

St Andrew's Methodist Church Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Karen Molloy
Setting address	St Andrews Methodist Church, 69 High Road, Bushey Heath, Bushey, Hertfordshire, WD23 1EE
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

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Description of the setting

St Andrew's Pre-school has been registered for 35 years. It operates from a church hall in Bushey, Hertfordshire. There are also kitchen and toilet facilities on site. Children have limited access to an outdoor area. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 30 children in the early year's age range. There are currently 19 children on roll. Children come from the local community. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school is open between 9.30am and 12.30pm five days a week, term time only. The pre-school employs seven staff, including the manager. Over half of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The group is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

St Andrew's Pre-school provides a friendly and welcoming environment for children. The learning environment is safe and provides an appropriate range of activities and experiences to meet children's needs. Staff know their key children well and respond sensitively to their individual needs. Planning for most children is appropriate and systems for planning, observation and assessment are regularly reviewed. Effective partnerships are established with parents and other early years support services, which means that children's welfare is well-supported. The pre-school is beginning to reflect on their practice in order to maintain continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- improve the links between observations, assessments and planning in order to ensure that individual children are consistently provided with appropriate levels of support and/or challenge
- increase the information gathered from parents in order to establish clear starting points for children's learning and development
- provide opportunities to develop the children's independence, particularly in relation to snack times and in selecting and carrying out activities

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are cared for in a safe, secure setting, where staff work well together and are deployed effectively to ensure children are happy and well supervised. A spacious hall enables children to move around freely, making decisions from the

available activities and resources. Staff are receptive to children's needs and any new children are settled in sensitively, gradually encouraging them to move away from their parent and explore more independently. Appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Regular staff meetings enable staff to share information and ideas effectively. A positive approach to further development ensures all staff keep up-to-date with safeguarding and first aid training, which contributes to improving outcomes for children. Recent action has been taken since the last inspection to improve some of the setting's policies and practices, such as obtaining written permission to seek emergency advice or treatment, developing the safeguarding policy and maintaining a detailed and accurate record of children's attendance. Risk assessments are carried out regularly and the manager is aware of the need to complete a separate written risk assessment for any outing they may do. Consequently, children's welfare is now fully protected. In addition, all staff have completed safeguarding training and this contributes to children's safety and well-being. Policies and procedures for the smooth running of the setting are in place and the relevant documents are readily available for parents.

Staff have established firm relationships with parents, carers and other providers. Parents' feedback is positive; they feel they are well-informed, staff are very approachable and they are happy with the 'open door' policy. Information about the children's well-being and development, is shared with parents on a daily basis, to ensure they are kept up-to-date. Parents receive regular newsletters and a pre-school booklet, with information about the children's activities displayed on the notice board. Staff are looking to develop this further by giving parents information about the Early Years Foundation Stage. Some information about each child is gathered when they first start and this enables staff to respond well to their care needs, although this does not yet extend to include information relating to what children can do, in relation to their learning and development, or information about children's first language. This means that staff are not always fully aware of individual needs when planning for all groups of children. However, parents' contributions are valued and they are invited in to talk about various festivals. Children have access to some resources to help them develop an understanding of difference in relation to culture, gender and disability. Two staff share the post of Special Educational Needs Coordinator. They attend appropriate training and have a positive and proactive approach to supporting children with additional learning and/or development needs.

Partnerships with parents have been developed since the last inspection, to extend children's learning at home. A library system enables children to choose a book to read at home with their parents and Jasper the setting's 'dog' goes home with the children for a few days, where parents and children can record anything about their time with Jasper. This has proved successful and establishes a good link between home and pre-school. Links with local schools means teachers and nursery staff visit the pre-school, as well as specialised support staff, such as dieticians and staff also attend regular network meetings. This contributes to all agencies working together to support children's care and learning. The manager has started to evaluate the service provided; currently this is done informally and discussed with the staff team. She has identified some of the areas for improvement such as developing the planning, observation and assessment system

and has responded promptly to actions and recommendations set at the last inspection. This has a positive impact on outcomes for children and further reflection of their practices demonstrates how they continue to raise children's achievements and make improvements to the setting.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment by a caring and enthusiastic staff team. They arrive happily and quickly engage in their chosen area of play. The key person system works well and staff are on hand to encourage children and offer guidance and direction. A satisfactory range of resources are laid out for the children who choose from what is available.

Planning, observation and assessment systems continue to be reviewed as an ongoing process, with support from the early year's advisor. Observation and assessments are beginning to inform planning and support children's progress in all the six areas of learning. The next steps in children's learning are being identified and learning journeys have been introduced to record children's achievements and show progress. Magic moments' demonstrate children's achievements and successes in a positive way by displaying these for others to share. Staff are working towards planning on a more individual basis, moving away from themes and topics for the whole group, which will enable them to meet children's individual needs. However, planning and assessment systems are not fully effective, in ensuring that all children are consistently provided with the appropriate level of support, or challenge to enable them to make the best progress possible.

Children participate in a satisfactory range of activities across the six areas of learning. Whilst creating autumn collages, they are introduced to new vocabulary such as crinkly and crunchy, as they use different materials and are encouraged to listen to their sounds too. Children become familiar with days of the week, through a song and they discuss the date and weather each day during circle time, thereby giving them a sense of time and place. Children's imagination is fostered as they happily push their buggies and take their 'babies' to the shops. Communication, language and literacy skills are developing as children find their names and post them on arrival at the pre-school; they listen well at circle time and clearly respond to their name during the register. Children work well together, for example, whilst making a train track another child joins the group and is supported by others to join both the tracks together. However, there are missed opportunities to develop children's independence such as during snack times, selecting resources and at circle time, as staff organise and carry out most of the tasks.

Every child's welfare needs are given close attention. They are learning to keep themselves safe and a road safety week has reinforced this in a fun and informative way. Children are clear of the rules around safety, for example, they know that not running in the pre-school is a way to keep safe. Children's understanding of a healthy lifestyle is promoted through every day activities around the pre-school. A new changing area means children in nappies are

changed effectively, their hand washing is supervised and any allergies or dietary requirements are clearly recorded. Outdoor physical play is limited, particularly during the winter months, so children make good use of any indoor physical play equipment such as the trampoline. Children jump enthusiastically and when other children ask to join in, they respond by saying 'sorry, no, I'm doing my exercise!' thereby demonstrating how they are beginning to associate exercise as something valuable. Children behave well, there is clear guidance and positive behaviour is promoted through praise and encouragement. Children develop a sense of belonging; they have individual trays to put their 'work' in and support from their key person to ensure they feel safe and secure in the setting.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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