



St.Teresa's Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY270968
Inspection date	17 November 2006
Inspector	Anne Daly
Setting Address	Parish Centre, 109 Ashingdon Road, Rochford, Essex, SS4 1RF
Telephone number	07980 388786
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Registered person	St.Teresa's 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 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?

St. Teresa's Pre-school is managed by a volunteer management committee of parents of children attending the pre-school. It opened in 1979 and now operates from one room of the St Teresa's Parish Centre adjacent to St Teresa's Catholic School in Rochford. A maximum of 12 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open 5 days a week during school term times from 09:10 to 12:00 and from 12:30 to 15:00 on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. All children share an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 22 children from two to five years on roll. Of these, 17 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school mainly serves children entering the Catholic School from the local community and surrounding areas. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities and has experience of supporting children who have English as a second language.

The pre-school employs four staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP), the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PSLA) and the Rochford Cluster Group.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted and they are very independent in their personal care. They understand the need to wash their hands before eating food and after using the toilet to prevent illness from germs. Children are protected from the spread of infection by the setting's written sickness policy being shared with parents, to ensure that they know when to keep their unwell children at home. Children with specific medical conditions are well cared for by staff undertaking relevant training to administer an epipen. Children's accidental injuries are well managed by staff holding current first aid qualifications. A first aid box is easily accessible and accident records are shared with parents to ensure that they are fully informed of treatment given. Children are able to enjoy playing in the sun because staff follow the setting's sun protection policy to avoid the sun's harmful rays affecting children. Staff are good role models to children by following the clothing policy of wearing sun hats.

Children are provided with varied, interesting and healthy snacks, which are attractively presented to promote their understanding of healthy eating. Snack times are social occasions when children and adults sit together around the table to enjoy their food and each other's company. Children are encouraged to develop a good understanding of healthy eating through fun activities, such as a computer programme requiring them to sort food which is good for them. Children can help themselves to their water bottles at any time to prevent them becoming dehydrated.

Children have good opportunities for exercise and physical play to contribute to their good health. They have daily opportunities to enjoy the fresh air in all weather conditions. They competently demonstrate their co-ordination and control over their bodies when kicking balls into a football net. They are beginning to develop an understanding of how their bodies work by discussing the changes and feeling their hearts beating faster after physical exercise. The outdoor facilities allow children many opportunities to practise and refine their skills in all areas of learning. They are able to practise their writing skills on an external blackboard or to weave lengths of materials through the trellising.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are very well cared for in premises that are safe, secure and suitable for purpose. The small room provides a welcoming environment with displays of children's work and posters at eye-level. Children can freely select from a wide range of toys and equipment to successfully promote their individual developmental needs.

There are good procedures to minimise the risks of accidental injury to children, with staff undertaking monthly written risk assessments to safeguard them from potential hazards. An additional fastening has been fitted to the gate to prevent children leaving the garden area unsupervised. Children's awareness of personal safety and accidents is well promoted through staff reminding them of appropriate boundaries through simple discussion and pictorial reminders of how to behave during certain activities.

Staff plan activities for children to learn about safety awareness. Special visitors, for example the school crossing patrol, maintain children's interest in learning how to keep themselves safe when crossing roads. They visit the Fire Station to learn about fire safety and know the pre-school evacuation procedure to be followed when staff ring the fire bell. Children's safety is well promoted on outings because staff ensure that parents have given prior written permission and that the adult:child ratio is increased to one adult to two children.

Children's safety is paramount as they are protected from unknown persons entering the room by an effective key pad security system. Staff carefully monitor any visitors and only allow children to leave with authorised adults agreed in writing by their parents.

Children are fully safeguarded by staff ensuring that all required child protection procedures are in place. They are aware of their child protection responsibilities and there is a named person responsible for ensuring that any concerns are dealt with promptly and sensitively. The named member of staff responsible for safeguarding children has attended a number of training courses to ensure that her practice is underpinned by good, up-to-date knowledge of possible signs and symptoms and that she follows correct procedures if has any concerns. Staff make note of any existing injuries and discusses these with parents to ensure children's safety is always a priority. The child protection statement is shared with parents before children attend the pre-school.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident and independent learners, who thoroughly enjoy their time at pre-school. All children arrive happy and eager to participate. They behave well and co-operate with one another to achieve a common goal, for example all eagerly tidying away toys. They benefit from a well planned setting organised into different areas of play and learning. Children are developing friendly relationships with their peers and staff. They can freely choose from the activities on offer and are curious and interested in all their tasks. They have many opportunities to use different senses, for example developing their sense of smell by choosing from a variety of creative materials including rosemary and lavender. Children are acquiring new knowledge and skills, for example all confidently pouring milk or water into their cups from a jug. They have many first hand experiences to develop curiosity as learners, for example jumping in puddles when playing in the rain. A minority of the children attending the pre-school are aged under three years. Staff observe what these younger children know, but do not use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan individual learning opportunities to support and encourage their development.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff team plans a good range of varied activities both indoors and outdoors to ensure that they deliver a curriculum focusing on the Foundation Stage in all six areas of learning. They have a good knowledge of how young children learn, allowing them to develop at their own pace by providing a good balance between adult and child-led activities. They complete base line assessments to ensure that they are aware of each child's starting point. They have a good rapport and warm relationships with children, resulting in them being eager to learn new concepts. Their sensitive intervention in children's play extends their learning, for example one child using cubes to follow a sequencing pattern. When completed, the child progressed to complete the pattern without visual aids following encouragement by staff. Staff pitch questions at the right level for individual children to encourage their thought, communication and progression to the next steps of learning. They make daily observations to assess all aspects of children's development and learning to inform their short-term planning for what individual children need to learn next.

