



Thurlow Bradley & District Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	251803
Inspection date	04 May 2006
Inspector	Lynn Clements
Setting Address	The Sunshine Building, Thurlow VCP School,, Little Thurlow, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 7HY
Telephone number	01440 783688
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Registered person	Thurlow, Bradley & District Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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?

Thurlow, Bradley and District Pre-School opened in 1997. It operates from one room, in a purpose built de-mountable premises, in the grounds of the local primary school in Thurlow. The pre-school serves the local area and surrounding villages.

There are currently 39 children on roll. This includes 21 funded children. The setting is registered to care for a maximum of 24 children at any one time. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with

special educational needs.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 08.00 until 15.20.

Four full-time members of staff work with the children. All staff including the manager hold appropriate qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff take positive steps to promote the children's good health. They are cared for in a clean and welcoming environment. Children learn about the importance of hygiene through the effective routines in place. Hand washing is encouraged at relevant times, which contributes to keeping children healthy. All health related documentation is in place and regularly updated to meet children's changing needs. Children benefit from staffs good knowledge of first aid, as well as the effective systems in place to deal with any emergency situation should it arise.

Children learn about healthy eating during snack and lunch time discussions and planned topics. They help themselves to fresh drinking water from the cooler and staff monitor their fluid intake to ensure no-one remains thirsty. Parents share information about their child's individual dietary needs, and this is recorded by staff to ensure their needs are met and parental wishes are respected. Children have daily opportunities to taste foods from other countries, exploring their likes and dislikes. Staff have attended relevant training in food preparation and hygiene techniques which they implement in practice to ensure children are protected from cross contamination.

Children have good opportunities each day to engage in physical play both inside and outside. This helps to extend their fine and gross motor skills, enabling them to move freely and use single handed tools or large apparatus with good coordination and control. They move between the classroom and the outside play area freely and take regular walks to investigate the world on their door step. Children climb, run, jump and balance. They are able to rest or be active according to their individual needs.

Younger children are developing their independence physically and emotionally. They are active and are becoming increasingly independent, acquiring control over their bodies and new physical skills. They are learning to express their needs and are beginning to meet those needs independently for example, by being able to access water for themselves. Staff have a sound understanding of the needs of the younger children and provide appropriate activities and resources to support their physical and emotional development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The organisation of the play space along with thorough risk assessments of all child accessible areas ensures the environment remains safe for children. Toys and resources are regularly checked and cleaned so they remain in good condition for children to use. The provision of good child accessible storage encourages children to extend their own play and learning, tidying away afterwards to prevent tripping hazards.

Whenever possible children share their ideas and take responsibility for decisions about their safety such as participating in fire drills and learning about road safety when out and about. Safety equipment such as socket covers and safety gates enable children to explore their environment safely. Children are supported by adults to tidy away their toys after playing to prevent tripping hazards.

Staff check the identification of visitors and have clear systems in place to ensure children are never left with unvetted persons. Safe arrival and collection procedures ensures no child can leave the premises unescorted. Children enjoy outings in the local area; ratios are increased when out and about and additional safety procedures are followed to ensure children remain safe.

Staff have attended relevant child protection training. They have a good knowledge and understanding about signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect. There are clear procedures in place to protect children and ensure their welfare remains paramount.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident in the pre-school and in their relationships with each other and staff. They are greeted warmly by staff as they arrive each day. Children move freely inside and outside, investigating natural and man made materials such as plastic animals, building blocks, soft modelling soap or sand, water, bark and leaves. They are keen communicators, discussing their ideas as they extend their imaginary play, fighting fires with pretend hose pipes by the climbing frames or saving the lives of the cuddly animals at their vet surgery. Children are encouraged to make their own choices and the good use of child accessible storage enables them to extend their own play and learning and build on their independence.

Children use their initiative as they help themselves to water when they are thirsty or go off to wash their hands when they have got muddy from playing outside. Staff are implementing the 'Birth to three matters' framework to ensure children under three years are supported effectively. All staff are deployed effectively to support children in their play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make sound progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and are involved as a team when planning activities; these are

based on clear observations of what children know and can do. Children's records of assessment are regularly updated and are used well by staff to identify each child's next step for learning. Staff plan a wide range activities and experiences which provide good levels of challenge and ensure children continue to make good progress.

