



## Arlesey Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY312527
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 March 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Paula Jane Hayhow / Kelly Eyre
<b>Setting Address</b>	Arlesey WI Hall, High Street, Arlesey, Bedfordshire, SG15 6SN
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<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Arlesey Preschool
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Arlesey Pre-school opened in 1983 and was registered at its current premises in July 2005. It operates from a single hall within the Women Institute's premises in the centre of Arlesey, close to Letchworth and Hitchin in Bedfordshire. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.10 to 11.40 and on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays the group also opens from 12.45 to 15.15 for term time only. A lunch club operates to link the

two sessions. Children do not have access to an outdoor play area at present but physical play is accommodated through indoor activities.

There are currently 50 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 12 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and wider community. The pre-school currently supports children with special educational needs, and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs seven staff. There are four staff, including the manager who hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are two staff who are working towards a qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment. The children's special requirements with regard to health and diet are clearly documented and staff ensure that these are respected. Children's growth and development are promoted because they are offered a variety of foods at snack time, including home made sandwiches, milk, fresh and dried fruit. Children wash their hands before snack time and after using craft items. However, the relevance of this is not consistently being discussed and the children do not have regular access to their own clean water and soap to wash in. This is giving children a limited understanding of hygiene practice and the importance of washing hands appropriately.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities, which contribute to their good health. They routinely use the indoor space to practise and improve their physical skills. They regularly participate in music sessions, ring games and the use of climbing apparatus. They practise and improve their physical and co-ordination skills as they participate in sessions where they balance over cross bars, climb up ladders, slide, jump over steps and crawl through tunnel openings. They show developing skills in smaller motor skills, for example, some are learning to use scissors correctly and construct objects using a range of materials and construction sets.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment where resources are well-organised and easily accessible. Their safety is prioritised and staff carry out daily safety checks, identifying hazards and taking steps to remove or minimise these. This helps to ensure that children are able to move around safely, freely and independently. A major risk assessment is completed regularly and staff are able to refer to their operational policies and additional guidance over issues such as child protection and accidents. The daily implementation of practical policies and procedures ensures that staff are aware of safety practices and are able to promote

children's safety. However, children have access to the toy storage area and the policies regarding child protection and lost or uncollected children are not detailed enough and this could affect the children's safety.

Children are developing an understanding about taking responsibility and keeping themselves safe. They are consistently given clear explanations by staff to help them understand the relevance of safety rules, for example, they understand why it is important not to run inside. Children use toys and resources that are appropriate for their size and developmental stages. Staff regularly check these to ensure that they are clean and safe. Children's welfare is very well promoted because staff have a good knowledge of child protection procedures and are able to identify, report and follow up any concerns.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are happy, secure and settled. They enjoy their time at the pre-school and join in enthusiastically with the activities and daily routines. They are confident in their relationships with staff and are beginning to build relationships with each other. Their personal development and self-confidence are promoted through appropriate support and interaction from staff. Younger children's play and development are enhanced because the staff have a sound knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. This informs activity planning and assessment, ensuring that children's overall development is well balanced.

Children are in a stimulating environment where staff are vigilant and ensure that children are purposefully occupied. Despite their young age, children confidently make choices about their play and activities throughout the session. Staff quickly get to know the children well and make good use of open questions and discussions to encourage them to think further and extend their learning. Children can participate in all activities because of the high staff ratios which means that these can be adapted to suit each child's individual developmental needs and capabilities. An example of this is children playing with play dough, where younger children are encouraged to use the basic tools such as cutters and rolling pins, and staff extend the activity for older children by introducing additional tools such as scissors to cut out more intricate shapes.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress and their overall development is promoted because staff have a thorough knowledge of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage, enabling them to plan appropriate activities which cover all areas of learning. Children's progress in all areas is well balanced as staff use clear assessment methods, making use of this information to highlight areas to be covered in future activities. However, evaluation of group activities is unclear and this could affect future planning and mean that some learning opportunities could be missed.

