, children are not consistently gaining the skills to prepare them for their next stage of learning, such as moving on to school. Observations of children are not evaluative and do not take account of all areas of learning. For example, information, communication technology is not included in plans and the computer was not turned on during the inspection. Staff ensure that they obtain information from parents about what their children know and can do when they first join the pre-school, however there is little evidence to demonstrate how this is used to formulate children's next steps in learning.

There is a welcoming reception area where displays inform parents on different aspects of their children's learning, for example, supporting speech and language development. The pre-school maintains close links with local schools and children benefit from a physical education session at the on-site school. There are several children who speak English as an additional language and staff members who speak their home language. However, teaching is not specifically planned to support their communication and language skills in the pre-school, although there are examples of numbers displayed in English and Polish in the environment.

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

Overall, children appear happy to be in the pre-school, however there are times when they do not engage in activities offered to them and seem uninterested and bored. For example, during the inspection children walked around with empty pushchairs during outdoor play and were not confident to ask staff for additional resources. As a result, children's emotional well-being is not promoted well. Children who speak English as an additional language do not engage as well as other children, especially during large group activities. Children are not learning how to identify risks and prepare for their future independence. Staff do not provide them with a good example of how to maintain a safe outdoor environment and they allow children to access poorly maintained and unsafe play equipment, such as a rotting wooden train.

Key persons are assigned to each child, this is decided on by the manager who will consider who 'gels' well with a child. Key persons only have a small number of key children each but they do not all know key information, such as when a child started at the pre-school. There is a key person display in the reception area and parents know who their child's key person is and have an insight into their role. Appropriate information is gathered from parents to help children settle into the pre-school.

The outdoor environment has benefited from a new surface, which should enable children to access the outdoor area in all weather conditions. Although during the inspection a child commented that they did not come out every day because when it rains we get wet.

Children are offered healthy snacks and enjoy socialising during snack time. Staff remind them to wash their hands before snack; however adults do not exploit opportunities to interact with children and explain the need to eat healthily. Staff did make children aware of how to move chairs safely after circle time and praised their efforts. Children generally behave well and are learning to take account of the needs of others.

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

There is too little understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The manager is not secure in her knowledge regarding safeguarding procedures. She is unsure about what to do if an allegation was made against a member of staff. In addition, there are no procedures in place to ensure the safe use of mobile phones in the pre-school. As a result, children's safety is not assured at all times. Staff are aware of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and who to contact if they have a concern. There are risk assessment procedures in place but these are not effective in keeping children safe. For example, the rotting wooden train has an exposed screw that is dangerous to children and although the need for maintenance has already been identified, nothing had been done to restrict children's access to this. In addition, there were broken toys stored outside in the gardening area and children were still allowed to play near the rotting wooden train even though it had been identified as a hazard during the inspection. As a result, the outdoor area was not safe and suitable for children. This is a breach of requirements of the Early Years Register

and the Childcare Register. Appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures are in place to ensure staff are safe and suitable to work with children.

Management and staff demonstrate a lack of drive for improvement and weak reflection on practice has resulted in breaches of requirements which have a significant impact on children's learning. There is too little understanding of the learning and development requirements. Monitoring of educational programmes and children's progress is poor, resulting in gaps in children's learning and some inaccurate assessments of children's levels of progress. In addition, the progress check at age two has not been completed for all children. Staff are appropriately qualified for their roles, however, weaknesses in teaching are not identified because leaders do not focus closely on the impact of teaching on children's learning. This was evident during outdoor play when children wandered around unengaged and there were numerous opportunities when staff failed to engage with children and to build upon their learning. As a result, not enough is being done to ensure a consistent approach is used by all staff to support children's learning and development. Performance management of staff is ineffective in identifying weaknesses in assessment and teaching, which has an impact on the quality of learning experiences offered to children.

Parents and children are welcomed into the pre-school and staff strive to form good partnerships with parents. Appropriate information is gathered from parents. The manager produces regular newsletters which contain information about recent questionnaires and planned activities. Termly planning is displayed for parent's information so they have an overview of the activities offered. Parents are generally pleased with the support they receive from staff in settling their children. Staff work in partnership with other professionals when the need arises to support individual children.

### The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met  
(with  
actions)**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met  
(with  
actions)**

#### To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- ensure that the premises and equipment used for purposes of childcare are safe and suitable for that childcare (Compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- undertake a risk assessment of the premises and equipment: at least once every calendar year, and immediately, where the need for an assessment arises. Ensure that all necessary measures are taken to minimise any identified risks (Compulsory part of the Childcare Register).
- undertake a risk assessment of the premises and equipment: at least once every

calendar year, and immediately, where the need for an assessment arises. Ensure that all necessary measures are taken to minimise any identified risks (Voluntary part of the Childcare Register).

- ensure that the premises and equipment used for purposes of childcare are safe and suitable for that childcare (Voluntary part of the Childcare Register)



## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	205482
<b>Local authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	854391
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 17
<b>Total number of places</b>	40
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	39
<b>Name of provider</b>	St Ambrose Playgroup Committee
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11/12/2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	07980 182741

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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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