

# St. Aidan's Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 501092  
**Inspection date** 20/10/2009  
**Inspector** Diane Roberts

**Setting address** Lismore Place, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA1 1LY

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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. Aidan's Day Nursery is run by St Aidan's Day Nursery Trust. It opened in 1990 and operates from a single story unit containing four play rooms and a sleep room. Children have access to enclosed outdoor play areas. The nursery is in a residential area in the centre of Carlisle, Cumbria. It is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 43 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 86 children aged from birth to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The nursery has a number of children with English as an additional language and a number of children with special educational needs.

There are 19 members of staff. All of the staff employed to work with children hold early years qualifications to at least level 3. Two members of staff have achieved Early Years Professional Status. One member of staff is working towards a further recognised early years qualification. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds.

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

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

This setting provides a very caring and highly stimulating environment where all children are very safe, healthy and make outstanding progress in their learning and development. The staff has an excellent understanding of the needs and interests of all the children in their care, expert skills and commendable motivation. These aspects together with highly effective partnerships between the nursery and parents, carers and others ensure individual children's needs are fully met and their protection assured. Leadership and management, including the capacity for sustained improvement are exceptional.

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

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

- review the approach to using everyday observations of children to make sure it is systematic and routine and helps in deciding where children are in their learning and development and plan what to do.

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

Safeguarding all children is given the utmost priority at the setting. Excellent clear and inclusive policies, strategies and procedures are rigorously adhered to by

dedicated staff. Robust recruitment processes, including a comprehensive induction programme are firmly in place and high ratios of highly qualified, competent staff further ensure children are particularly well safeguarded. Measures taken by the staff to keep children safe and help them feel safe in their care are highly effective. This means the outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture, equipment and toys are fully suitable and safe at all times. Children are empowered to take responsibility for their own safety and adults are conscientious in their pursuit of safety-excellence whilst encouraging children in their independence in accessing the outstanding range of inspiring and challenging resources. Highly effective partnership working with parents and others to safeguard children means the protection of children is exemplary.

All children benefit from exceptionally well planned, purposeful play and exploration, both in and out of doors, with a good balance of adult-led and child-led activities that fosters active learning. Children's home life is fully acknowledged including their home language and all children enjoy superb opportunities with regard to people from the local and wider community. Inclusive practice is fully promoted so that all children achieve as well as they can through staff consistently promoting equality and eliminating discrimination. Significant emphasis is given to processes and provision to promote equality through effective partnerships with parents, carers, other professionals and with individuals and groups in the community. An all-embracing prospectus is in place for parents and carers with an excellent induction phase for children about to start at the nursery. All comments made by parents are extremely positive showing they feel totally involved in their child's care and education and hold the leaders and managers and staff in high esteem. Parents say children are treated very much as individuals and with 'great respect'. They say the staff are 'exceptional with the children', and they have an excellent relationship as a family with the staff. Parents feel they have 'absolute trust and respect' in the 'dedicated and caring' staff that do a 'fantastic job' with 'complete dedication to children'. There are frequent opportunities to encourage parents to be involved in supporting their children's learning and development through the sharing of plans and activities in each child's home-to-nursery link book. The excellent practice of ensuring parents know who their child's key person is with a clear explanation of roles means parents are exceptionally well informed. Laminated photo albums with family members are easily accessible to children and are looked at eagerly throughout the day reinforcing the importance of each child's family.

Leaders and managers are fully committed to making explicit their vision for the setting's continuous improvement and it is fully shared by all adults working within the setting and with parents and carers. The settings strong commitment to achieving the Every Child Matters outcomes means working with others, such as, health and social care professionals is given high priority to best support children and their families. Well thought out aims for the nursery reflect dedication and commitment to further improving outcomes for all children. Good quality targets are set, steps for improvement and key priorities are realistic but challenging. Plans for the future to maintain the very high standards have particular reference to equality and diversity. Leaders and managers rigorously tackle key priorities, secure consistency by meticulously checking how well plans and policies are

implemented and conscientiously review and adjust plans and priorities in light of changing circumstances.

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

Children are animated and enthusiastic at this setting, making confident choices about their activities through the positive support, praise and encouragement they consistently receive from staff. All children are happy and settled, giggling and laughing throughout the day or spontaneously singing or dancing along to a favourite song, thriving in the vibrant atmosphere. They behave very well, eager to join in, cooperate and share with each other, thereby demonstrating highly positive attitudes towards learning. Children easily make friends, greatly respect each other and accept each other's differences through the excellent role modelling by staff. They positively glow with pride when it is their turn to be a helper at snack or meal time and take their responsibilities most seriously. Children are developing skills for the future, such as communicating, literacy and numeracy. For example, early communication skills are extremely well supported through high quality adult-child interactions. Staff constantly engage with children explaining what they are doing encouraging children to link words and action. Children confidently lead in the singing and words in the songs are reinforced by staff who refer to the phonics such as 'ssss' for 'swish' which the wipers on the bus do in the song, 'The wheels on the bus'. Children have great fun doing the actions at terrific speed. They skilfully regularly count in everyday activities such as when lining up to return indoors. Children customarily celebrate diversity, for instance, days before the Diwali festival, they thoroughly enjoy creating candle holders to decorate their surroundings.

Staff are exceptionally skilled at creating an all inclusive environment that is highly conducive to children's learning. For example, young children in the baby room enjoy time splashing in a shallow pool of water. High ratios of staff and the utmost vigilance ensure children's safety at all times. Children are sensitively encouraged to join in by splashing, helping to create more bubbles. They jiggle and gurgle as they splash and staff repeat the words 'splish splash' as they do the actions to help children understand the words. Children are fascinated by the stream of water coming from the watering can as a member of staff patiently repeats the action over and over whilst children remain mesmerised. Adults teach children extremely well about keeping safe through relevant stories, setting safe limits and road safety. Children have recently enjoyed a 'Beep Beep' day when people who serve the community such as the police, road safety and the local lollipop lady visited the nursery. They are greatly encouraged to respond to what they see, hear, touch and feel. For instance on a recent 'listening walk' their listening skills were promoted through staff skilfully asking them to describe what they could hear. Children are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles and good health is well promoted by staff. They know to wash their hands before eating and competently reply when staff ask, 'Why did we wash our hands?' and 'What with?'. Children develop and test their physical skills through stimulating, vigorous indoor and outdoor play. Those aged three years and over are thrilled to take part in weekly swimming sessions at a local pool whilst younger children benefit from the space

both indoors and outside to crawl, roll and shuffle to get from one place to another and practise new skills, such as standing. All children including babies have a high standard of specially prepared food made with fresh ingredients. Good use is made of the dietary information collected from parents before a child starts the nursery as allergies and forbidden foods are well known and accommodated. Achievement records are very well kept and updated each week and staff are highly conscientious in sharing what they know about children. Next steps are planned for with an abundance of observations of children at play made each week. However, it is not always clear whether all pieces of information recorded about children are systematically used to best effect to inform the general planning of activities.

## 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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
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	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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