

# Abbotsham and Alwington Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106288
<b>Inspection date</b>	06 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Valerie Button
<b>Setting Address</b>	C/o Abottsham Village hall, Abbotsham, Devon, EX39 5AP
<b>Telephone number</b>	07766 912361
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees of Abbotsham and Alwington Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Abbotsham and Alwington Pre-School is a parent committee run pre-school which has been meeting in the village hall in the centre of the village of Abbotsham for more than thirty years. The pre-school is registered to take up to 26 three-to-five-year-olds and meets, Monday to Friday, from 09.30 until 12 noon, during school term times. In addition, the group runs an 'Early Birds' session from 09.00 to 09.30 each day.

There are currently a total of 25 children on roll, of whom 22 receive funding for their nursery education. The group supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities. There are no children currently attending for whom English is an additional language.

The pre-school has use of a large hall within the village hall which is sited next to the village school. There is an adventure playground and playing field adjacent to the hall which are used for outside play, and the group also use part of the school playground for outside activities.

The pre-school employs five members of staff, all have appropriate qualifications. The group receives support from the local authority and the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children learn about keeping healthy, for example, by discussing the healthy food they will eat at snack time. They use liquid soap and wash their hands under running water, which helps to protect them from the risk of cross infection. They are well cared for in the event of having an accident as sufficient staff are qualified in first aid and there are effective systems in place to record what has happened. Children are managed extremely sensitively. Medication is rarely administered to children, because they only attend morning sessions and do not attend if they are ill. However, the current policy and the records used, fail to clarify the correct procedures to be followed. Staff work hard to present an attractive, welcoming and clean environment for the children. However, patches of damp in some areas of the premises do not have a positive effect on the children's health and wellbeing.

Children enjoy healthy snacks of, for example, fresh fruit and vegetables and bread sticks. They sometimes also enjoy fresh produce, such as carrots, that they have grown at the pre-school. This helps children to understand where food comes from and enables them to have worthwhile discussions about nutrition. Children may request a drink of water at any time, from a jug prepared for them at every session.

Children benefit from the health giving properties of fresh air every day, using the adjoining adventure play area or school playground. They make very good use of the outside play area for exercise and various large physical activities, such as ball play. They also have sufficient space for active play in the hall, where they enjoy activities, such as moving to music. There is good record-keeping of the development of children's skills. They develop their small movement skills effectively, for example, by controlling the computer mouse and by manipulating play dough.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children play in an attractively presented setting. All toys, games and activities are set out ready for the children to enjoy and access safely as soon as they arrive. They have ample space to play active games in the large hall, Children are kept very safe in the setting as the door is always secured and a bell must be rung to gain entry to the hall. Risk assessments are regularly undertaken to identify any areas of concern regarding the fabric of the building. Children play with a range of clean and well-maintained resources. They have safe, appropriately sized furniture to sit at and play on.

Children learn about keeping themselves safe, for example, understanding the importance and listening carefully to instructions, particularly when going outside to play. Good attention is given to practising emergency evacuation from the premises, in order to ensure that children and staff are familiar with procedures.

Children's safety is further supported as the staff all have a secure understanding of the child protection procedure. They have attended training in this area and have up-to-date, helpful, written guidance to refer to in the event of a concern.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children have a good time in the setting. They become skilful communicators as they talk to staff and their friends. They snuggle closely to members of staff, who they know very well, and listen to stories with obvious enjoyment. Children develop good attitudes to learning and are eager to join in with adult-led activities. All children enjoy the welcoming atmosphere and the well balanced programme of activities provided.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. They are supported by a well led and extremely enthusiastic staff team who have a secure and thorough understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff plan a stimulating environment and present a balanced curriculum which provides suitable challenge to all children. Plans support staff well: providing an overview of the curriculum, but also supporting them in assessment of the children's learning and ensuring that the use of play resources is varied. Staff use appropriate methods to help children to learn. For example, presenting activities to children on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. This makes very good use of staff time and resources. The first parts of sessions offer children excellent learning experiences, supported by very good teaching. However, after children have enjoyed their snack, the transition time following this, before children move to small group work and whole group large physical activities, is less successful. Staff clear some resources away. Children, briefly, have less good opportunities to engage in meaningful activities. After this, children enjoy adult-led activities. These are very successful in sustaining children's interest. Good efforts are made to vary activities to match children's varying levels of ability. For example, work on numbers, letters and story-times are all well matched to children's different stages of development. Children benefit from the well implemented assessment system. The frequent, relevant observations are used to complete useful assessments of the children's learning and progress and also to inform the immediate planning of next steps of learning for individual children. Children enjoy looking at their records because they are very attractively presented and contain many photographs and samples of work. Entries onto the chart which monitors their progress over the stepping stones to the early learning goals are not dated however. This makes it more difficult to track children's ongoing progress in some learning areas and is a minor weakness in otherwise very good systems to monitor the children's progress.

Children make marks and write in many of their freely chosen activities, for example, making good use of the drawing table, or writing shopping lists; examples of their drawing and writing skills demonstrate their good attainments in this area. Children recognise the sounds that letters make. They enjoy books on an informal basis and group story sessions are well planned and provided. Children develop their mathematical understanding frequently during every session. For example, they confidently complete number puzzles and count to 10 on their own, or calculate numbers during good small group activities, using vocabulary such as 'how many more?', and 'how many altogether?'. Children are currently thinking about light. They are asked to investigate lights in their home and bring information to the next session. Many young children are confident and independent in their use of the laptop computer. Children enjoy role-play and adults support their play very effectively.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are very happy here and settle swiftly to play. They are able to concentrate to complete tasks, such as puzzles or drawing activities, on their own. Staff know the children in their care very well, which means that outstanding attention is given to ensuring that individual needs are met. Children's records are regularly and carefully maintained. Staff show exemplary care and concern in ensuring that any minor upsets are thoroughly and sensitively investigated. The result is that children are confident and secure in the pre-school. Children respond well to very good behaviour management. They receive plenty of praise and encouragement. They are encouraged to consider the needs of others, for example, spontaneously fetching another ball for a child who is upset at losing his. They learn about their own community and the area around the pre-school, as well as about other cultures. In all these ways children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good. Children are cared for in accordance with their parents' wishes and all consents are in place. Children benefit from the very warm welcome that is extended to their parents and the daily informal discussions that take place between them and staff. The parents' management committee is strong and parents support the group in very many ways, including helping at sessions, on a rota basis. Good written information is available to parents and the notice board displays a great deal of useful information for them. In all these ways the partnership with parents and carers supports the children's welfare very well. Some parents are aware of the detailed children's records that key workers maintain. However, there is no system in place to confirm that all parents regularly share information contained in their children's records of achievement and have regular opportunities to discuss their children's progress.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by sensitive, caring, responsive and consistent staff, who present excellent role models to children. All who work with the children are vetted to confirm they are suitable to do so. The staff team is well-prepared, arriving in good time to ensure that all is ready for sessions: all resources have to be set out at the beginning of every session and cleared away at the end. Children benefit from staff's enthusiasm for undertaking additional training and this enhances their experiences. An outstanding feature of the provision is the commitment shown by the qualified and experienced staff team. All children particularly benefit from the sensitive grouping and differentiation that takes place to ensure that they enjoy group learning sessions. Children enjoy stimulating activities that help them to progress in all areas. Children receive good levels of adult attention. They are supported and challenged appropriately. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

All legally required documentation to support the children's care and welfare is in place, and efficiently and confidentially stored. There is some lack of clarity in the procedure to administer medication. The system to register the attendance of children, staff and visitors is not maintained accurately enough to provide clear information on the times that they are present in the hall.

The leadership and management of the Nursery Education is good. The recently appointed manager leads the team well. Staff are supported in their professional development and regularly attend training, to ensure they keep abreast of current developments. The committee is very enthusiastic and pro-active in supporting the group. Monitoring of the group's activities is

good and shows very good understanding of requirements. For example, children's records are regularly updated and staff evaluate the success of activities in achieving their aims. Children learn and develop whilst being cared for by thoughtful, reflective practitioners.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the pre-school was asked to ensure that staff are aware of child protection issues. Good attention has been given to this, for example, by ensuring that staff and some committee members attend additional training. In addition, they were asked to evaluate the organisation of sessions, to ensure that time and resources are effectively used. The difficulties imposed by the fact that all resources must be set out before sessions start and cleared away at the end impinge on the running of the sessions. The first part of the session runs very smoothly. There remains a blip in the middle of the session, when children and staff are less well managed in the transition time, following snack time and before children join two different group sessions. These are then very well run and children settle once more to meaningful activity.

Very good progress has been made with developing both planning and assessment systems, as required at the last inspection. These systems both support staff well in enhancing children's learning and ensuring their development and progress.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection, there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

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### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that the system to register the attendance of children, staff and visitors accurately records their hours of attendance
- clarify the policy and procedures for the administration of medication to children
- continue to strive to get some areas of damp within the hall removed.

## **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- consistently date entries made to children's records of achievement, in order to demonstrate their ongoing progress; devise a system to confirm that all parents regularly share information contained in their children's records of achievement and have regular opportunities to discuss their children's progress.
- continue to identify ways of ensuring the smooth running of sessions, and the transition from one part of the session to another

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