



St Annes Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	203473
Inspection date	16 November 2006
Inspector	Lisa Paisley
Setting Address	St. Annes Road, Canvey Island, Essex, SS8 7LS
Telephone number	01268 680143
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Registered person	Angela Jocelyn Fordham
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?

St. Anne's Pre-School is privately owned. It opened in 1976 and operates from one room within the premises of a local church, Canvey Island, Essex. A maximum of 25 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday from 09.15 to 12.00 and Monday and Thursday from 12.15 to 14.50 term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 31 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 16 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area.

The pre-school employs eight staff. Three of the staff, including both managers hold an appropriate early years qualification. One staff member is currently attending training.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for in an environment where suitable hygiene practices are maintained. Children learn about hygiene routines through washing their hands appropriately, for example, after using the toilet and before snack time. Children have access to tablet soap, hot and cold water and paper hand towels. Some of the staff are first aid trained, ensuring children receive suitable care and attendance in the event of an accident or administering medication such as an inhaler.

Children's awareness of the benefits of healthy eating is suitably promoted at snack time. They learn why some foods are better for our bodies than others through planned topics and general discussions. Staff maintain appropriate written records for each child to ensure their individual health and dietary requirements are met.

All children enjoy regular opportunities to engage in physical activities and have access to a range of outdoor play equipment to support their whole body movements. For example, children confidently use the climbing frame and slide. Children also use a range of tools and equipment to promote their fine hands skills, such as threading activities and puzzles. As a result, children are making secure progress in all aspects of physical development and their skills are challenged appropriately.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from using a range of toys and play equipment which are maintained to a good standard. Children enthusiastically select their own play resources which are appropriate to their ages and stages of development. Resources and play equipment are organised at child height, allowing children to self-select promoting their independence and choice. Children learn about keeping themselves safe through gentle reminders from staff, such as no running and practising regular fire drills to ensure they know how to evacuate the building quickly and safely in the event of an emergency.

The pre-school has suitable measures in place to ensure that risks to children's safety, both indoors and outdoors, are minimised. For example, the radiators and low-level sockets are safe and the kitchen is inaccessible to children. However, staff have hot drinks sitting with the children at snack time and the over congested play area could lead to further accidents. Clear arrival and departure procedures allow for the safe arrival and collection of the children to and from the pre-school. The group has clear written safety procedures in place which are consistently applied by staff, such as the lost child policy.

Children are suitably protected by staff who have an awareness of child protection. A written policy is in place, however, the policy has not been updated to include a written statement regarding an allegation being made against a staff member. Consequently staff are unclear as to what the procedure is if an allegation is made against them.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at the setting and are happy and settled due to staff relating to them sensitively and providing a range of activities which are interesting and stimulating. Staff have developed warm and effective relationships with the children, enabling them to feel secure and develop a strong sense of their own self-worth. They participate in a range of creative activities, such as sand and bathing the dolls. A range of themed resources including the home corner allow children to develop their role play. Children use the outdoor area confidently when developing their physical, investigative and exploratory skills.

The pre-school has obtained the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the staff are beginning to implement the approach into their practice, however, further consolidation is required to improve the quality of care and play experiences for young children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff use the Foundation Stage guidance soundly to plan a balanced range of activities to promote the six areas of learning. Planning has just been updated to ensure that they are covering all the required elements of the curriculum, this includes differentiation, evaluations and next steps for children. A key worker system has recently been implemented to ensure children's developmental progress is being sufficiently tracked. Individual profiles incorporating the stepping stones are used to record children's developmental progress. Children self register into the pre-school and the structure of the session allows for children's choice, registration time and group work at the end of the session.

Children are keen to participate in the range of activities provided and are encouraged to independently select resources and initiate their own activities and games. Children show a secure sense of belonging as they greet staff and each other upon arrival. They work well together and understand the importance of co-operation during group activities. For example, children negotiate with each other and agree turn taking when engaging in role play such as the farm. Children are becoming confident speakers, using words effectively and a range of vocabulary to convey their experiences both real and imaginary. They listen to each other and join in during group story times. The book corner is bright and inviting for children and they enjoy sharing books such as 'Hungry Harry' and 'Peace at Last'. Consequently, children's early appreciation of books and stories is fostered. Children use a range of tools to make marks, however there are limited opportunities for children to write their own name independently and mark making is not linked into role play. Older and more able children count up to ten confidently. Counting and number recognition is suitably promoted through activities such as singing number rhymes. However, there are missed opportunities to use mathematical language through daily routines, for example, at snack time. Cooking and dry sand activities help children's understanding of weight, measurement and capacity.

