

# St Leonards Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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EY397241

**Inspection date**

26/03/2010

**Inspector**

Julie Neal

**Setting address**

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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 Leonards Pre-School registered in 1993, and moved to its new premises in Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education in 2009. It is managed by a voluntary committee. The pre-school has sole use of two rooms in the school building, and shared use of an enclosed courtyard outdoor play area. They have a kitchen and separate children and staff toilet facilities. The school field and the ball court are available for the pre-school to access on outings. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register to provide care for a maximum of 24 children aged three to five years at any one time. There are currently 49 children in the early years age group attending at different times. It is open during term time only, and on Monday and Tuesday runs from 8.45am to 2.45pm, Wednesday from 8.45am to 11.45am, and on Thursday and Friday from 8.45am to 12.45pm. There are seven members of staff, six of whom are qualified to NVQ Level 3 equivalent or above. The manager has Qualified Teacher Status, as well as Early Years Professional Status.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs are met exceptionally well. They enjoy an immensely inclusive environment where there is a strong emphasis on recognising the uniqueness of each child. This results in planning being very specific to the learning and development needs of individual children, ensuring they make consistently excellent progress in all areas, relative to their starting points. Systems of monitoring the effectiveness of the provision are extremely effective in all areas, and ensure that future planning is very well focused to achieve and maintain high quality outcomes for children.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- encourage parents and children's further contributions to learning and development records, as identified in the setting's action plans.

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

Dynamic management results in a knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff team who implement the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage extremely well. This is demonstrated in the excellent routines and procedures that are in place to ensure children remain safe and secure at all times. Employment procedures are robust, ensuring all new members of staff are suitable to work with children, and there are clear systems in place to confirm the ongoing suitability of existing staff.

Protecting children from the risk of harm is given extremely high priority within the setting, and all staff regularly update their safeguarding knowledge through training and personal development. This results in staff who are secure in their awareness of issues that may raise concerns regarding abuse or neglect and confident in the actions they would take in order to safeguard children. Excellent risk assessments and daily routines ensure children remain safe and secure at all times. These cover all aspects of the premises, resources and excursions into the wider community. Risk assessments are reviewed regularly in order to take account of children's specific needs, for example, considering where additional safety precautions may be appropriate to ensure no child, or groups of children, are excluded from access to activities and resources. All required documentation that supports children's well-being is in place and maintained extremely well. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure they provide good guidance to staff and are informative for parents. Records of attendance clearly show when children and staff are present, confirming that ratios are maintained and children benefit from good levels of adult support.

Processes of self-evaluation are excellent. Managers have successfully promoted a culture of reflective practice within the setting, using team meetings and regular discussions to involve staff in considering all aspects of the provision and identifying opportunities to make improvements that will benefit children. Parents' and children's views are actively sought and included when making plans for the future, for example, part of the outdoor area is being developed to include a wildlife pond in response to children's ideas for external improvements. There is an immensely strong focus on inclusive practice within the setting. This is reflected in the thoughtful and well targeted plans for future improvement, for example, developing the staff team's skills in using British Sign Language with children. This results in children learning from a very young age that there are positive, non-verbal ways of communicating with each other. Staff have made excellent use of the opportunities provided by the setting's relocation to develop strong partnerships with other agencies involved in supporting specialist needs of individual children. This results in very good cooperative planning to ensure children's learning and development needs are comprehensively met. The positive and proactive approach to partnership working is also reflected in the very good processes in place to share information with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage where children attend more than one setting, for instance those that also attend nurseries, or who are collected by childminders. This ensures consistency in planning to meet children's individual learning objectives.

Staff develop excellent relationships with parents and carers and extremely effective processes of sharing information ensure they are very well informed regarding children's individual needs. Settling in procedures are very good, enabling parents and children to get to know key adults and ensuring that children feel confident and secure when they begin regular attendance. Parents are provided with extremely good information about all aspects of the provision and have frequent opportunities to discuss their children's learning and development. Staff actively involve them in their children's learning, providing ideas for activities they can do at home with children, and introducing them to words in sign language that they can practise together. Parents are encouraged to suggest activities that would interest their children, for instance there is a big wall planner

and parents and children are encouraged to put ideas on this; some parents have begun to use this well. Staff have identified that they would like to further involve parents, and children, in monitoring progress towards the early learning goals, for example, encouraging their input into learning and development records.

