



Child Okeford Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 141096 |
| Inspection date | 22 June 2006 |
| Inspector | Brenda Joan Flewitt |
| Setting Address | St. Nicholas Early Years Centre, St. Nicholas C of E Primary School, Station Road, Child Okeford, Dorset, DT11 8EL |
| Telephone number | 01258 861007 |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | Child Okeford Pre-School |
| Type of inspection | Integrated |
| Type of care | Full day care, Sessional 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?

Child Okeford Pre-School opened in 1967 and is run by a committee of parent volunteers. The pre-school is situated within St. Nicholas Primary School, in the village of Child Okeford, near Blandford, Dorset. It serves the local community and surrounding villages. The pre-school operates from one main playroom, and has use of the school hall, and playground. The pre-school is open from 09.00 to 15.30, Monday to Friday during school term time. Children attend morning or afternoon

sessions with the choice of bringing lunch, or they can stay for a full day.

A maximum of 17 children may attend at anyone time. There are currently 30 children on roll. Of these, 21 receive funding for early education. The pre-school supports children who have special needs. Three full time and two part time staff work with the children. Of these, three hold an appropriate level 3 early years qualification, and two are working towards a qualification. The manager is starting an early years foundation degree.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's healthy lifestyle is promoted well at all times. They are involved in a good range of activities that help develop their physical skills, which includes daily fresh air and exercise. They increase their competence in using a varied range of large equipment during their play in the outside area. They climb, swing and balance with confidence. Some children enjoy practising their ball skills as they 'score a goal', or 'take a penalty'. Children help themselves to a drink of water when they are thirsty, as there are resources made available at their height. They enjoy a good variety of healthy options at snack time which includes fruit or raw vegetables. They particularly delight in washing, chopping and tasting vegetables they have grown themselves. They learn about staying healthy through topic work, and visitors into the group who talk about strong bones and teeth.

Children are protected from the spread of infection through staff's routine procedures. These include providing hygienic resources for hand washing, and thorough cleaning of tables and equipment. There is a clear sickness policy that ensures children do not attend if they have an infectious illness. Children develop independence in their own personal hygiene. The toilet facilities are easily accessible, and children are reminded to wash their hands after using them and before handling food.

Children's accidents and medication are managed well. There is a well stocked first aid box which is easily accessible and records are completed accurately. Most staff have up-to-date first aid certificates, and have been trained to carry out specific procedures, as required, for children with additional needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in safe and secure, well maintained premises where hazards and risks are identified and minimised. Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out and measures put in place to help prevent accidents. These include the safe storage of cleaning materials and sharp objects. The good security system means that children are protected from uninvited visitors and they cannot leave the building unsupervised. The effective organisation of the space available enables children to

move around in safety as they choose their activities and during their play. They use good quality furniture and play provision. Staff communicate well to ensure that children are supervised well both inside and outside, while allowing them to explore, try new skills and develop independence.

Children learn what is expected if they must leave the building in an emergency, as they are fully involved in regular fire drills. They know the sound of the alarm and are often the ones who find the 'fire' when staff have placed a picture of flames in a particular area.

Staff's secure understanding of child protection issues and Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures contributes towards the children's safety and welfare. Staff attend training to update their knowledge and there is a clear written policy as reference for staff and parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and secure. They enjoy the time they spend at pre-school, making good relationships with staff and each other. They play and learn in a welcoming, friendly and caring environment where they are encouraged to show concern for each other. Children enjoy the positive interaction they receive from staff and develop confidence in making their needs known, as they can be sure of a kind response. They develop independence in practical skills such as managing their own shoes and clothes, and pouring drinks. Children use an extensive range of play provision which is well organised and stored to allow them to select for themselves. For example, a range of puzzles is readily available on low shelving, dressing up clothes are displayed on child height pegs, and storage boxes are labelled with pictures as well as words.

Staff have attended training in relation to the Birth to three matters framework and are using this knowledge to develop an effective planning and assessment system for the younger children. This contributes to identifying the children's starting points in the Foundation Stage.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage, and how children learn through play and by making their own choices. There is an effective key worker system. All staff are involved in planning a broad range of interesting activities and experiences that promote children's development in all areas of learning. Children take part in a good balance of self-chosen and adult led activities. The assessment records are completed regularly and used, together with the key worker's knowledge of each child, to help children make good progress towards the early learning goals.

Staff encourage the children to be fully involved in processes that help them to understand the world around them. For example, children make their own play dough. They use their senses to explore the ingredients, making predictions of what

will happen when water and paint is added. One child describes the mixture as 'goeey' as she stirs with a wooden spoon. When the dough 'feels' right, the children enjoy manipulating it into specific shapes and mixing the 'yellow' and 'blue' dough together to make 'green'. Children develop a good sense of time and place through topic work such as 'Families' and 'Growing'. They learn to care for plants as they are involved in planting seeds, watering and harvesting. They then enjoy the results as they prepare the vegetables to eat. Children express their ideas in a variety of ways. They use their imagination well during role play as they act out real life situations. For example, children instigate a game where they are fire fighters. They use benches as a fire engine, wear fire helmets, write a fire log, and make maps to find the way. When completing art and craft activities, children are encouraged to create their work to their own satisfaction.