Children use initiative and are able to be self-sufficient within their learning by choosing activities and freely accessing their own resources. Older children have a good awareness of their own needs and of those of others, such as showing a younger child how to play a computer game. They form good relationships with adults and other children. They are beginning to understand their part in their family and the setting by making a book about all the families of children attending the pre-school. Children are able to become increasingly independent when dealing with their physical needs, confidentially taking off shoes before putting on Wellingtons. Children understand the boundaries, know the need for simple rules and respond well to staff's expectations. They take some responsibility for implementation of rules by knowing that they have to take turns and to share.

Children are learning to communicate with confidence. They have many opportunities to share books, enjoying stories and non-fiction books. They choose to share their books with their dolls, with a child sitting on a small easy chair reading a story and showing pictures to her two dolls on her knee. Children thoroughly enjoy listening to and using spoken language. During imaginary role play, children writing their shopping lists while others asking visitors and their peers questions, such as 'what would you like to drink', before recording the reply. Children are becoming aware of communication systems such as Makaton, although they are not aware of Braille. Younger children are beginning to recognise their names, while more able children can confidentially link the sound to letters, naming and sounding letters linked to their names.

Children enjoy mathematical learning because staff ensure that it is purposeful and fun. They calculate during everyday activities, for example by singing a song about 'how many pre-school children have to wash their hands,' before subtracting as each child goes to wash their hands. More able children can recognise numerals. Children use size language, such as big and little, when manipulating play dough into baking cases. They are beginning to understand the concept of measuring when comparing sizes. Children building a long line of cubes on the floor before lying down to see whether they are longer than the line of cubes.

Children are learning about the world they live in through staff planning a varied range of practical experiences. Children have opportunities to observe, explore, question and to be curious during a broad range of activities, such as growing tomatoes and collecting leaves in which pretend hedgehogs to hibernate. There are good opportunities for children to learn

about technology as they can independently use the computer to confidently demonstrate their skills by following simple educational programmes.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities to help them to develop their confidence and skills when using large and small apparatus, tools and equipment. They explore different malleable materials by patting, pinching and squeezing while understanding the use of simple tools to create specific shapes.

Children are able to be creative by expressing their own ideas and thoughts through art, music, dance, role play and imaginative play. They confidently explore colours when painting pictures and explore textures and shapes when putting pasta shapes on sprigs of rosemary. They use their imaginations well and express and communicate their ideas and thoughts during role play, for example when using small pieces of bark as pretend ice-creams. However, this could be further enhanced by them having opportunities to work alongside artists and other creative adults.

Children are making good progress towards their learning. Staff use good systems to observe, assess and record children's achievements to inform their short planning for individual children's next steps of learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel a good sense of belonging as they enter the setting with confidence. They are developing good relationships with staff and other children. They understand the pre-school's routines by finding their names on a chair at the beginning of sessions.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are learning social skills, such as sharing, taking turns and remembering to say 'please' and 'thank you'. They learn about their own religion through attending Mass on Holy Days and by joining in with the Parish and School on special Feast Days. They are developing a good understanding of other cultural festivals, confidently describing how they celebrated Diwali and have tasted different Indian foods at snack time.

Children are looked after by caring staff. An effective system supports children who have learning difficulties or disabilities. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) liaises with parents, carers and other professionals to ensure that children's individual needs are effectively met. Staff consult with parents and carers about any special equipment that their children require to ensure that they are able to play alongside their peers.

Children's behaviour is commendable when playing happily together. They rapidly display a good understanding of what is considered to be acceptable behaviour and why restrictions are imposed on them. Good use is made of behaviour management strategies, such as pictures to help children to learn to take turns and to respect the needs of others.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents and carers receive clear information about the educational provision through a prospectus, newsletters, notice boards and daily

activity sheets. There is an effective two-way system for recording children's progress by staff completing 'look what I can do books,' before giving parents and carers opportunities to pass comments about what their children are learning at home. Parents and carers are fully informed of what their children are eating through daily snack time menus being displayed in the entrance foyer. Staff are freely available at any time to discuss concerns. Parents and carers attend open evenings and receive a yearly written report.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by a caring, long established, qualified staff team, who have all been vetted and cleared. Children benefit from the staff being motivated and interested in their professional development by attending regular training to keep up to date with current childcare issues and trends. Space and resources within the pre-school are extremely well organised. The required documentation is in place for the safe day-to-day management of the pre-school and to promote children's welfare and safety. Children are protected by the Committee ensuring that the setting's policies and procedures are regularly updated to ensure staff fully safeguard the welfare of all children.

Leadership and management is good. Staff work extremely well as a team and are all actively involved in the planning and delivery of the curriculum. All staff are aware of their responsibilities and sessions run particularly smoothly. Weekly staff meetings, staff appraisals and constant evaluation of activities ensure that the pre-school is effective in monitoring the provision of nursery education for all children.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the provider was asked to develop a policy setting out how staff induction training will be met in first week of employment and to review the medical and child protection policies and procedures to ensure meeting requirements of National Standards and associated guidance. The provider has reviewed the child protection statement, the medical policy and has prepared a staff induction programme to promote children's health and safety.

At the last nursery education inspection, the provider was asked to plan more frequent opportunities and to seize incidental opportunities for children to learn about shapes, space and measures. The provider has addressed these key nursery education issues by children now having frequent opportunities to learn about shapes, space and measures when undertaking both indoor and outdoors activities.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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.

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 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):

- improve the outcomes for children aged from 2 years by using an approach in line with 'Birth to three matters'.

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):

- develop opportunities for children to work alongside artists and other creative adults.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk