



Newlands Spring Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	650109
Inspection date	26 May 2006
Inspector	Lynn Clements
Setting Address	Dickens Place,, Copperfield Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 4UU
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Registered person	Newlands Spring Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Newlands Spring Pre-School opened in 1984. The pre-school operates from a purpose built early years unit in the grounds of Newland Springs primary school. It is situated in a residential area of Chelmsford and serves the local and surrounding area.

The setting is registered to provide care for a maximum of 25 children at any one time. There are currently 66 children on roll. This includes 44 funded children. Staff

have strategies in place to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are Monday to Thursday 09:00 - 11:30 and 12:30 - 15:00 and Friday mornings 09:00 - 11:30.

12 part time staff work with the children. Five members of staff including the two managers hold relevant early years qualifications and three are currently working to National Vocational level 2 and 3. The setting works closely with the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and welcoming environment. They learn about the importance of hygiene through the effective daily routines in place. Hand washing is encouraged at relevant times which prevents cross-contamination. All health related documentation is in place and regularly updated to meet children's changing needs. Children benefit from the staff's secure knowledge of first aid, as well as the effective systems in place to deal with any emergency situation should it arise.

Opportunities for children to learn about healthy eating are promoted by staff during snack and planned topic discussions. However, opportunities for children to help themselves to drinks during sessions are limited and staff rely on them to ask for a drink if they are thirsty. With parents permission, children have regular opportunities to taste foods from other countries, exploring their personal likes and dislikes. Parents share information about their child's individual dietary needs, and this is recorded by staff to ensure those needs are met and parental wishes respected.

Children move freely around the setting and they are able to rest or join in activities according to their individual needs and interests. They have good opportunities each day to engage in physical play both inside and outside. Children climb, run, jump and balance and they construct using a variety of building materials including large building blocks and role play resources; 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. Children confidently move between the classroom and the outside play area and staff support their physical development further by organising large group music and movement sessions where children join in singing and dancing, matching actions to rhymes and songs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children explore and investigate within a child centred environment. The use of the children's own creations in the bright displays around the pre-school provide a warm

and welcoming atmosphere for children, families and visitors. Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. There are secure systems in place for the safe arrival and departure of children to prevent them leaving the premises unsupervised. Staff are careful to check the identification of visitors and supervise them at all times to ensure children are protected from unvetted persons.

There is a range of child-height furniture and equipment which enables children to play and learn in safety and comfort. Toys and resources are regularly checked and cleaned to ensure they remain in good condition for children to use. Children are beginning to learn about keeping themselves safe. They participate in regular fire drills helping them to know what to do in an emergency. They are beginning to tidy their play space to keep it clear of tripping hazards.

One part-time member of staff has completed children protection training. However, the team's overall understanding of the procedures to follow if they suspect abuse or neglect requires development to ensure children are adequately protected at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children under three years follow a programme of activities based on guidance contained in the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff are developing an understanding of the content which they use to inform practice. Children take part in planned activities designed to help them progress and develop. They are confident in the pre-school and in their relationships with each other and staff.

Children respond well to new challenges by questioning and using their own initiative. They negotiate with each other during role play activities, taking babies for walks and preparing pretend meals or using their imagination as they take and join in telephone conversations together. Large group activities are organised by staff to include children of all ages; older children help younger ones as they work out which leg to put first during the 'Hokey Cokey'.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have an understanding of the Foundation Stage and are beginning to develop planning based on observations of what children know. Differentiation in planning, based on identified prior learning requires further development to ensure that the more able children are challenged effectively. Children's records of assessment are in place and are regularly updated and shared with parents during open evenings.

Children are keen to communicate with each other and members of staff. They select and share books in small groups, using the pictures as clues to the story line. Simple phonics are used by staff to support children as they begin to link sounds to letters when attempting to write their names. Opportunities for children to use writing for a purpose or mark making in role play are limited. Children show their curiosity as

learners as they observe the changing weather or watch tadpoles grow and develop into frogs. However, opportunities for children to investigate information communication technology requires development. Children discover the wider world around them, exploring other cultures through topics and discussions. They join in simple songs and rhymes, matching movements to music. They create collages cutting and sticking with a variety of creative media. Children are beginning to develop their understanding of numbers as they join in games, number rhymes and songs. Staff are directly involved in children's learning and all children are treated with equal concern.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about people in the community who help them, such as nurses and the police. They learn about other cultures and beliefs during topics and discussions, examining artefacts and tasting foods from around the world.

Staff have clear procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities; taking a multi agency approach in the best interests of the child. Key staff are in place to support children who speak English as an additional language.

Staff work adequately together to provide a consistent approach to behaviour management. However, the lack of age-appropriate explanation means children have limited opportunities to discuss their emotions and feelings. Children are beginning to learn about sharing and turn taking during cooking and large group activities.

The setting is developing relationships with parents and carers. Parents, carers and children are greeted as they arrive. Notice boards are kept up to date with information about forthcoming events and general pre-school business.

Partnership with parents and carers of funded children is satisfactory. Records of assessments are in place and shared with parents during open evenings. However, there are no formal systems in place enabling parents and carers to share information about their children's achievements at home or become involved in helping to plan their child's next steps for 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's spiritual, moral and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff maintain documentation appropriately and all policies and procedures are in place. Robust vetting systems ensure that children are protected. The operational plan is currently being updated in line with recent changes in legislation.

Children are cared for by staff who have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding

of child development. The majority of staff hold appropriate qualifications and attention to on going professional development ensures practice remains relevant. Staff induction and monitoring systems are in place to help support new and existing members of staff. Generally policies and procedures are implemented in practice to promote positive outcomes for children.

Leadership and management of nursery funded children is satisfactory. The provider and managers are responsive to the needs of children, parents and staff. Regular staff meetings take place to support the delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Managers are beginning to monitor classroom practice to ensure staff continue to work appropriately with children. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection historical qualifications have been updated and relevant staff have attended special needs training to ensure children are supported appropriately. The child protection policy has been updated. However, staff's overall understanding about implementing procedures in practice requires further development to ensure children are protected and this has been taken forward as a recommendation at this inspection.

Since the last education inspection records of assessment have been updated and staff are beginning to identify children's next steps for learning. Children are beginning to use simple phonics to link sounds and letters and some children are writing their names on their creations. Children are becoming increasingly confident when exploring numbers. They join in number rhymes and songs and re-create simple patterns during construction and creative activities.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since April 2004.

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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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 fresh drinking water for children at all times
- develop staffs knowledge and understanding with regard to child protection concerns to ensure appropriate action is taken to protect children at all times
- ensure adult handling of behaviour is consistent and developmentally appropriate, respecting individual children's level of understanding and maturity.

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 use and explore information communication technology
- increase opportunities for children to explore writing for a purpose; develop everyday mark making opportunities in role play scenarios
- develop differentiation in planning to ensure that focussed activities and topics challenge individual children effectively
- develop opportunities for parents and carers to share information about their children's achievements at home and become involved in planning their children's next steps for learning.

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