

Arnold Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Lesley Sharples

Setting address Arnold School, 488 Lytham Road, Blackpool, FY4 1JG

Telephone number 01253 346391
Email Headmaster.Arnold@church-schools.com
Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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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

Arnold Kindergarten has been registered since September 2005. The current registered provider is United Church Schools Trust, a registered charity which took over registration in February 2010. The Kindergarten is situated in the south shore area of Blackpool and set within Arnold Junior School. The local area is mainly residential with the airport, promenade, library and a children's centre close by. Facilities for children comprise of a separate unit joined to the school. Children have access to the school hall, library, science room, two's room, Kindergarten hall and four rooms in the open plan area. There is an outdoor play space to the front and side of the building, including the hard surface playground when available.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register. Registration is for a total of 50 children age between two years to five years. Currently there are 55 children on roll of whom 15 are age two years. Children attend for a variety of sessions throughout the week. Sessions are from 8am to 1pm, 1pm to 3.45pm and from 1pm to 6pm, with full day-care within these times. The Kindergarten is open for 51 weeks of the year and closed only at Christmas and Bank Holidays.

There is a staff team of seven. All staff are qualified and one member of staff has a National Vocational Qualification level 4. The setting gains advice, support and training from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children thrive within a rich, vibrant and inclusive environment where their individual needs are fully recognised and supported. The staff team, work extremely well together and use their knowledge and experience to inspire, and challenge children. Consequently, children are making excellent progress in their learning and development. Staff give high priority to children's health, safety and welfare, underpinned by the implementation of clear policies and procedures. Staff work closely with the parents to ensure they maintain excellent relationships and a shared commitment in their children's learning. Partnerships with others is strong, ensuring easy transitions to and from other settings. Reflective practice highlights areas for development, assuring continuous improvement, which have a positive impact on the quality of provision for the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- retain a record of the emergency evacuation procedures carried out and evaluate any problems encountered and how they were resolved
- enhance opportunities for children to develop aspects of shape, space and measure in both planned and spontaneous activities.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The children are fully safeguarded as staff have a clear knowledge of safeguarding issues, achieved through attending training and awareness of the procedures to follow. The children are supervised effectively through the deployment of the staff team and they are kept secure, both indoors and when playing outside. Stringent risk assessments minimise hazards in all areas used by the children and for all outings undertaken. All the required documentation is in place with the exception of a record of the emergency evacuation procedures held. Robust recruitment procedures ensure that only suitable personnel are employed. Good management strategies include quizzes to check the staff's understanding of policies and procedures, including line management and the reception class teacher. Staff appraisals provide an ongoing assessment of staff's training needs, consequently continuing professional development is supported and this impacts positively on children in the setting.

Partnerships with parents is highly valued from the beginning, with effective means to ensure a continuous two-way flow of communication. Written and verbal exchanges of information with parents ensure staff get to know the children well and provide consistency of care to meet their individual needs. Parents are invited to fully contribute to their children's learning journey. They provide initial and regular ongoing information which enables staff to plan for continuing learning. Parents speak highly of how well their children are doing and like coming to the setting. Their views are sought and contributions valued. For example, parents accompany children on trips, bring in pets, such as tortoises, do baking sessions and talk about being a coast guard. Policies and procedures are fully shared and available to parents. Notably, the manager has implemented a system of highlighting one policy at a time. This assists with parents understanding the requirements, placed upon the setting within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff demonstrate an understanding about the importance of creating a framework for partnership working with other settings and professionals. They gain information when children transfer to them and transitions into school are extremely well-managed, as older children visit the reception class and the teacher comes into the kindergarten.

The deployment of resources is good, maximising the use of space, both indoors and outside. This significantly contributes to creating a vibrant and inclusive learning environment. The setting promotes equality of opportunity through resources and activities, which provide positive images of other people, allowing the children to value their own, and other people's differences and similarities effectively. There is a genuine commitment to continually develop the setting, through a shared vision for improvement including contributions from the staff team and parents. A significant improvement has been, to the outdoor play space, which extends learning opportunities from children. Contributions from children, by recording responses to questions about what they like to do, add to reflective practice and help target further improvements. The staff work with the local

authority early years team, demonstrating a good commitment to continuous improvement and partnership working.

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

The children are making excellent progress in relation to their starting points, towards the early learning goals. They are happy and confident individuals, who show a positive disposition to learn. Frequent observation and sensitive assessment is very well done. Evidence is gathered in a variety of ways, such as spontaneous comments capturing something said, focussed observations and additional recordings for each of the areas of learning. The use of photographs further illustrate achievements. Information is effectively used for planning next steps, weaving in children's interests. There is effective monitoring of children's achievements and this assists in ensuring all areas of learning are covered equally. As a result, learning journey's reflect the unique child and the staff's commitment to fully supporting their progress.

Children flourish within their highly stimulating learning environment. The continuous access to resources, and a variety of media and materials means that children are afforded experiences that span all six areas of learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Innovative activities make learning an enjoyable experience and there is a beneficial balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning. Resources are freely accessible and children feel a real sense of belonging in the setting, as they have their own places for their belongings. They move about easily, both indoors and outside, making decisions and choices in their learning. Staff are skilful in knowing when to support and when to not interfere. Displays reflect themed activities and outings, such as a visit to the zoo and other venues. For example, children relish the large equipment on a visit to an animal park, where they delight in adventurous play and talk excitedly about seeing clowns at the circus.

Children's future social and economic well-being is extremely well addressed through information and communication technology learning opportunities. The children use simple programmable resources, for example the CD machine and they are adept on the computer, and mouse work. Opportunities for using the interactive white board enhances technological skills further. Children love creative play and use recycled materials to design and decorate models. They ably draw lines with a ruler when making a flag of the local football club and talk about colours and shapes. As identified by staff, problem solving, reasoning and numeracy is an area of learning, where children can be better supported, especially relating to the aspect of shape, space and measure. Children's emergent writing skills are promoted in a variety of ways. They write their names and copy letters and see a wealth of labels within their setting, so they understand words carry meaning. They learn about living things through practical experiences, such as helping to plant flowers and seeing birds of prey. They ask good questions, for example 'is it a boy or a girl?' and 'do they eat worms' and they get to hold an tawny owl on a gloved hand.

The children develop a good awareness of how to stay safe and healthy through their play and daily routines. They feel safe and secure, and learn about the 'golden rules' of positive behaviour. They follow safe practice when out of the setting, wearing high visibility vests and learn road safety from a visiting professional. Children keep well-hydrated, helping themselves to water throughout the day and have nutritious snacks. They eat meals provided in the school and make their own choices. Independence in self-care skills is fully encouraged, through the good provision made for this and from gentle reminders by staff. They learn about their own community and the wider world through various themed activities throughout the year, with visits to the local children's centre and library. Overall, the children successfully learn skills to be inquisitive, active and independent learners, which fully prepares and supports them as they move onto other settings and schools.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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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