



Lordswood Community Centre Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	131542
Inspection date	14 June 2006
Inspector	Helen Mary Ball
Setting Address	Sandpiper Road, Lordswood, Southampton, Hampshire, SO16 8FD
Telephone number	07932 951792
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Registered person	Lordswood Community Centre 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 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?

Lordswood Community Pre-school is a committee run group which opened in 1982. It operates from two halls, kitchen and toilets in a purpose-built building in the Lordswood area of Southampton. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 09:30 to 12:00. On Tuesday and Thursdays the pre-school opens from 09:30 to 15:00, and includes a lunch club. All children share access to a secure

enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 42 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. This includes 39 children who receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local catchment area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs, and welcomes children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs a qualified supervisor who is responsible for the day to day running of the group. In addition, four staff work directly with the children, two of whom are qualified.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy playing outside on a daily basis and they notice the effects of exercise on their bodies. For example, they understand that running makes them hot and they ask for drinks to cool them down. Children are becoming independent in self-care routines and wash their hands after using the toilet. However, children's health is at risk because staff do not ensure that children wash their hands before eating. Children's health and welfare is supported by the maintenance of appropriate documentation such as accident and medication records.

Children enjoy the cafeteria-style snack time, where they can access healthy snacks and drinks at a time of their choosing, such as apples, bananas and milk. Staff are aware of children's individual dietary needs and are trained to administer an epi-pen to children with serious allergies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a welcoming environment and have ample space to move, both indoors and out, without restriction. Children settle quickly in this relaxed atmosphere where nursery rhymes play in the background, creating a congenial atmosphere.

Children play with a suitable range of toys and resources which are rotated daily to provide variety. They particularly relish playing outside on the wide range of bikes and trikes, which are suitable for children's individual ages and stages of development.

Children's safety is assured because the setting has clear and effective procedures for parents to collect children. Children are supervised closely and are unable to leave the premises. However, children's safety is compromised when playing on the climbing frame. Children are not restricted and this results in too many children climbing at once.

Children are protected from non-accidental injury because staff understand their roles and responsibilities with regard to child protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children happily settle at the pre-school where the cheerful rapport between staff and children create a relaxed atmosphere. Children enjoy themselves and have opportunities to persevere at activities for good lengths of time, such as painting beach pictures. Children build caring relationships with adults who are interested in what the children say and do and relate to them in a friendly manner. Staff enthusiasm for play is infectious and staff joining the children on their "picnic" and making a train out of chairs for the journey enhance children's imaginative play. Children responded to this with excitement and anticipation, which adds another dimension to their play.

Younger children are at ease at the setting, and confidently play alongside older children who are good role models.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Overall, children are making progress towards the early learning goals. However, there are some weaknesses in the implementation of planning and assessment and inconsistencies in individual teaching methods which impacts on the rate at which children progress. An appropriate learning environment is set up daily, although some areas of learning are missed because the activities do not excite or motivate children and they choose to play elsewhere. For example, children consistently choose to play outside and show little interest in the writing or mathematics activities inside. As a result, their learning is often incidental and spontaneous without adult direction. Simple plans cover most aspects within the areas of learning, but are not always implemented well by staff, and do not help all children progress along the stepping stones at their own individual rate. The assessment of children's achievements is inconsistent and as a result, not all children's progress is regularly tracked and used in planning future activities.

Children engage easily in conversation with their peers and with the adults throughout the session. They listen well at story time and enthusiastically contribute to elements of the story. For example, they joined in with parts of "The Bear Hunt" by anticipating and calling out "we are not scared" and marched around the hall "squelching" in their imaginary wellington boots. Children have opportunities to talk about themselves during the welcome time at the start of each session, although this generally lasts too long and children become restless and distracted. Some staff are skilled at encouraging children to think and express their ideas, but overall this is a weakness in teaching. Children learn to read their names through daily routines, such as finding their names before snack time. However, children have few opportunities for emergent writing and incorporating writing into their play. Children learn to count, taking turns to count how many children are present at the session and through some support from adults during their play activities. However, there are few opportunities for children to use numbers in context in their play and the mathematics table is not

sufficiently exciting to attract children. Children enjoy a suitable range of creative activities; they paint and make collage pictures benefiting because adults give children sufficient time to complete activities to their own satisfaction. Children have suitable opportunities to use the computer and are competent in using the mouse appropriately. Children benefit from visits from outside professionals such as the dentist. They are eager to share their own experiences at the dentist and enjoy talking about how to keep their teeth clean.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are respected as individuals and staff have a sound knowledge of equality of opportunity. Children are developing personal independence by pouring their own drinks at snack time and selecting their own activities; this promotes confidence and self-esteem. Children are keen and enthusiastic, building good relationships with each other. Overall, children behave well although their exuberance on the climbing frame can compromise safety. Tidy up time is a positive and meaningful experience for children. They understand the "five minute warning" and, using an egg timer, help to clear the toys by the end of each session. Staff offer an abundance of praise and encouragement to children, which help them to feel good about themselves. Children with learning difficulties make sound progress and the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is competent at accessing external support for able children who require extension activities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is being fostered.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. There are effective induction procedures and parents are welcome to stay with their children at the start of the session. This contributes positively to the continuity of care and education. Parents are openly positive about the setting and build effective relationships with staff who are approachable and friendly. Parents receive newsletters about the setting and know about the curriculum offered to children. Staff are available daily to discuss children's developmental progress informally, although there is no provision for regular formal meetings to identify children's progress towards the early learning goals.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care.

Children are happy and enjoy their time at pre-school. Staff plan effective routines, which means that children feel secure, and staff know in advance which activity they will be supervising. The setting has a range of policies, which underpins the care of children. Half of the staff are qualified in childcare, and they take part in training to develop their knowledge and skills. Children's play space is organised appropriately to give them access to a range of activities. Ratios are adhered to ensure suitable care, and staff are deployed to ensure maximum supervision. Children's health and welfare is underpinned by the effective maintenance of required documentation.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. An active management committee assists the supervisor. She leads a consistent staff team, who are supportive of one another. The management team have worked hard to increase the resources available to children and to support their care and education. The supervisor and deputy work together to plan the curriculum, although the inconsistent written assessments means that staff knowledge of children is not always taken into account. The supervisor receives guidance from the Local Authority as well as the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, two years ago, the pre-school were required to respond to five, care actions and four key issues relating to nursery education. The care actions have been addressed, but there has been limited improvement with regard to the nursery education.

Children now have access to a balanced range of activities to promote their learning, although presentation of these activities does not encourage children's interest. This means that children do not choose, and are not encouraged, to access all areas of the curriculum. Staff have now accessed relevant training so that children with learning difficulties are fully supported, and staff understand child protection procedures.

Children's welfare is assured and parent's wishes are now taken into account, as consent for emergency medical treatment has been obtained. Staff now maintain an accurate register and take account of confidentiality in all paperwork.

Staff have a basic understanding of the stepping stones. This means that the learning intentions are sometimes not fully explored and children are not sufficiently challenged. There are basic systems in place for planning and recording children's achievements, although this is still an area of weakness. Children have some opportunities to develop early reading and number skills although these are very limited, and this still remains an issue for the pre-school to address.

Systems are in place to monitor the effectiveness of curriculum planning and the impact this has on children's individual progress towards the early learning goals. However, although some suitable activities are provided, children are not encouraged to participate in them, which means that there are parts of the curriculum, which are not taught.

The setting now provides informal opportunities for parents to help extend children's learning in the home. Staff are available informally each day to talk with parents about their children, although there are no formal meetings during the year.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 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

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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):

- ensure that all children are encouraged to wash their hands before eating so that their health is protected
- ensure that systems are in place to restrict the number of children using the climbing frame at any one time

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):

- improve the system for planning to ensure that clear learning intentions are identified, understood and implemented by staff
- develop staff's understanding of the systems for recording children's ongoing achievements and progress, so that this information is used to plan the next steps in their individual learning
- provide opportunities for children to engage in emergent writing activities and to develop their number skills within their play, with particular regard to the role play area
- develop and implement systems to monitor and evaluate the provision to ensure that children access all areas of the curriculum to enable them to make sound progress towards the early learning goals.

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