Children enjoy a well balanced variety of activities. These include regular

opportunities to participate in a range of crafts, construction, imaginative play, simple cooking, physical play and music sessions. Children's knowledge is further extended as they cover a variety of topics enabling them to look at themes such as 'Cultures ', where they are involved in food-tasting, listening to a variety of music from other countries and discussing different nationalities and beliefs. Children are confident in initiating conversations and in using language to explain their ideas and activities. They enjoy listening to stories and are beginning to understand that print carries meaning. However, there are limited opportunities for them to view written words and letters in the pre-school environment. Children can hold pencils correctly and are beginning to form recognisable letters, for example the older children are able to write their names.

Children are motivated and enthusiastic about their play and activities. They are developing good relationships with their peers, organising games and negotiating turn-taking and sharing. They show developing skills in mathematics as they learn about this through number rhymes and activities such as shape puzzles and comparing sizes. They are beginning to introduce these concepts into their daily play, for example talking about bigger or tallest towers. They are gaining an awareness of their own culture and that of others through activities, theme topics and discussions. Children are beginning to use their imagination in art, role play, music, and stories, for example acting out the story of ' We are Going on a Bear Hunt' .

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and actively participate in the pre-school because staff value and respect their individuality and the family context for each child. They are offered a variety of activities and play opportunities which help promote their understanding of society and increase their awareness of other cultures and ways of life. However, they do not have regular access to resources reflecting the wider world, limiting their understanding and knowledge of this. Children are respected as individuals and staff ensure that specific needs are clearly identified and consistently met. Children's behaviour is good throughout the sessions as they confidently choose their activities and share the play resources. They respond well to staff, and the positive approach and good staff role modelling ensures that children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children who have special needs have their requirements clearly identified and met as there is a policy relating to this and staff ensure that this is implemented daily. Staff have attended additional training and are skilled in identifying needs and in working with parents and other professionals to ensure that children are offered the most appropriate care and support. The daily implementation of individual education plans, practical teaching methods and a good understanding of inclusion means that children participate meaningfully in all activities and routines. An example of this is the practical use of picture prompts to enable children who have English as their second language to communicate and make choices about how they spend their time.

With regard to the provision of funded nursery education, the quality of the setting's partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are given initial information about the setting and there are displays explaining the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. They are kept well informed of their children's progress and activities through discussions with staff and the use of newsletter and notice to inform parents of current themes and topics. Parents have opportunities to discuss and review their child's progress through regular open afternoons and evenings. The positive attitude of the group helps ensure that parents' views are valued, standards are maintained and appropriate care can be provided for each child.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Overall, the needs of all children attending are met. Children's care is enhanced by the setting's good organisation and they benefit from the care provided by experienced, well-organised staff. There are stringent procedures in place for checking that all staff are suitable to work with children. A clear staff induction process, regular appraisals and ongoing monitoring ensure that the pre-school's policies and procedures are understood by all and are consistently applied.

Good organisation of space ensures that children are offered a wide range of play opportunities and activities. They are able to move safely and freely between activities, enabling them to feel confident to initiate their own play and learning. A well structured daily routine ensures that children have time for free play, organised activities and physical play.

With regard to the provision of funded nursery education, the quality of leadership and management is good. Children's overall welfare is promoted by the clear understanding that the manager and committee have of their roles and responsibilities, ensuring that they are aware of all regulations. The manager acts as a good role model, supporting staff to attend additional training and encouraging cohesive teamwork. This helps staff to feel valued and motivated and creates a positive atmosphere within the setting. All sessions are well planned, with a balanced range of activities throughout the week. Children are given sufficient time and resources to enable them to complete their activities and tasks. Their progress is tracked through ongoing assessments and monitoring. Staff pay attention to the planning of future work, ensuring that the needs of individuals are met and the development of all children is promoted.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Concerns were raised following an accident to a child at the setting. These concerns relate to National Standard 6: Safety. The group carried out an internal investigation

and followed all procedures appropriately. Ofsted are satisfied with the action taken in relation to the concern and will therefore be taking no further action. The provider remains qualified for registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

## **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- further develop procedures to encourage children's understanding of hygiene practices
- further develop policies and procedures to improve children's safety. This refers to access to the toy storage area and to policies regarding child protection and lost or uncollected children
- ensure that children are offered regular opportunities to access a range of resources which give positive images and promote their understanding of other cultures and ways of life.

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- further develop children's opportunities to access and view written words and letters
- review and develop the activity planning so that this clearly shows how the activities are evaluated and the information used in future planning

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*concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website:  
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