

Abacus Pre-School @ Mangotsfield

United Reformed Church, Cossham Street, Mangotsfield, BRISTOL, BS16 9EP

Inspection date	14/05/2014
Previous inspection date	25/11/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	1
	Previous inspection:	2
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

- Staff have excellent knowledge of how children learn and provide challenging and varied activities, as a result of precise assessment and planning. Consequently, all children make rapid progress in their learning and development.
- The preschool provides extensive support to develop children's communication and language skills through the meticulous use of sign language, picture cards and group discussion.
- Children are highly confident and show a superb level of independence for their age. This is as a result of first class staff practice and a stimulating learning environment that is organised so that children are consistently able to select resources for themselves.
- Excellent relationships between staff, children and parents ensure that children feel safe, secure, and highly valued. The preschool is successful in helping parents and carers to be directly involved in their children's learning.
- The leadership and management of the preschool is highly successful. Staff are highly enthusiastic about their work, which leads to children being equally motivated in their 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.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children and staff during activities both indoors and outside.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to staff and children at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector sampled documentation including policies, risk assessments, attendance registers, accident book and children's records.
- The inspector spoke to several parents to obtain their views.

Inspector

Karen Allen

Full report

Information about the setting

Abacus pre-school @ Mangotsfield registered in 2010 and is one of four private settings that is run and managed by the owners. It operates from a church hall in Mangotsfield, South Gloucestershire. Children have access to the main hall and an enclosed outside play area. The pre-school serves the local and surrounding areas. The group is registered on the Early Years Register. They are open weekdays from 8.30 am until 3.30pm term times only. They currently have 60 children in the early years age group on roll. The preschool receive funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years. The provision offers support to children who have special education needs and/or disabilities, and those who have English as an additional language. There is a total of five staff. Of these four hold recognised childcare qualifications at level 3 and one at level 2.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance the outdoor environment by increasing the displays of signs and labels to support children's learning further.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make excellent progress in their learning and development. This is due to the educational programme being fully underpinned by staff's excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how children learn effectively. Staff hold the children at the heart of everything they do, and this is evident in their interactions with every child. Staff provide rich, varied and interesting opportunities for all children. As a result all children have excellent opportunities to play and explore, learn actively and become creative thinkers. Children are able to lead their own play, think through ideas, and solve problems as they engage in child-initiated play for much of the day. The role of the adult is extremely effective in supporting their progress. Staff recognise their own role in enhancing, guiding and offering some structure to activities where needed. For example, staff encourage children to discuss their own ideas in role-play activities using mud and pretend food in the outside kitchen. They extend children's ideas, offer challenge within activities and the environment, and ensure a child-focused approach. For example, children show curiosity about strawberry leaves that are eaten by snails at home. Staff provide a tray containing snails, leaves, buttercups and magnifiers so that children can examine the snails first hand. Children are fully engaged in their play and are enthusiastic as they talk about what they are doing. Staff are good role models as they let the snails move across their hand to encourage children to do the same. They effectively support

children to describe how the snail feels on their skin. Children are observant and recognise the different patterns on the snail shells. The children become engrossed in the activity and staff encourage them to count the snails and compare the different sizes and patterns on the shells. This helps to support their mathematical development well. Staff use skilful questioning techniques and descriptive language effectively to further children's vocabulary and language.

Communication and language skills are given a high priority. Staff talk to children at all times, showing great delight as children ask to sing an Italian song to their friends. Children engage in conversations with the staff and their friends while they play together. Speaking and listening skills are developed as staff consistently use sign language to reinforce what they are saying. For example, during circle time as staff and children sing the 'hello' song, and when staff give children instructions for a dance activity. Additionally, staff make excellent use of picture cards to help younger children further understand the daily routines and activities. This helps to consolidate communication and language skills. Children demonstrate an excellent ability to maintain focus for significant periods of time, which prepares them extremely well for when they are ready to move on to school.

Staff provide extensive opportunities for children to develop their physical skills. Children balance on stilts, climb up steps to go down a slide, bend their bodies through hoops, and jump up and down during dance routines. Children develop good hand-eye coordination as they fill and empty containers with water, construct with a variety of resources and dig in the sand with small tools. They experiment with colours by mixing paint with their hands and then use their fingers and hands to make pictures. Children explore weights and measures as they play with pasta and lentils using 'real' kitchen scales, silicone cake containers and metal spoons and ladles. These activities support children's abilities to develop their sensory experiences. Children work with staff and their friends as they use pens and crayons to produce a large scale road map to push the small cars around. Staff support children to make labels for displays and write their name on their artwork. This effectively helps children to develop their early writing skills. Children develop a love of books as they sit with the staff listening to stories and answering questions about the illustrations and the story. There is an excellent use of print throughout the indoor environment, such as displays, signs and labels on storage boxes. This helps children to develop their understanding that words have real meaning and supports their very good literacy skills. There is some scope to improve the outdoor area further by broadening the use of displays and labelling to further enhance children's learning.

Systems of observation, assessment and planning are sharply focused on children's individual needs. Staff work hard to ensure that observations are meaningful and reflect children's learning styles. This helps them to make secure assessments of not only what children are learning, but how children learn. Highlighted next steps in children's learning are focused and specific to each child. As a result, planning is robust and remains child-centred and reflects the developmental needs of all children very well. Staff complete the required progress check for two-year-old children and ongoing 'learning stories' and written summaries include the views of parents. Parents are actively involved in their child's ongoing learning and development. For example, they select themed sacks and letters and sounds bags to share with their children at home. They also contribute to their children's learning journals by adding photographs and comments about activities children

enjoy at home. There is an excellent two-way flow of information. Staff keep parents thoroughly informed about the pre-school activities. For example, through information on the notice boards, regular newsletters, emails, verbal discussions, text messages and the pre-school website.

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

All children are extremely happy when they arrive at this nurturing pre-school. They are warmly welcomed by the staff team as a whole, with whom they enjoy secure and warm relationships. The staff provide children with consistent affection and reassurance, which helps them to feel relaxed and confident in their care. Children's well-being is supported extremely effectively through the implementation of a robust key-person approach. Staff acknowledge that emotional security is vital in order for children to flourish. Staff help children to settle at the preschool by implementing a carefully planned settling-in process for individual children using a 'passport'. They gather a wealth of information about children's interests and individual needs from the parents before children first start. Staff keep parents As a result, children feel secure and quickly become fully engaged in purposeful play and learning.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They thrive on the praise and encouragement received from the staff, who constantly boost their confidence and self-esteem. Adults are excellent role models and use situations, such as song time, to encourage children to listen to others and show respect by clapping children's 'performances'. The staff have high expectations of the children and encourage their independence by giving them responsibility to undertake tasks. For example, they help to prepare snack, set out the tables for lunch, and take on the role of 'snack monitor'. A safe and enabling environment is maintained for all children. Staff supervise the children well and maximise opportunities to teach children about safety. For example, how to use a knife safely as they cut up fruit, how to carry the chairs correctly when they clear a space for dance, and not to access the stage. This effectively helps to minimise accidents and injuries. Children learn about the danger of cars and staff teach the children to 'look and listen' as they cross the car park to access the outdoor play area. Children practise the fire drill with staff so that they know how to evacuate the building to keep themselves safe in the event of an emergency.

Staff promote the importance of a healthy diet and exercise. Children have excellent opportunities for plenty of fresh air and exercise as they access the outdoor area on a daily basis. They are able choose to play indoors and outdoors throughout most of the day. This helps to effectively promote their individual learning preferences. Children have access to an abundant range of high quality toys and resources both indoors and outdoors. This promotes children's independence skills and enables children to make choices about their play. Snack is offered as a caf style where children choose when to eat their snack so that their play is not interrupted. They choose from a selection of fruit and breadsticks at snack time and they help themselves to drinking water when they are thirsty. Staff work with parents to encourage them to put healthy food, such as fruit and vegetables, in their child's lunchboxes. Children develop an awareness of plant life cycles as they sow seeds, tend to plants, and harvest the crops to eat at snack time. Children

develop excellent self-care skills and are becoming competent in managing their personal needs. For example, they are aware of the importance of following good hygiene practices, such as washing their hands before eating. They confidently help themselves to tissues, wipe their noses, put the tissues in the bin and then wash their hands. Children are very thoughtful and kind to each other. For example, they fetch a hat for their friend and explain that they have to wear it to protect their head from the sun. Older children are extremely well prepared for school. Staff arrange for teachers to visit the pre-school so that they can meet and play with the children in a familiar environment. Children visit the schools for stay and play sessions. Staff attend meetings at school so that they can reassure parents and children and answer any questions they may have.

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

There is a very strong commitment to, and understanding of, the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The required adult-to-child ratios are always met by the qualified staff team. Managers are not counted within the adult ratios which means they can provide cover to ensure there is always sufficient staff available. Staff and the management team foster a culture of continual improvement so that all children are able to develop to their full potential. As a result children make excellent progress from their starting points. The management team have high expectations of staff. This results in a well-trained, experienced and knowledgeable team who recognise how children learn.

Arrangements for safeguarding children are strong and embedded in practice. All staff have an excellent understanding of their responsibilities to promote children's safety and welfare. There are clear safeguarding policies and procedures in place. Management and staff have an excellent understanding of child protection issues to help keep children safe. They are clear about the procedures they would follow if they have concerns about a child in their care or regarding another staff's practice. All the required documentation and policies and procedures are in place. Staff conduct daily safety checks of the premises and equipment to make sure there are no potential hazards. This means that children can play in a safe and secure environment. Accident records are promptly completed and shared with parents on collection of their child. Management monitor accidents so that they can feed into risk assessments which are reviewed regularly. This helps to effectively promote children's welfare. Management complete robust recruitment procedures to check the suitability of staff to work with children. New staff receive a thorough induction when they first start to help them understand what is expected of them in their roles. There are extensive supervision and monitoring systems in place to enable staff to achieve high standards consistently. There are excellent systems in place to support staff in their professional development through well-considered training that meets the needs of the children.

Ongoing self-evaluation to monitor the provision includes the views of staff, parents and children. As a result, staff and management are highly reflective in what they offer children. They constantly review their practice and successfully continue to improve what they provide. For example, they have recently introduced more information,

communication and technology resources to further promote children's technological awareness. Children benefit from the activities through the 'open door' policy involving their parents and families. For example, a parent has taught children to sing 'Twinkle, twinkle' in Cantonese. Children develop their creativity as they design and build with real tools and wood. Management carefully monitor what the children are learning to ensure they are covering all areas of learning and that all children achieve their potential. The manager meets with the local authority to help identify areas for their improvement in the pre-school provision. Staff have developed excellent links with other agencies and professionals involved in children's development to help meet their additional needs.

Parents spoken to at the inspection sing their praises for the care and education their children receive from the warm and welcoming staff team. They feel that their children are progressing exceptionally well in speech and language. They state that there is 'an open door' policy and feel that they can talk to all staff at any time about their children. They state that the settling-in procedure is very good and that their children are extremely happy and enjoy attending the pre-school. Information sharing with parents in relation to their children's learning and development is strong. Parents state that they know what their children are learning at the pre-school and they feel fully involved in their children's learning. They appreciate the detailed observations and 'learning stories' completed by key persons. They enjoy the activities that knowledgeable key persons send home to extend their children's learning. They have regular opportunities to see their children's learning journals and are provided with a formal opportunity to discuss their children's learning and development. As a result, parents are effectively involved in their children's learning.

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	EY409900
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	972788
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	60
Name of provider	Learning Through Play Ltd
Date of previous inspection	25/11/2010
Telephone number	01454867285

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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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