



Little Swans Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY315587
Inspection date	25 April 2006
Inspector	Christine Slaney

Setting Address	Westcliff Primary School, First Avenue, Dawlish, Devon, EX7 9RA
Telephone number	01626 862444
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Registered person	Little Swan Preschool
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?

Little Swans Pre-School is managed by a voluntary committee of parents. Originally registered in 1997, the pre-school moved to its present location, based within the grounds of Westcliff School in Dawlish, in January 2006.

The pre-school is registered to provide 22 places for children aged from 3 years to under 5 years. At present there are 47 children on roll, including 40 funded 3 and 4-year-olds. The children come from the surrounding area and represent a variety of

socio-economic backgrounds. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and children with English as an additional language. It operates Monday to Friday from 09.00 to 11:30 and 12.30 to 15.00, term time only. A supervised lunch time session is also provided.

There are eight members of staff employed, four of whom are appropriately qualified and one member of staff is currently undertaking a level 3 childcare qualification.

The pre-school staff work closely with the early years advisory teacher and has good links with Westcliff and Gatehouse Primary Schools. A qualified teacher is also available and she provides support for two sessions.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good range of activities, which contribute to their good health. These include a variety of indoor and outdoor activities to help them gain control of their bodies, for example, balancing on low-level steps. As a result, children show great control and balance well. Overall, children learn the importance of hand washing through daily routines, supervised by adults. There are hygienic kitchen areas for preparing food and snacks. Children are able to relax and enjoy quiet times within the pre-school, for example, they share books and receive one-to-one support from members of staff in the book corner.

Overall children benefit from healthy eating; they are provided with toast, biscuits, and fruit on alternative weeks. However, this system does mean children do not fully appreciate the importance of regularly eating fresh fruit. Nevertheless, children have a good understanding of healthy eating, for example, when role playing in the 'fruit and vegetable shop', they spontaneously chat about healthy foods like grapes. Children have good access to drinking water and juice and milk are provided at snack time. However, children are not consistently encouraged to be independent in meaningful situations, for instance, more able children are not given the opportunity to pour their chosen drink.

Children's health is further promoted by well maintained accident and medication records. There is also clearly written information for parents, for instance, an appropriate sickness policy is provided in the pre-school welcome book.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, well maintained environment, with good space available for both indoor and outdoor play experiences. Children have use of a large classroom, a smaller quiet area and an enclosed outside play area. Staff prepare play activities and experiences each day and children independently self-select resources to support their own play, for instance, they collect fire helmets from the

role play area, while playing with fire engines on the car mat. Toys and equipment are clean, well maintained and appropriate for their ages and stages of development. This helps to ensure that they are safe for the children to use.

Children can play safely and freely both inside and outside without risk of harm, due to the vigilance of the staff team. Good security systems are firmly in place to protect them, such as a coded system to enter the building. This ensures no person enters the area without the staff's awareness. There is evidence of a detailed risk assessment that clearly identifies potential areas of risk to the children's safety, both inside and outside. This is regularly reviewed by the health and safety officer and the management of the building, through regular meetings. There are clear procedures for the emergency evacuation of the premises, for example, a fire procedure is clearly displayed and a drill is practised with the children. Children are developing a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy, for example, they are encouraged to pick toys up off the floor when accidental spillage happens.

Children's safety is further supported by the pre-school's good understanding of child protection procedures, for example, staff have an understanding of possible signs and symptoms of abuse. In addition staff are fully aware of their responsibilities and an appropriate child protection policy and procedure is shared with parents.

Children have good opportunities to enjoy outside play, which enable them to enjoy the fresh air.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the pre-school. They have free access to a good range of activities, toys and resources that promote their learning and development well. The areas used are child friendly and organised to promote children's own experiences. As a consequence the children enjoy a good variety of activities prepared by the pre-school, such as playing with lentils in a water tray, role playing 'fruit and vegetable shop', construction, floor mats, and craft.

Children are taken out every day to enjoy the fresh air and planned outdoor experiences. They also have opportunities to explore the local environment.

Children self-select their own toys or request toys from the staff members. They are confident and self assured within the secure and safe environment. Children are developing a good understanding of the available space around them. For example, they thoroughly enjoy action rhyme games and jump up and down with glee pretending to be a jumping bean. In addition, children understand the concept of 'tidy up time', which is achieved quickly as they become involved with putting toys away in their correct storage boxes.

Children play freely and the staff are well able to engage the children's own interests, for example, staff chat to children about healthy eating while they role play in the 'fruit and vegetable shop'.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress because the practitioners have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. They plan a varied and balanced range of activities that cover all six areas of learning. Staff are developing in confidence with the help of a useful resource designed by the qualified teacher within the setting. This is helping them to adapt and differentiate activities to meet the needs of all children. In addition, detailed planning for more structured activities ensures clear learning intentions are covered.

Assessment records are good. They are dated and completed regularly. They clearly show children's achievements and the next steps in each child's learning.

