

# The Priory Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY285495  
**Inspection date** 03/02/2011  
**Inspector** Susan Parker

**Setting address** St John Ambulance Headquarters, Stanmore Road,  
Stevenage, Herts, SG1 3QA

**Telephone number** 01438 357900

**Email**

**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*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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## **Description of the setting**

The Priory Nursery opened in 2004 and operates from one large room in a St. Johns Ambulance building in Stevenage old town, Hertfordshire. A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each week day from 7:30am to 5.30pm for 50 weeks of the year. The Nursery is closed for one week during the month of May, all bank holidays and about one week during the Christmas Holidays.

There are currently 37 children on roll under eight years, of whom 13 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and widening catchments area. The nursery is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs nine staff and a cook, seven of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The manager holds the Early Years Foundation Degree.

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

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children display a sense of belonging in this welcoming nursery. Good observations of children's individual achievements and well planned challenges enable children to make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff ensure that parents are informed about what their children are doing and effectively share information about their needs and routines. Partnerships with other providers is developing.

The manager and staff are motivated and have a positive approach to self-evaluation. They are beginning to develop systems to support the continuous review of their work, enabling them to prioritise areas for improvement and offer a service which is responsive to the needs of its users.

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

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

- develop further the system for evaluating the provision in order to maintain continuous improvement
- develop a coherence of learning and development across different settings that children attend.

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

Children's safety and welfare is actively promoted through the nursery's robust safeguarding procedures and most members of staff have attended safeguarding training. This ensures that the staff responsibilities are clearly understood. Stringent checks are carried out to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with

children. Thorough risk assessments and daily checks ensure that hazards are minimised. Good daily practice, such as the provision of nutritious food and helping children to adopt good hygiene routines, means that children's health is promoted. Even the youngest children can reach the sinks to wash their own hands before eating and after messy activities.

The manager and staff team have a clear vision for the future; they are beginning to develop a form of self-evaluation which will involve staff and will involve parents in reviewing the setting's practice. Staff are supported in attending further training and gaining qualifications. This helps create a positive learning environment where both children and staff thrive. Resources are used well to promote children's learning and development. For example, children are supported in cutting their own fruit for snack time. Children use knives under the supervision of staff so they adopt safe practices when using tools. Children can choose when to have their snack so that they can continue to explore their play until they are ready to stop for some fruit and a drink of milk or water.

Children can sometimes choose to free flow between the indoor and outdoor learning environment when the weather is fine. Staff ensure that physical activities are also regularly available within the hall. The staff have a good understanding of equality of opportunity, enabling them to provide a service which is inclusive for all children and their families. They make sure that they understand each child's background, cultures, and beliefs and encourage children to recognise and respect differences. Children's self-esteem is promoted as they are offered opportunities to talk about their beliefs, families, and recent experiences. This enables all children to feel welcome and valued.

Good communication with all parents, including those who speak English as an additional language, results in good partnership working. Parents receive thorough information about the setting. They receive regular newsletters and have daily talks and daily diaries. Parents are encouraged to complete observations on their children at home to add to their learning records. The nursery has links with a local school to collect and drop off children. However, the links to share information on the children's learning and development is not yet in place.

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

Children make good progress in all areas of learning and are supported in achieving because staff have a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children display good skills and attitudes towards learning as a direct result of the input from their key workers and the staff team. They observe and assess children as they play, using this information to inform activity planning. Staff can respond quickly to children's developmental needs as adaptations to planned activities can be carried out on a daily basis. This enables them to provide extensions to activities to challenge children and to promote individual development.

The environment is attractive and accessible, enabling children to make

independent choices and select their own resources. This promotes children's confidence and self-motivation. For example, children choose when to have their snack, they select and cut their own fruit and pour their own milk or water to drink. Children display their feelings of safety as they confidently move from one area of play to another, accessing their own resources to develop their own play. They routinely learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe, for example, a gentle reminder from staff sends the children scurrying into the bathrooms where they wash and dry their hands confidently. They also show care and respect for others as one three year old guided the inspector on how to wash hands correctly, to dry them on the paper towel and dispose of it in the bin.

Children are rewarded with lots of praise from staff, which further promotes their self-esteem. One child built a tall chimney and carried it over to show a staff member. Staff praised her and the conversation developed into discussion of size, shape, colour etc. Children's works of art are displayed around the room. Children obviously delight in making these pictures, some with three eyes and some with no nose leading to a conversation with the inspector about facial features.

Children have secure relationships with the staff, whose consistent approach to behaviour management enables children to feel secure and develop their understanding of appropriate behaviour. They show care and concern for each other, sharing resources, listening and taking turns in discussions. Staff act as good role models and encourage children to work together to sort out any issues. Children respond positively and demonstrate a good sense of responsibility for their behaviour. Children's understanding of diversity is developed as they participate in daily discussions, access relevant resources and celebrate festivals that reflect their beliefs and those of their friends. All staff and children are learning the Makaton sign language. This enables children with language difficulties to communicate on an equal basis. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress. They are supported in developing their knowledge of English but staff also value the children's own language, using key words and sign language.

Children's behaviour demonstrates that they feel safe. They are confident and are therefore actively involved in their learning, developing positive attitudes to this. Children are encouraged to be active learners and explore. For example, one child put on the headphones to sing along with the music on the compact disc player. Children also skilfully use the selection of battery operated toys and computer games. They have recently adopted African land snails which will expand the children's understanding of aspects of science and nature. Pots outside are used to grow plants in the summer months. Children experience the growing of the plants and see what happens when the caterpillars eat their cabbages. Children develop skills for the future as they share ideas and work together. For example, children using a construction set discuss their models, comparing these to buildings they have seen. Children have opportunities to develop early reading and writing skills. Young children enjoy snuggling up with a member of staff and sharing a book. Children regularly make marks in the sand and learn to use paintbrushes and chalk. They also experience making marks in shaving foam as well as discussing the feel and the smell.

All children, based on their starting points and abilities, make good progress towards the early learning goals in this well organised nursery.

## 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>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

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

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### 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>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
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	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met