Children have adequate opportunities to find out about the world around them as they go on regular trips out into the community and people are invited into the pre-school to talk about their work, for example, the local baker and librarian. They are developing a sound awareness

of the uses of information technology in everyday life and are able to operate equipment such as battery operated toys and domestic items. Their physical skills are promoted through a variety of mediums such as the climbing frame, tricycles, balls, hoops and bean bags. Children's manipulative skills are sufficiently promoted through the suitable range of activities such as threading, puzzles and building with small bricks. Children's free expression is suitably promoted through a range of activities such as sand, painting and role play, however, creative activities can be repetitive and at times directive, restricting children's imagination. Children enjoy music and movement where they have the opportunity to practise moving their bodies rhythmically, stamping their feet and nodding their heads.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are warmly welcomed into the pre-school which helps them to feel happy and secure. Children benefit from having access to a range of play resources which promote positive images of diversity such as books, puzzles, dolls and dressing up clothes. Children also participate in activities which promote their awareness of different festivals and cultures, for example, Chinese New Year, Easter, Halloween and Christmas. Children's individual needs are discussed with parents in detail. Any additional requirements or information are discussed and the individual needs of children are recognised and met sensitively.

Children settle well at the pre-school as staff work with parents to ensure children's individual needs are met. Children are well behaved and benefit from having consistent boundaries set by staff. Children are appropriately supported by staff that regularly use praise and encouragement to promote children's self-esteem. They learn to share play equipment and take turns and increasingly take responsibility for their own actions. Their understanding of right and wrong is promoted sensitively by staff through gentle reminders to care for their environment, the equipment and each other. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Staff inform parents and carers about the day to day running of the pre-school. There is a flexible settling-in procedure and staff find out about children's individual needs and their developmental progress before starting. Parents receive information about the pre-school's policies and procedures and there are regular newsletters keeping parents up to date about topic work and any changes in the pre-school. Parents receive both verbal and written feedback with regard to the day to day care provided by the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care is supported by the adequate organisation at the pre-school as staff make sufficient use of available play space both indoors and out. However, the organisation of snack and group time restricts children's free flow play resulting in missed learning opportunities. Documentation and records are in place and are suitably organised.

The leadership and management of the pre-school is satisfactory. The manager, deputy and staff work closely together to ensure the day to day running of the pre-school runs smoothly. Staff are suitably aware of their roles and responsibilities and they are deployed effectively within the setting. Staffing ratios are maintained throughout the session ensuring children are well supervised and supported during activities. Staff have a sound awareness of the policies and procedures which are in place and staff training needs are adequately supported.

Overall the setting meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to: devise an action plan detailing how and in what timescale the required staffing qualifications will be met; ensure at least one member of staff with a current first aid certificate is on the premises at any one time; ensure that the child protection procedure for the pre-school complies with local Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) procedures and includes procedures to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer; ensure a statement of procedure to be followed if a parent fails to collect a child or a child is lost, is in place. An action plan is in place and staff are currently attending training to update their qualifications; the pre-school now has three staff members who hold current first aid certificates; a policy is in place if a parent fails to collect a child or a child is lost. However, the child protection policy has not been updated, to include a statement in the event of an allegation being made against a staff member. Overall, there have been improvements with regard to staff qualifications and most of policies have been amended accordingly resulting in improved procedures.

At the last education inspection the provider was asked to: develop the curriculum planning to ensure that all aspects of the six areas of learning are covered regularly and to show how less able children will be supported and more able children challenged; review the recording system for children's progress to ensure that they are more clearly linked to the stepping stones of learning. Clear links will enable all staff to see quickly what the child already knows so that future curriculum planning builds on this and helps the children take the next steps in their learning. The group has worked hard and updated all their curriculum planning to ensure they are covering the six areas of learning and children's developmental records have been updated to show clear links between the stepping stones and next steps for children. Consequently the quality of children's learning has improved.

Complaints since the last inspection

There has been one complaint made to Ofsted since the last inspection. On 10 September 2004 concerns were raised in relation to National Standards 1,2,6,7 and 12. Ofsted carried out an unannounced visit to the pre-school to discuss the concerns. Ofsted is satisfied that the registered person has addressed the concerns appropriately. The provider has been given one action to ensure that written records of all incidents are signed by parents to acknowledge the entry and confidentiality is maintained. 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):

- minimise potential risks to children, this relates to the organisation of resources and hot drinks in the hall
- improve the outcomes for children from birth to three by using an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- review the organisation of snack time and the grouping of children to improve play and learning outcomes for children
- update child protection policy to include a statement with regard to an allegation being made against a staff member.

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):

- create opportunities for more purposeful mark making through daily routines and role play
- use mathematical language in every day discussions and routines such as snack time
- review the range of creative activities and how they are offered to children to extend their imaginations and free expression.

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