Children select and share books. They join in group story times using the pictures as clues to guess what may happen next. They are beginning to recognise their own name in print and the use of labels, signs and pictures around the setting provides further opportunities for children to observe and recognise letters and the printed word. Staff support the linking of sounds to letters using a published phonics' programme and older children are starting to apply this as they begin to read simple texts. Children use number language in their play. They recognise shapes and explore capacity and quantity during sand and water play. However, opportunities for children to increase their skills in calculation are limited. Staff support children to notice change as they grow flowers from seed or watch the changing seasons of the year. Children explore how things work holding binoculars and learning that depending on which end you look down objects can get larger or smaller. They have plenty of opportunities to learn about different customs and cultures through topics, examining artefacts and circle time discussions. However, opportunities for children to explore information technology requires development. Children sing and laugh as they play. They join in simple songs and rhymes and enjoy matching movements and actions to music during large groups activities. Children create their own bands playing saucepans and more traditional musical instruments, as they beat out rhythms and make loud and soft sounds.

Children are active learners, taking risks and trying new activities without fear of failure. Staff work closely as a team, praising and encouraging children to develop their personal independence and confidence. Overall, children are making sound progress towards the early learning goals.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children have equal opportunities to access a wide range of interesting activities and resources; they are confident and independent. They play with an assortment of small world figures and role play equipment that represent all members of society. Children learn about people in the community who help them, such as the police and fire brigade. They discover the wider world during topics and discussions. Staff ensure that there is no bias in their practice in relation to gender race or disability. They understand their obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act and are pro-active in ensuring that appropriate action is taken to support children with identified needs.

Children have high levels of self-esteem and confidence and they form good relationships with each other. Staff listen enthusiastically to their ideas and respond with encouraging comments to extend their play. Children behave well and clearly understand what is expected of them. They work together deciding on their own rules

to be kind to each other. Children self regulate their own activities using large sand timers to ensure turns are taken fairly. Staff are sensitive in their approach to children, using age appropriate explanation and discussion which helps them understand what is expected. They listen patiently to children's views and ideas so that they feel respected and acknowledged. Staff create an environment that encourages children to behave well.

Staff foster strong relationships with parents and carers. Key workers are in place to support children and share information with their families. Children, parents and carers are greeted as they arrive. Staff ask children about the special toys they have brought to pre-school. Daily diaries and verbal discussion provides parents and carers with valuable information about their children's experiences during the day. Notice boards are kept up to date with relevant information about the curriculum, general pre-school business and forthcoming events. Information packs are shared with parents so they have copies of the relevant policies and procedures which are in place to protect their children and ensure the smooth running of the pre-school.

Partnership with parents and carers of nursery funded children is good. Records of assessments are in place and shared with parents. Parents are encouraged to write comments and share their observations about their children's achievements at home. Children's needs are being met well because staff work closely with parents and carers to enable all children to achieve in their learning.

Children are learning to share and help each other. They encourage others to join in their games and make room for them at activities. Children listen to each other at circle time, learning to respect each others views and ideas. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by staff who have a good knowledge and understanding of child development. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and attention to on going professional development ensures practice remains relevant and continues to meet the needs of children. Staff induction and monitoring systems are in place to support new and existing members of staff. Policies and procedures are implemented in practice to promote positive outcomes for children.

Staff maintain documentation appropriately and all policies and procedures are in place and regularly updated. However, the complaints procedure requires updating to include systems for recording complaints or concerns.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. The manager is responsive to the needs of children, parents and staff. Regular staff meetings take place to support practice and draw on staffs interests and skills when defining roles and responsibilities. Managers monitor and evaluate classroom practice along side staff who take an active role in analysing their interaction with children and the curriculum offered; and this ensure it continues to challenge them effectively. Overall, children's, needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last care inspection staff have implemented the following changes to improve outcomes for children. Rooms have been re-organised with posters, information and displays of children's creations which provide a bright and welcoming atmosphere. All hazards are kept out of reach of children and lunch boxes are stored in fridges to keep the contents safe. Netting has been replaced to prevent any access under the mobile classroom. Children follow clear daily hygiene routines. All staff have completed behaviour management training and ensure consistency across the team to support children appropriately. The child protection policy has been updated as required.

Since the last nursery education inspection the following key issues have been addressed. Staff have worked closely with the local authority support teacher to improve their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and they are now using 'Step by Step' assessment records which supports key-workers to identify children's achievements and effectively plan their next steps for learning. Staff have worked as a team to improve the presentation of the activities and provide children with interesting and challenging play scenarios which extend their investigative skills.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.

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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):

- update the complaints procedure in line with recent changes to legislation; ensure there is a system in place to record concerns and complaints.

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):

- increase opportunities for children to develop their calculation skills
- increase opportunities for children to explore a wider range of information communication technology activities.

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