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

Children's welfare, learning and development are promoted extremely well. Excellent routines and procedures that support children's well-being are implemented most effectively by the staff team in order that children develop a very good understanding of personal health and safety issues. Frequent practices of emergency evacuation procedures, and involving children in evaluating these, result in children being well informed about how to conduct themselves safely in the event of a fire. Children engage in ambitious construction projects such as building a pond, they help to design this and as part of the process reflect on possible hazards and how to minimise these, such as, using sharp digging tools safely and carrying heavy objects with care.

Health promotion with children is very good. Children demonstrate their understanding of the importance of personal hygiene, for example, they thoroughly wash their hands before taking part in a cookery activity. They show their awareness of how illness and infection can be spread in the care with which they cover their mouths when they cough and sneeze, and dispose of used tissues appropriately. Staff ensure that parents are made aware of the setting's sickness procedures and any exclusion times following particular illnesses. Procedures for the administration of any medicines required by children are rigorous and implemented well by staff, and any accidents or incidents involving children are clearly recorded, and records shared with parents. The setting promotes a 'healthy eating' message and parents are provided with information and suggestions to encourage them to provide nutritious packed lunches for their children. Snacks are provided and take account of children's individual dietary requirements, such as food allergies. Children are provided with a choice of fruit, and with water and milk to drink, and snack times are used very well to develop a range of skills. For example, children select their own cups and plates, they help to peel and slice fruit, they pour their own drinks and they help to clear away at the end of their meal. Activities that promote children's physical development and bodily coordination are extremely good, for example, children enjoy planned activities such as 'Leap into Life' where they show confidence in moving their bodies and awareness of each other's space. Children also make excellent use of resources indoors and outside as they develop their own active play, such as using climbing and balancing equipment, throwing and catching balls, riding bikes and scooters, and building dens.

Children make consistently excellent progress towards the early learning and development goals in all areas, relative to their individual starting points. Staff use their extremely good observations of children most effectively in ensuring that planning focuses on promoting specific objectives for each child and in identifying their next steps in learning. Children are actively and meaningfully involved in

planning activities, for example, their curiosity about dogs led to them enjoying a variety of activities that have enhanced their knowledge of pets in general and dogs in particular. They have been visited at pre-school by pet dogs and by working animals such as guide dogs, and they can discuss how to care for pets responsibly, such as feeding them and taking them to the vets. Children's individual records are extremely well maintained and contain a wealth of evidence that reflects their excellent progress towards the early learning and development goals.

Children are extremely eager and enthusiastic learners who make excellent progress because they are extended and challenged very well. Staff use children's interests most effectively to develop them in all areas. For example, the pond building project has involved children in making very good use of their problem solving skills. They have considered size and shape as part of their initial designs; they have conducted experiments to see which materials are best suited to stop water seeping away; and they have consulted with staff regarding the appropriate depth to sustain tadpoles. Children are also keeping an electronic photo-journal of their progress, recording their commentary of what they are doing in each picture. Staff plan creatively to promote different aspects of learning in ways that are interesting and relevant to individual children, for example providing different contexts for them to practise their emergent writing skills. Children have recorded the different toppings chosen when the group made pancakes and made a poster from their results, they look in the mirror and draw the expressions on their faces, they use big brushes and buckets of water to 'paint' shapes, letters and numbers on the ground.

Children's behaviour is excellent. They are confident and happy with high self-esteem because they are secure that their individual needs will be met. Children understand simple ground rules that are focused on showing respect and care for each other, and this results in children playing and working cooperatively together. Children are given high levels of responsibility that they respond to very well, for example, they monitor use of the computer with timers and are scrupulous in ensuring each person has a fair turn. Children learn to use British Sign Language within the setting and are extremely proud of their ability. They quickly become competent and thoroughly enjoy opportunities such as at group time where children take the register and share their news, using a combination of speech and signing. They do this whether friends who use signing as their first language are present or not, demonstrating their eagerness to practise their skills.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

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

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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