Children use language well to communicate. They initiate conversations with adults and each other, and often describe what is happening, and talk about events in their lives. For instance, children are fascinated by red and yellow ice 'hands' as they 'melt'. They talk about them feeling 'cold' and 'freezing' as they observe the coloured ice turning to orange water. Children learn to recognise their written names through daily activities like self-registration. They start to identify the initial sounds and some children are forming recognisable letters as they write their names on lists or on their art work. Children develop a good sense of number through planned and every day activities. They often count objects during their play, and link the number with the correct numeral. They solve mathematical problems such as 'how many more chairs or cups are needed' at snack time and enjoy number songs which involves 'taking away'. Children learn about shape, space and measure through activities such as cooking, construction, messy play and craft. Staff use shape names as they support activities, which helps confirm children's understanding of shape in every day contexts.

Children enjoy using technology and are increasing their knowledge and skills. They regularly use a computer. Some children competently control images on the screen using the mouse. They take turns by compiling a list of names of children who want a go. Children like to hear their own voices as they play back the singing or talking that they have recorded on the tape recorder. Children's physical development is well promoted. They move around with confidence and coordination, showing an awareness of others as they choose their activities and during their play. They have fun following instructions on the 'Sticky Kids' tape as they stretch, march, gallop, crouch down and jump up to the familiar music. One child says 'I love this one', as she recognises the tune. They competently use a range of tools and equipment that develops fine motor skills. This includes pens, rollers, cutters, scissors, pegs and threading equipment. Children learn to use real wood-work tools safely as they cut and join pieces of wood to make models or collage pictures.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop a good sense of belonging and being part of a community. They have individual pegs for their belongings which are identifiable by name and symbol.

They like to see their work and pictures of themselves, friends and family displayed in the environment. Children learn a positive awareness of people's differences through planned activities where they explore festivals and celebrations. They see positive images of diversity within their environment and learn from the good example set by staff. Children are respected as individuals, staff know each child well and plan activities linked to their interests. Children with special needs are supported well. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator liaises with staff, parents and connected professionals to ensure that individual needs are met and every child is fully included. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave well. They know the routine and are cooperative. They are keen to help with tasks to keep the environment clean and tidy such as sweeping up flour and wiping tables. Children respond well to clear explanations for requests which help them understand how their behaviour affects others. They receive much praise and encouragement from staff for effort, achievement and kindness, which helps build their self-esteem.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the staff's positive relationships with parents. Parents receive clear information about the setting. This includes a comprehensive prospectus, notice boards and informative displays. Any complaints received from parents are managed well, however, the record is not suitable to share with other parents if requested. Parents are informed about the curriculum in various ways and are welcomed to be involved by helping with sessions. Staff make themselves available to exchange information on a daily basis, which contributes towards meeting children's individual needs. Parents are invited to have an active voice in their child's care and education by serving as a member of the committee. They have regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress records both formally and informally.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by an experienced staff team who work well together to provide smoothly run sessions, which means children know what to expect and settle well. There is a clear staff recruitment procedure that ensures that staff are suitable to work with children. The effective induction system leads to staff consistently carrying out procedures outlined in policies that contribute towards children's care, learning and play. All legally required records are in place and well organised. However, the attendance register does not record when children arrive late or leave early.

Leadership and management is good. There are good systems in place to help identify strengths and weaknesses, which involves feedback from parents. The setting have a clear vision for the development of the pre-school which includes extended premises. Management and staff are committed to providing good quality provision, and staff are well supported to develop their roles through training. The strong links with the school help children's smooth transition as they start in the reception class. Children meet the reception teacher when she visits in the summer

term, which helps them settle the next term. Staff meet with her to discuss children's individual stage of development and any specific requirements. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last care inspection recommended that staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues was developed, and that equipment was organised to ensure space is used effectively.

Staff have attended training to update their knowledge in child protection issues, which contributes towards the children's welfare and safety. Resources and equipment are organised effectively to ensure that children move around safely as they choose their activities.

The last nursery education inspection recommended: that the organisation of furniture and equipment was improved, so that children can explore all areas of their environment successfully; that opportunities were increased for children to develop an awareness of simple calculation during practical and planned maths activities; and that children's independent use of books was encouraged.

The environment is organised well so that children can make choices in all areas of play. The resources are stored so that children are able to access them easily. Children solve simple mathematical problems through planned and every day activities, as staff consistently ask questions to encourage them to think about 'have we got enough?' or 'how many more do we need'? Children handle books correctly. They are encouraged to use books through some planned activities, and sometimes use the book corner to share books with others. However, children tend not to select books independently as often, during busier sessions.

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):

- review the system for recording complaints, to ensure it is suitable to show other parents on request
- develop the record of attendance, to show the hours that children attend.

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):

- enhance children's understanding of time further, by providing resources that help them understand the passing of time when they are taking turns, for example, when using the computer.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk