



Pant Pandas Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY310362
Inspection date	05 July 2006
Inspector	Dianne Andrews
Setting Address	Bryn Offa C of E (Controlled) Primary School, Rockwell Lane, Pant, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 9QR
Telephone number	01691 830 621
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Registered person	Pant Pandas 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?

Pant Pandas Pre-school opened in 1985 and moved into school premises in 2005 where a breakfast club facility is also offered. It presently operates from one main classroom, in Bryn Offa Primary School, which is situated in the village of Pant, North Shropshire. Forthcoming changes include the opening of a purpose-built annexe for their use. There is an outdoor play area.

The setting supports children with special educational needs and children who speak

English as an additional language.

The setting employs three staff. All of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate child care qualifications. A maximum of 48 children may attend the setting at any one time and there are presently 29 children on roll. The setting is open each weekday from 08:00 to 15:15 during term time and a holiday club for children from the school or pre-school aged from two to 11 years is planned for commencement in summer 2006.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to learn the importance of good health and hygiene practices through the regular routines of the sessions. For example, they know to wash their hands after using the toilet to wash away the germs. Children's well-being is promoted because staff are appropriately informed about children's health care matters and all the required documentation and consents are in place to support this. Staff are generally aware of the correct procedures to follow to maintain children's health and prevent the spread of infection, however, the sleep facilities available to the youngest children do not offer protection from cross-infection.

The majority of children's dietary needs are met through the provision of a range of nutritious snacks such as fruit, cheese and crackers and raisins. However, where children do not eat the snack offered, an alternative, unhealthy option, such as a sweet biscuit, is provided, which does not positively encourage children to make healthy food choices. In contrast to this there are opportunities for children to take part in thematic activities, where they learn which food types help them to grow and are kind to their teeth. Lunches, provided by the school kitchen, offer a wholesome, balanced, diet which include fresh fruit and vegetables. Menus are provided to give parents information about meal choices. Children eagerly use the newly-installed chilled water dispenser, drinking plenty of water, especially during the hot weather, to keep themselves hydrated.

Children are offered a range of physical activities both indoors and outside that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They take part in regular active play, such as dance to music, which encourages them to develop the confidence to enjoy moving with control, using their bodies in various ways.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a colourful and welcoming environment, where they have sufficient space to play and learn. There is a wide range of toys and resources that are of good quality to support enjoyable activities. Resources are stored in low-level units around the room, however children do not routinely select from these areas and staff prepare and provide a range of play opportunities for them to choose from. This

enables children to settle to activities as soon as they arrive, but does not encourage them to explore and develop their play independently. Furniture in the activity room is appropriately sized to ensure children's comfort, however the tables in the dining area are too high for the pre-school children and do not meet their needs.

Children's safety is appropriately considered as staff make visual checks on the rooms used prior to the start of the session and potential hazards are suitably minimised. The high staff ratio ensures that children are well supervised, the room is secure and visitors to the setting are monitored. Children learn about what is dangerous and how to keep themselves safe. They learn about fire safety as they practise emergency evacuation procedures.

Children's welfare is promoted effectively. Staff have a sound understanding of the child protection issues and know the correct procedures to follow if they have a concern. They attend training to ensure that their knowledge and the group's policy is up to date.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children arrive at the setting with enthusiasm, most leave their carers confidently and settle eagerly to their chosen activities. They greet staff and each other with warmth and affection and enjoy sharing their news. Activities and resources are appropriately organised before children arrive so that they are purposefully occupied in a busy and cheerful environment. Children enjoy their time in the group and staff have fun with the children, giving them a sense of belonging and making them feel valued.

Younger children do not currently benefit from the 'Birth to three matters' framework and at times are not positively included in the activity, for instance during a lengthy story time and while older children practise letter and sound recognition. However, staff are aware of the importance of providing suitable activities that meet younger children's needs and are developing their understanding of the learning needs of this age range through training opportunities. Children have their care needs met because staff liaise with parents so that they know children well, however, there is no key worker system in place to ensure consistency. A healthy adult to child ratio enables children to benefit from one to one support if required and develop secure relationships in their own time.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff show a generally good understanding of the Foundation Stage and support children well in their activities. They enjoy good relationships with the children and actively engage with them, sitting with them and encouraging them to take an active part. Sessions are lively, interesting and appropriately paced so children are usefully engaged in purposeful activities. However, there are limited opportunities for them to make choices and develop their own learning. Children behave well and play harmoniously together; staff encourage children to share and help them understand if their behaviour is unacceptable. On occasions staff do not adapt the routine to effectively meet

children's physical needs, for instance the timetable is not changed to allow outdoor play earlier in the day during hot weather.

The planning system is being developed. The present system does not use the stepping stones to identify outcomes, and written assessments are not undertaken in order to provide an accurate picture of children's attainments. Although staff know children well, the lack of observation and assessment records means that planning is not effective in taking account of children's next steps in their learning and plans do not show how activities will take account of children's varying stages of development.

Children are happy and enjoy coming to the setting and have a positive attitude to learning. They are confident and play well on their own or with others. Most children are very confident communicators, initiating conversations with their peers and adults and they enjoy using language during imaginary play, for example, while interacting during role play situations. Children enjoy listening and responding to stories in a large group and take part in activities to name and sound letters of the alphabet. Children proudly practise their emergent writing skills at the writing table but the role play area does not always support children in writing for a purpose and there is little text modelled within the environment.

Children recognise and identify shapes during their play, for example as they build structures with solid shape blocks. They use mathematical language such as bigger and smaller and sort by size. They respond to challenges to extend and consolidate their learning; when thinking of more examples of a triangles, a child refers to the shape of Christmas trees. Some children can count confidently to 10 and beyond and demonstrate an understanding of problem solving, for example, at snack time working out how many cups are needed for snack time. However, they have few opportunities to access numerals in the environment to enable them to refer to them while counting.

Children gain knowledge of the world around them and of time and place through a variety of activities. They freely talk about their families and their lives and important events to them, such as a forthcoming birthday, so making them feel valued. They learn about everyday technology as they use simple interactive toys and access a computer with educational programmes to support their learning. They explore, predict and investigate when looking at the life cycle of frogs.

Children's large scale movement skills develop and improve through a variety of experiences, including activity routines devised by 'Sticky Kids'. They eagerly stretch, crouch, march and tip-toe as they listen intently and follow the instructions. They become aware of the effects of exercise on their body as they get a drink when they become too hot. They move confidently around the space available and access a wide range of activities to develop their fine control skills including construction sets and threading.

Children develop their own imaginative play, using a large cardboard box as a boat they create roles and build a story line together. They use a range of mediums, provided by staff, when creating pictures and models, but materials are not readily available to allow them to make choices themselves and to develop their creativity in this area using their own imagination and some planned activities are not sufficiently

challenging for the more able children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are content and happy in the setting. Staff have a consistent approach to managing children's behaviour. As a result children behave well and understand what is expected of them, so they know they have to take turns with the toys and resources. Good behaviour is encouraged as the staff give praise and encouragement to the children for their efforts. At snack time good manners are encouraged and kindness and respect is promoted so children relate well to each other and learn to have consideration for others. Older children encourage and help younger children and praise them for their efforts. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children are valued, listened to and respected as individuals. They have some independence within the session, but have limited opportunities to make choices about what they want to do. Their awareness of diversity and understanding of others is appropriately promoted as the pre-school have a suitable range of resources and offer some themed activities to positively reflect diversity. There are appropriate procedures in place to support children with disabilities or learning difficulties, with staff maintaining positive relationships with outside agencies and working closely with parents.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. There is an informal, relaxed and supportive feel to the setting and staff discuss care issues with parents on a regular basis and obtain information from them to ensure consistency. Various information is available for parents through notice boards, letters that go home and a home/pre-school link book, so that parents can be involved in their child's learning. However, at present parents are not offered formal opportunities to review and discuss their children's progress with staff.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. Staff meet together regularly to learn from one another and agree on future training needs. They are supported by the Local Authority development workers who help them to develop their practice. The parent committee are supportive of staff and provide them with both time and funding to update and improve their skills. The system to evaluate the quality of care or the nursery education is in its infancy and has started to provide opportunities for staff to identify and address weaknesses in the provision. There is presently no induction procedure in place to ensure new staff become familiar with all aspects of the pre-school or breakfast club.

The space available has been appropriately organised to enable children to play comfortably. Effective staff deployment contributes effectively to the children's good

health, safety, enjoyment and achievement, although children do not presently benefit from key worker grouping. Most documentation is in place to support safe management of the pre-school and breakfast club. However, the daily register does not record the times of children's attendance within each day. Paperwork is stored securely, ensuring that children's information remains confidential. Policies and procedures are in place and are reviewed on an ongoing basis to make sure that they continue to work in practice. Overall children's needs are met

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 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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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 sleep facilities are effective in protecting children from cross-infection
- ensure that all furniture is suited to children's needs
- improve outcomes for children under three by using an approach in line with 'Birth to three matters'
- develop an induction procedure for new staff
- provide opportunities for children to belong to a key group which has consistent staff

- ensure that the system for registering children shows hours of attendance.

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):

- provide more opportunities for children to select resources and make choices about what they want to do
- develop the planning system to ensure that learning intentions are clear and take account of children who are more able or need additional support and ensure that child observations and assessments are used effectively to plan for the next steps in children's learning
- provide opportunities for children to write for a purpose within their play and to access text and numerals within the environment to use as a learning tool
- provide opportunities for parents to review and discuss their children's progress with staff.

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