The areas used by children are prepared well. The pre-school staff have worked closely with the Sure Start committee to provide display boards for children's work and parental information. Therefore, the areas are starting to look inviting and attractive for children and parents. There are well established daily routines, which ensure children are safe and well cared for. They understand the daily routines well, for instance, tidy up time. Although, the routine for washing hands before snack time is overly long as children line up to wash their hands at one sink and some children become restless and bored.

Children's independence is promoted well. Children know they need to wear different clothing for outside play and craft activities like painting. Most are able to put these on, with little support or help. Children show great care and concern for others, for example, children check new children's feelings by asking significant questions like, "what is the matter?".

Children enjoy listening to stories and rhymes. They have good opportunities to develop their writing skills through play. For example, some children write their own names on pictures they have painted or drawn. Some use recognisable shapes and patterns. They enthusiastically join in with singing and action songs. This includes good demonstrations of their actions, for instance, wrapping arms around themselves to show they are chilly.

Children enjoy numbers. They are provided with opportunities to count and are able to count confidently and spontaneously to numbers over 10. Nevertheless, they do not always have opportunities to consolidate their learning, for instance, by touching or moving objects while counting. Children also enjoy matching games. Overall staff use some good questioning skills. They encourage children to think about the objects on their game boards before showing them the picture.

Children learn about technology. They self select from a well resourced technology box that includes mobile phones, calculators and programmable toys. Furthermore, plans show there are also opportunities to use the computer independently to complete simple programmes.

Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills, such as running around outside and joining in action songs in a large group activity. They follow instructions well. They use their bodies with good control to show a good

representation of a broad bean, by making themselves bigger.

Children are developing a good understanding of colours. In addition, they are developing good hand-eye co-ordination skills. As a result, children can control and hold paint brushes and paint pots skilfully, to mix yellow and red paint making the colour orange.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The pre-school has taken good steps to ensure that all children and parents feel welcome. Children benefit from being cared for by consistent staff who show an awareness of individual needs, family background and parental wishes. The pre-school staff work closely with other professionals to plan individual educational plans for children with special educational needs. As a consequence their care and educational needs are well met. The building is new and the pre-school has therefore worked very closely with the Sure Start management committee that owns the building, for instance, they have recently paid to install display boards for parents and to exhibit children's own work. As a consequence the area used by the pre-school is starting to look more welcoming and inviting and provides regular information for parents. Children show care and respect one another, for example, children chat to a child who has just arrived and is settling into the afternoon session.

The pre-school is taking positive steps to ensure the children have a view of the wider world and is due to purchase more toys and resources which reflect diversity.

The staff interact well with children and relate to them as valued and respected individuals. The children are relaxed and confidently decide what to do and independently initiate play. For example, children self select some helmets from the role play area while playing with fire engines on the floor mat.

The staff are positive role models and as a result children are well behaved. They settle to activities quickly and happily share and take responsibility for their own actions, for instance, children pick toys up off the floor to ensure other children do not have an accident.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children enjoy and independently socialise with each other during free play activities. As a result they are curious, imaginative and freely explore, for example, children enjoy role play opportunities. They extend their own play by self selecting from a range of resources like fireman's helmets. Therefore, they have good opportunities to develop and organise their own thinking as they play together on a car mat.

Partnership with parents is good. New parents and children are made to feel welcome and good information is given to parents about how their child has settled and activities they have enjoyed during the session. The pre-school is aware of its own strengths and weaknesses and has recently identified that, with a move to a new building, a parent liaison officer would benefit new and existing parents and children to settle into the new building.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care needs are identified and met through efficiently organised records and documents that are discussed and completed with parents. The required documents are well supported by the pre-school's comprehensive policies and procedures. These include detailed registers of attendance and detailed information records about the children. Consents regarding emergency medical treatment and outings are obtained from parents. All documentation is securely and confidentially stored. All records are regularly reviewed to make sure they are up-to-date and remain relevant to the care provided for each child.

Children benefit from their time in the pre-school. Over half the staff are suitably qualified, with others currently on training programmes. Staff are encouraged to develop their own ideas for planned activities and these are then transferred well into document plans and activities by the nursery teacher. There is also additional guidance for staff on the sessions the teacher is not available. However, teaching and learning is not regularly assessed to ensure all staff are effectively using real situations, like snack time, to ensure children can further develop their skills in meaningful ways; more specifically pouring their own drinks, counting at registration time and waiting to wash their hands before snack time.

The staff maintain safety by ensuring supervision at all times and there are effective systems in place to ensure all staff working with children have completed all required vetting procedures. The areas are suitably organised and roles and responsibilities of staff have been clearly defined. This allows children the freedom to play in a safe and secure manner with toys and games they can access with ease.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and are involved in planning for the curriculum to help children develop in all areas. They are clearly aware of the learning intentions for the activities. Appraisals have been recently introduced and will monitor staff development. Assessment records are updated by key workers who monitor children's achievements and developments; these include identifying the next step in learning for children.

The pre-school meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

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):

- provide healthy and nutritious foods at snack time. Think about involving children and parents in the planning of snacks and their preparation to further encourage the children's independence.

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):

- review the system in place to monitor more fully the teaching and learning, to ensure children have more opportunities to consolidate their learning in meaningful situations; for example, developing independence at snack time, counting at registration and hand washing routines at snack time.

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