

Holy Angels Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	139427
Inspection date	21 January 2008
Inspector	Anne Legge
Setting Address	Holy Angels Church Hall, Queensway, Chelston, Torquay, Devon, TQ2 6BP
Telephone number	Mrs Baldwin 07968 170183
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Registered person	Holy Angels Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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.

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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Holy Angels Pre-school has been registered since 1992, and is located in The Holy Angels Church Hall, in a residential area of Chelston in Torquay. The pre-school has the use of a main playroom, kitchen and toilets and an enclosed outdoor play area. It is managed by a voluntary committee.

The pre-school is registered to provide care for up to 22 children aged from two to five years. There are currently 37 children on roll, of whom 34 are funded three- and four-year-olds. Children may start pre-school in the term in which they are three. The group is open on Mondays, Wednesday and Friday from 08:30 to 15:30, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 08:30 to 12:30. There are eight members of staff, six of whom hold appropriate child care qualifications. The group supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language. The pre-school receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from eating exceptionally healthy snacks and meals. Staff provide café-style snacks, offering children a wide range of fresh fruits, such as apple, melon and grapes, as well as dried fruits and cheese cubes. They present snacks very attractively, encouraging children to try all the healthy options available. Packed lunches are also very well balanced, as staff work very effectively with parents, ensuring that all children eat nutritious meals. Lunch packs are stored in a large refrigerator, to keep their contents fresh. Children drink water or milk at snack and have constant access to fresh drinking water, enabling them to maintain good fluid levels. Special dietary needs are carefully recorded and met. Children enjoy daily outdoor play sessions, when they use wheeled toys, climb and balance on large equipment or dig in the sand. They also take part in a range of physical activities indoors, such as acting out a bear hunt, using a parachute or completing obstacle courses.

Children receive excellent protection from infection. They play in very clean premises, and staff are meticulous in keeping floors, tables and all surfaces spotless during sessions. There are rigorous systems in place for maintaining very good hygiene standards. These include staff wearing gloves, hats and aprons when preparing and serving snacks, and the consistent use of gloves and disinfectant for nappy changing and dealing with children's personal hygiene. Children learn excellent routines regarding hand washing. They know they must wash their hands before registering for snack and after using the toilet or playing outdoors. Children receive very good care when they are unwell or injured. Most staff have current first aid qualifications and there are comprehensive systems for recording accidents and medication, and for sharing this information with parents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children's safety is given the highest priority within the group, and staff have an excellent understanding of all safety issues. Consequently, children are extremely safe and secure in the setting and on outings. Their security is assured, as doors are locked and chained, and a gate is placed across the rear door, to further reduce any risk of children leaving unsupervised. There are excellent systems for ensuring that children are never collected by unauthorised adults. On outings, staff ratios are always very high and venues and modes of travel are comprehensively risk assessed. Children are very safe in emergencies, as evacuation procedures are practised regularly, over a whole week, so that all children know the routines.

Children choose from an extensive range of toys and resources, which are maintained in pristine condition. Comprehensive risk assessment systems ensure that all areas and resources used by children are free from hazards. Staff carry out daily and longer-term checks on all equipment, making sure that children are fully protected from harm. Cool-touch radiators have been installed, to remove any risk of burning, and a new floor provides extra protection. Children learn about their own safety as they, for example, help to manage the number playing in the small outside area, using sand timers. Staff have a very clear understanding of safeguarding issues and are able to fully protect children from harm. They have all undertaken relevant training and have excellent systems for managing any concerns about children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are keen to attend and enjoy an excellent variety of activities, which very effectively promote their development. The Birth to three matters framework is used very successfully, to provide for the needs of the youngest children. They access plenty of free choice and sensory experiences, such as using soapy water, sand, dough, paint or cornflour and water. Cupboards and floor spaces are covered with different fabrics, to encourage the use of the senses, and mirror tiles help to promote children's sense of self. Staff are very caring and provide excellent support for very young children, who may be unable to participate fully in whole-group activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff plan an exceptional range of activities, covering the whole curriculum and very effectively meeting the individual needs of the children. Topics are exciting and very carefully planned, so that children become engaged and demonstrate excellent concentration. For example, they re-enact a bear hunt, enjoy stories about teddy bears and paint pictures of animals, all with great enthusiasm. Key workers record children's achievements and track their progress towards the early learning goals. They identify the next steps in each child's development and share this information with parents. Staff are very well deployed to support children's learning and to challenge the most able. They all demonstrate an excellent understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, using questions and discussion skilfully, to promote children's language and understanding.

Children engage in an excellent range of imaginative play, as staff join in, challenging and encouraging their thinking. For example, they role play making telephone calls and serving meals or they use toy animals to act out stories. They enjoy singing familiar songs, using musical instruments and playing singing games. Children explore an extensive range of materials, such as pasta, glue with glitter, vegetables for painting and ingredients for cooking. They design and make models with recycled materials and a variety of construction sets, and they develop their understanding of technology when using a computer, a CD player with earphones, or tills and keyboards in their role play. Children gain excellent control of their physical movements, as they use tweezers, pens, brushes, rollers, cutters and other small equipment. They develop very good co-ordination in their use of large equipment, such as wheeled toys, a slide and a climbing frame.

Children extend their love of books, as they regularly share stories, using high quality visual aids, such as dolls to represent the characters. They make excellent progress in their understanding of rhymes and letter sounds, as they play singing games, such as 'Silly Soup', using rhyming words. Children recognise their own names, using them to find their peg or to register for their snack. They speak very confidently, as they engage in frequent conversations with staff about what they are doing at pre-school or events in their family lives. Children constantly discuss numbers, as they count at registration or when playing with toy cars or animals. They look at numerals, count and compare groups of objects and discuss one more or less, developing their understanding of number patterns. They make patterns and discuss the features of shapes, and they use mathematical language when playing with sand or water.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The pre-school has an excellent ethos of inclusion, with all families welcomed and very well supported. Displays, resources and planned activities all help to promote children's understanding of different cultures and to encourage them to value diversity. For example, a topic about 'Our World' includes detailed studies of Inuit, Bedouin and Masai Mara cultures, and children enjoy dressing up in the traditional costumes of these groups. The pre-school makes excellent use of the local area, inviting visitors, such as a lollipop lady, a fire officer and a paramedic. Children with English as an additional language are provided with excellent support and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are carefully monitored and included. Picture cards are used with outstanding success, to help children understand the sequence of events during sessions and what is expected of them at each stage. High staff ratios enable all children to have their needs very effectively met.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They develop a good understanding of different beliefs, as they celebrate a wide range of festivals, including Christmas, Diwali and Hanukkah. They also sing a prayer before lunch and take part in a Nativity Play at Christmas. Children are nurtured in a warm and caring environment, where they learn to be aware of the needs of others and to share resources. Staff very effectively help them to understand why some behaviour is unacceptable, using very clear explanations. Children enjoy copious praise for their efforts and their self-esteem is very successfully promoted. Challenging behaviour is managed calmly and consistently, using very positive strategies.

Children's care is extremely consistent, due to the pre-school's comprehensive systems for communicating with parents. Excellent information is provided in the form of a prospectus, newsletters and on notice boards. Staff talk to parents daily about their child's care and development, and parents are invited to serve on the committee or to support their child in taking objects to pre-school, which are related to topics. For children receiving nursery funding, the partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Key workers keep parents fully informed about their child's progress, through regular meetings, when achievements and targets are discussed. Children's records are always accessible to parents and include photographs and clear tracking of progress towards the early learning goals. Topics are detailed in newsletters and current planning is displayed. In addition, staff organise curriculum evenings, such as a phonics and literacy session, so that parents are well informed and can fully support their child's development.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are cared for by very well qualified and experienced staff. The pre-school has an excellent commitment to ongoing training, so that staff remain up-to-date and constantly develop their skills, for the benefit of the children. They work as an extremely efficient and effective team, and they are ably supported by a dedicated committee. Leadership and management of the nursery education are outstanding. There are comprehensive planning and assessment systems, and all staff are involved in monitoring and evaluating their practice. Appraisal systems are used very effectively, to identify training needs and plan for future development. There is a total commitment to achieving and maintaining the highest standards.

Children receive excellent individual attention, due to the pre-school's constantly high staff ratios. Sessions are very efficiently planned and staff work seamlessly together, ensuring that

every child enjoys a wide variety of exciting play opportunities. Space is used very thoughtfully, with different areas carefully resourced for different activities. Displays are attractive for children and informative for parents. Children enjoy the facilities of an extremely safe environment, where their good health is very well promoted. All the required documentation is in place and used very effectively to underpin children's care and welfare. Policies and procedures are regularly updated and records are shared appropriately with parents. The pre-school meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the pre-school agreed to develop the induction programme for new staff, to keep an inventory of equipment and to record the dates of risk assessments. At the last nursery education inspection, staff were asked to consider developing planning and assessment systems, to show appropriate challenges and support for children of different abilities.

The staff induction programme is now comprehensive, including good familiarisation with all policies and procedures. Resources are listed and regularly rotated, so that children enjoy an extensive variety of play experiences over time. Risk assessments are thorough, detailed and dated, providing excellent protection for children. The pre-school has introduced new and very effective assessment and planning systems, which enable staff to successfully promote the development of children of all ages and abilities.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 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.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk