



## **Puffin Pre School Group**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	508848
<b>Inspection date</b>	06 October 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Barbara Ann Bush
<b>Setting Address</b>	Foakes House, 47 Stortford Road, Dunmow, Essex, CM6 1DG
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<b>Registered person</b>	Puffin Pre School Group
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Puffin Pre-School opened in 1982. It operates from four rooms in the committee premises of Foakes Hall. It is situated centrally in Great Dunmow near to local amenities. A maximum of 22 children may attend the setting at any one time. The group is open each weekday for morning and afternoon sessions, term time only. All children share access to an outdoor play area.

There are currently 56 children aged under five years on roll. Of these, 39 children receive funding for early years education. Children come from the local and wider catchment area. The group currently supports children with learning difficulties and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs nine members of staff. There are four members of staff, including the manager, who hold an appropriate early years qualification. Currently there are four members

of staff working towards a qualification. The group receives support from the area special needs coordinator (SENCO), the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PSLA), the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Service (EMAS) and the Local Authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health and hygiene routines are adequately promoted. Children are encouraged to wash their hands and be independent when using the toilets. Staff members have produced simple explanatory pictures about keeping clean, using toothpaste and brushes, keeping tidy and using soap. However, at snack times communal bowls of water are used for hand washing thus increasing the risk of cross-infection by using shared water. Policies and procedures are in place to deal with sick or injured children and staff are confident about treating children in the event of an emergency. Information is on file regarding children's medical history, allergies and any food preferences.

Children are well nourished and enjoy a healthy snack during the session. Children have opportunities to see the growing process of fruit and vegetables at the group's allotment. The crops are picked and brought back to be eaten and sometimes cooked. Children take part in topic work on nutrition and the benefits of making healthy choices. A water dispenser ensures that children drink regularly during the session, however children occasionally share mugs and drink each other's water.

Children's physical development is generally fostered. A room is dedicated for use of large pieces of equipment such as climbing frames and soft play shapes. The children enjoy lively sessions of music and movement using instruments and pretending to be wild animals. Funded children are able to visit the allotment and the nearby park from time to time. However, outside play does not form part of the daily routine. Much depends on the weather conditions and is treated as an outing. Children are encouraged to use tools with confidence and show the ability to manipulate small pieces of equipment.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are able to move freely around the premises, accessing activities in the three main play areas. Children's artwork and posters decorate the walls, making the rooms bright and welcoming. The main door is securely locked to prevent unauthorised access and ensures children do not leave without supervision.

Children access a range of good quality toys and equipment suitable for their developmental needs. Children benefit from using clean, well maintained resources. Staff identify damaged resources and these are repaired or removed.

Children are protected by the risk assessments made by the staff members; any potential hazards are removed and danger is therefore minimised. Children understand the fire evacuation drill

and practise procedure on a regular basis. Children are supervised closely both inside and outside of the premises. Written policies are in place for health and safety and staff are given training to ensure the children remain safe. Children are given information regarding using equipment, preventing accidents and road safety instruction.

Children benefit from the policies in place regarding the safeguarding of children. Staff members are secure in their knowledge of child protection procedures and their role in making a referral to the relevant agencies.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Play activities are planned by the staff but the children have input and there is lots of spontaneity during the sessions. Children make up their own games and use their imaginations particularly when using the home corner and small world figures. Imaginative use of sand and soil for use with dinosaur figures, produce great enjoyment and fun. Children 'find' bones and are able to put them together following a diagram.

The range of activities enables the children to explore and investigate. Resources are arranged on low shelves for easy access and children can choose to change what they are doing. The room is organised to ensure that as well as table top and floor toys, children can sit quietly, read and talk with their friends. Children are able to cooperate and share their toys and equipment. They have already made friends early in the term and look for each other to share toys and games. Staff members are aware of each of the children's needs and are alert when problems arise or there is a need to organise something different for an individual child.

Play flows between the play rooms. Enthusiasm from the staff members ensures that the children enjoy the games and concentration is sustained. Children are able to play for extended periods, for example creating shadows on a light box. The resulting effects produce laughter and conversation about shapes and size. Children are able to talk with confidence, approach the staff for their needs and feel safe and reassured during the session. Staff members give their praise and acknowledgement of children's achievements generously.

Staff members are using the 'Birth to three matters' framework extensively in their planning for the younger children. They are keeping development records and are pinpointing areas to extend children's play and learning experiences.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff members have competent knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. They plan activities based on the key workers observations of what children know and can do. Evaluations of the activities reflect the learning achieved by each child and records how the learning can be extended. Planning is clear to enable all staff members to understand how to differentiate when helping the children complete tasks. This enables them to provide appropriate levels of challenge for the more able children.

Children are able to access a range of books and they participate in group story time. They are able to discuss what is happening to the characters and are invited to predict what will happen next. Children are beginning to recognise their own names and name cards are used at each snack time to help children find their seats at the tables. Labels, signs and pictures around the rooms provides further opportunities for children to recognise letters and the printed word. However, regular opportunities for children to use writing for a purpose requires development, to enable them to write lists, messages, letters and captions on their own artwork. Children can say and use numbers in familiar contexts such as counting out cups or adding up how many children are present. They can also recognise written numerals and count reliably up to ten. Older children have some skill at addition and subtraction and use language to compare two numbers. Children are able to compare shape, size and quantity; using containers in the sand tray. Children are able to manipulate and use tools when creating artwork. They have control over their bodies and can move freely around the rooms. Children have opportunities to learn about different customs and cultures through topics, books and circle time discussions. Children can create models and paintings using their own imaginations and experiences from home life. They enjoy re-enacting scenes and making up stories and scenarios in the home corner; supplementing the action with dressing up clothes. Children enjoy exploring the 'senses', looking closely at sound for this week's topic. They confidently make their own musical instruments and discuss the sounds made by each other's efforts.

Children are enthusiastic learners, trying new activities, knowing that the staff members will praise and encourage their achievements. Children are confident and outgoing. Overall, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are becoming aware that they have similarities and differences and value each other's abilities. There are good resources on site reflecting equal opportunities, particularly books and dressing up clothes. Boys and girls have equal access to equipment and any discriminatory remarks are challenged. Children take part in festival activities, topic work and the group has links with outside organisations who bring together a range of people and information for workshops.

Children who need additional support are welcomed and included in all activities. Adaptations are made if required and close working links are established with the area special needs coordinator. Staff work in unison with parents and progress is monitored to achieve good results. Staff have a working knowledge of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Children behave well, respecting each other and instructions from the staff members. Staff members understand the behaviour management policy and this ensures that they deal with the children in a consistent manner for all ages. Words such as 'naughty' are avoided and praise is given freely to acknowledge kindness and courtesy. Rules are simple to avoid any confusion. Staff members behave well to give children good role models to follow.

Parents are made welcome and information is freely available to them. Staff spend time giving feedback to parents, listening to their views and making note of any concerns they may have. However, the new complaints procedure has not been explained to the parents.

Partnership with parents and carers of nursery funded children is good. Parents receive verbal and written reports regularly. Clear written information about the curriculum and the six areas of learning is provided for parents. Information regarding children's prior learning is sought from parents to enable staff to plan activities to capture the children's interest. Opportunities are created for staff and parents to meet to discuss the children's progress and how parents can become involved with their child's learning and development. Key workers are in place to liaise closely with the families.

Children are considerate and show concern for their friends. They are learning right from wrong and realise the consequences of their actions. They are able to leave their parents with confidence and have formed good relationships with the staff. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Staff members work well as a team. They are well qualified and are committed to training and sharing their knowledge and understanding of childcare with each other. The group has a robust recruitment policy ensuring that children are safeguarded. The management team is strong and has a vision of where development opportunities lie. The group's mission statement's aims are that 'children become confident, secure caring individuals who achieve personal success'.

Children have key workers who understand their individual needs. Staffing ratios are maintained to ensure children are well supervised and receive individual attention. New members of staff are given thorough induction training to ensure they understand the group's policies and how the children are treated.

Children and parents benefit from a range of policies and procedures implemented by the staff. Parents can access information about the group through information on the notice boards, talking with the staff and the home diaries kept on each child. Records are in order and kept confidential. The group's operational plan is being reviewed to come in line with the childcare outcomes.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. Regular staff meetings take place to discuss the curriculum and define individual roles and responsibilities. Strong links are fostered with outside agencies and the local schools. The managers regularly monitor and evaluate the quality of the nursery education they offer. They identify their own strengths and weaknesses and put together action plans with timescales to address the issues.

Overall, the children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, the provider was required to ensure that a child protection procedure and lost child policy were in place to ensure the safety and welfare of the children. Both policies are now in place and are understood by the staff members.

### **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.

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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 positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection
- inform parents of the group's complaints procedure.

#### **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 methods for children to regularly use writing for a purpose; making lists, instructions and captions for their artwork
- continue to develop opportunities for children to maximise the use of outside play to promote good health and physical well-being; (this also applies to the care standards).

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