

# Inspection of The Salvation Army Pre-School

The Salvation Army, 50 Green Street, Gillingham ME7 1XA

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Inspection date: 18 January 2023

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## **Overall effectiveness**

**Outstanding**

The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

## What is it like to attend this early years setting?

### The provision is outstanding

Children flourish and make exceptional progress in this extremely nurturing environment. They develop extremely strong bonds with their key person and show that they feel happy and safe. Children have incredibly high levels of well-being and self-motivation to learn and explore. From the moment they arrive, children are engrossed in meaningful play due to the exceptionally well-planned environment. Children talk excitedly about their past learning and how they plan to extend this further. For example, children show excitement about the plastic brick pirate ship that they previously built and talk with their key person about using the bigger blocks to extend this learning, exclaiming 'I'm big and strong'.

Staff have high expectations for children's learning and behaviour. They treat children with kindness and respect. Children behave impeccably. Staff are inspiring role models to the children. For instance, during a play dough making activity, children gave up their spoons to the younger children, and waited patiently for staff to get more. Without hesitation, children say 'please' and 'thank you'.

The carefully planned, inspiring curriculum ensures that children have a range of opportunities to help them gain essential knowledge and experience for their future lives. For example, children go on various visits to the local shops and parks, and complete activities with the over 50's group that attends the Salvation Army hub. Visitors from the local community also come into the setting. For instance, the local school lollipop person visits the pre-school to talk about road safety and become a familiar face when children eventually move to school.

## What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- An outstandingly strong key-person system ensures that children feel secure and happy. Each key person's knowledge of their children is impeccable. The key person works closely with parents and carers to ensure children's individual needs are met. Parents have opportunities to share their children's achievements and are invited in to view their child's diaries, which are full of observations and photos. Children take pride in their diaries as they freely access them and sit with their key person to add observations. They excitedly look at pictures, recalling past experiences.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has a passion for supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Her knowledge base is exceptional, which allows her to pick up on any delays and swiftly put strategies in place to support children. She regularly undertakes learning and training to support her in her role. The SENCo has formed positive working relationships with parents. They support parents through referrals and give advice on how they can support learning and development at home.

- Additional funding is used creatively to subsidise and provide trips out of the setting for children and their families. For example, the setting hires coaches to go on trips to the beach and parks. This provides families with opportunities to visit places that they might not otherwise have access to. These trips provide valuable time for children to spend with their parents, and for staff to build relationships with children's parents and extended families.
- Children who speak English as an additional language develop their understanding of the English language quickly. Staff consistently talk, sing and read to the children, which enables them to build a range of words to communicate effectively. Staff learn words in children's home languages. This ensures that they can support children, such as by knowing when they need the toilet, require help, or are hungry or thirsty. They use translation tools to effectively communicate with parents who do not speak English as their first language. This makes all parents feel included and valued.
- Staff are extremely motivated by their inspirational and passionate management team. The manager uses staff supervisions and frequent observations of their practice to highlight any training needs. This enables staff to build their knowledge to provide high levels of quality care and education for the children. Staff appreciate the time and support that they receive from the manager to develop their practice and discuss their own well-being and workload.
- Partnerships with parents and carers are incredibly effective. Parents describe the pre-school as 'amazing' and 'absolutely fantastic'. They praise the staff, who take the time to get to know their children and their extended family. Staff make it their priority to understand each family's background and offer support that they might need. Parents become emotional as they talk about the support that has been offered to them. For example, they know that the staff are always there to talk to and offer advice, as well as support to attend clubs to help make friends when new to the area. Parents feel included in their child's education due to being informed of their next steps and how these can be promoted at home. Parents highly recommend the pre-school.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The pre-school has a strong culture of safeguarding. All staff understand the importance of safeguarding and undertake regular training to extend and embed their knowledge base. Staff are knowledgeable about what could be a cause for concern and know the procedures for reporting and referring concerns. Staff fully understand the setting's safeguarding policy and procedures. This includes whistle-blowing procedures and knowing how to report to the local authority designated officer any concerns about staff practice or conduct, in order to keep children safe. The management team ensures the ongoing suitability of all its members of staff so that they remain safe and suitable to work with children. The setting is safe and secure, with robust risk assessments in place to ensure that any risks to children are discussed and minimised.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY486928
<b>Local authority</b>	Medway
<b>Inspection number</b>	10265680
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Sessional day care
<b>Age range of children at time of inspection</b>	2 to 4
<b>Total number of places</b>	28
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	39
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Salvation Army Trustee Company (The)
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP903315
<b>Telephone number</b>	07872 403 917
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 July 2017

## Information about this early years setting

The Salvation Army Pre-School registered in 2015. The pre-school is open each weekday from 9am to midday and from 12.30pm to 3.30pm during term time only. They also offer a lunch club, which runs daily from 11.45am to 12.30pm. The pre-school is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years, and also receives early years pupil premium funding. The pre-school employs six staff, all of whom hold early years qualifications ranging from level 2 to level 6.

## Information about this inspection

**Inspector**  
Kelly Southern

## Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the pre-school and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- The inspector observed the interactions between staff and children.
- The manager showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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