



Tavistock Community Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	154081
Inspection date	18 September 2006
Inspector	Karyn Yarnold
Setting Address	The Alexander Centre, 62 Plymouth Road, Tavistock, Devon, PL19 8BU
Telephone number	01822 613701
E-mail	
Registered person	Tavistock Community Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional care, Out of School 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 outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Tavistock Community Pre-school was established in 1998. It operates from a building within the grounds of the Alexander Centre in Tavistock, Devon. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open during school term times, from 09:15 to 11:45, Monday to Friday, and 12:45 to 14:45 on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. On a Friday afternoon the setting is open from 12:45 to 15:15. There is no afternoon session on a Monday. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 18 children aged from two to under five on roll. Of these, 11 children receive funding for early education. The pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties.

The pre-school employs six members of staff, all who hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are two volunteers who support this staff group. The setting are members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and receive support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which contribute to their good health. Each day there are outdoor activities to help them develop control of their bodies. For example, they slide down a slide, climb through plastic barrels and play in pop up tents. Children are cared for appropriately in the case of accidents, for example, all staff and volunteers hold up-to-date first aid certificates and accidents are recorded sufficiently. There is a fully stocked first aid kit, which is regularly checked and stocked. This is also taken when children are taken on outings, such as visiting the local library.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean environment where they can rest and play according to their needs. Their clear understanding, reinforced by staff, of why they must wash their hands after using the toilet or before handling food helps prevent the risk of cross contamination. The risk of spreading infection is reduced because staff wipe tables with suitable cleaning products prior to, and after, children eat. Children are independent in self-care skills when, for example, going to the toilet.

Children enjoy healthy snacks of fresh fruit and savoury snacks, such as crackers, which the children are encouraged to spread butter on independently. Snack times are social occasions where they sit together in small groups and talk. This promotes their social and language skills. Drinks which are routinely provided with snacks, include, water and milk, however, drinks are not available for children to help themselves, although they have a good understanding of their own needs and can ask for a drink when required.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in very well organised premises. The room is well laid out allowing children to move around safely between activities. Colourful displays, around the room, and an informative parent's notice board, helps to make the setting inviting. Individual child level coat pegs, and free access to stored toys, allow children to feel part of the group. Children benefit from the safe, secure environment the pre-school offers. They are protected from unknown visitors by the use of a visitor's book and scrutiny of visitor's identification by staff. Children can play safely in a fully enclosed outdoor play area, which is secure and where staff supervise children at all times. The physical environment and resources are kept safe for children by staff undertaking regular risk assessments and implementing appropriate actions, to address any identified potential hazards. For example, an extensive risk assessment was undertaken when the outdoor play area was being constructed. This action reduced the risk of harm or injury to children and their families. Children have access to a good selection of toys and resources that are regularly cleaned. These are stored within easy reach of children. This enables older children

to self-select. Suitable child sized tables and chairs, together with comfortable, inviting, soft furniture in the book corner provide children with a relaxing environment.

Suitable fire fighting equipment is in place and regular emergency evacuation drills, which are recorded, ensures that children and staff are familiar with this practice should a real emergency occur.

Children's welfare and safety is suitably supported with regard to child protection. Staff have a general understanding of child protection issues. They know how to access additional information and support, and keep local contact details for additional support if required. Staff and volunteers attend training to up-date their knowledge and understanding. The settings' child protection policy is clear and comprehensive and includes procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are offered an excellent and well planned range of activities and experiences during their time at the pre-school. This includes a very good balance of child led and adult directed play opportunities where children learn through first hand experiences. Children are able to join in with planned activities or to self-select from the good range of equipment readily available to them. This develops their independence and personal responsibilities. They use their imagination through role-play and creative activities. For example, children pretend to iron, change babies nappies using dolls, cook, and sweep; and enjoy using bandages in the role-play area to aid pretend wounded children. Children also absorb themselves in small world play when playing with cars and garages.

All children, whatever their ability, are individually valued by all members of the staff and their artwork is displayed beautifully, and changed regularly, around the setting. This raises children's self-esteem, sense of accomplishment and self-confidence. Children are extremely happy, settled and enjoy warm interactions with very caring staff members. Children are polite, very considerate to each other and demonstrate good behaviour. For example, children present snacks to other children within the group and offer them choice. They are patient and await a please and thank you from their peers. They do this with encouragement and support from staff.

The planning of activities is extensive, detailed and absorbs all areas of learning. Plans take into account children's interests and are flexible enough to develop children's individual interests, while being balanced sufficiently to meet all children's needs. This approach ensures that children's interests are fostered and allows them to build on their natural curiosity as learners.

Younger children benefit from very good planning and assessment, as staff use the Birth to three matters framework effectively. Parents receive sufficient information on younger children's development, which enables them to understand how their children are progressing. Younger children are encouraged to make and send out their own individual invitations to invite parents to the pre-school, to meet their key worker and discuss their progress.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are offered a superb range of play opportunities, which is helping them to make good progress along stepping stones towards early learning goals. Staff have an excellent understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and know what children are expected to gain from activities. Children respond enthusiastically to the abundance of verbal and visual information that stimulates all their senses and imagination.

Children are made to feel part of the group. They take responsibility as they join in routine tasks, such as tidying up and clearing away prior to snack and story time. They are developing their concentration and ability to sit quietly, when, for example, they listen to other children and staff during circle time. They talk confidently about what their families have been involved in and local events, such as watching hot air balloons. They listen intently when being told stories. For example, children listen in awe when being told a story during a visit to the local library. Children's interest, during these times, is sustained due to the skill of the adults. Staff value what children say and are willing to listen to children and extend their learning by engaging them in conversation and using questioning skills to make children think. Children are increasing their self-confidence by being able to use the toilet independently.

Children have opportunities to develop their writing skills by attempting to form letters in their names when completing work sheets and colourings. They learn that print has meaning when selecting books and most children hold books correctly. Children have access to a good range of books which are varied and easily accessible to children. They have opportunities to develop their speech when contributing at circle time, when they talk about their families. They relish in selecting a nursery rhyme card from a bag and enthusiastically sing their chosen one with all the other children and staff. They are confident in talking in small groups. For example, children engage in conversation with other children and staff when pretending to sweep, change a dolls nappy and iron. Staff encourage children to learn letter sounds by sounding different letters of the week at registration time. Visual pictures to support the letter allow children to make links with the written letter and sound.

Children enjoy participating in the planned physical development activities, moving imaginatively in a wide range of ways, learning to control their bodies well. For example, they are able to play with hoops, bats and balls, crawl through plastic tunnels, climb up a climbing frame and slide down a slide. These physical activities help develop children's larger muscles. They also enjoy running and developing their own free play. Children's fine motor skills are developed as the children are offered play dough and clay to roll out with rolling pins and making shapes using cutters. Activities, such as sticking and gluing help to develop their eye to hand co-ordination.

Children are making good progress in the area of knowledge and understanding of the world. They learn about the natural world by planting tubs with seeds to see how plants grow. They examine different media, such as seaweed during water play, and make collages out of shells. They use magnifying glasses to examine mini beasts. Children learn about the wider community when visiting the local veterinary practice to discover how animals are cared for. Trips to the post office introduce children to the posting process as they send their family postcards. Visitors

to the group, such as the emergency services, library service and speech therapist extend children's understanding of people that help us. Children have many opportunities to learn about other cultures, as staff plan extensively to ensure children are introduced to various festivals and celebrations from different cultures. Pictures around the room and small world play toys give children visual images of difference including disability.

Children are encouraged to progress their counting skills by being asked to count the number of children at registration. They are beginning to recognise number by playing number games and by viewing large number displays around the room. They count to ten with confidence and staff encourage them to count backwards. Other mathematical activities include making daisy chains and counting them. They learn about weight when being involved in cooking activities and counting sand castles. Practical situations are used to help children understand number, size and use mathematical language correctly. For example, children are asked by staff how high a Lego tower is against the height of them. Staff ask children to count how many cars can fit in the garage. Children have excellent opportunities to use technical equipment, such as a computer. They are able to access child centred learning programs to teach them number, shape recognition, letter and word formation. Children learn about pattern when looking at information books such as 'The Aztecs'.

Children become involved in a vast range of creative activities. They delight in working in small groups to paint animals for their 'Mill'. Free painting includes bubble, string and sponge painting. They have many opportunities to become involved in role-play and adult support ensures that their play is extended. For example, staff pretend to eat plastic food and ask children to make more, including cups of tea. Children learn about natural materials when gardening using peat, seeds and sand.

A clear assessment system employed by the staff ensures that a detailed record of each child's development is made. Staff use this information to plan the next activities. An extremely high standard of curriculum planning, clearly indicate learning intentions for all children's abilities. This careful and methodical planning enables children with different stages of learning to be accommodated for and challenged. During the sessions, children are very busy and well motivated. This ensures children do not become bored or uninterested in any activity, yet maintaining their concentration. This has a very positive impact on children's behaviour. All children are extremely confident within the setting, showing a positive attitude and a willingness to learn through the activities provided.

Scrap books and observation sheets are used effectively to record children's development and progress through the stepping stones and this information is shared with parents through key worker meetings and open days. Narrative observations are made and kept in individual children's folders, together with other forms of observations. The setting also complete peer observations on staff. These steps ensure that children's further development and interests is planned for and enables the setting to reflect on its own practice.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All the children are valued in the setting and children are helped to play a full part in the group, whatever their individual needs. They settle well forming very good relationships with other children and with very caring staff. Very good relationships are formed with parents, and experienced staff ensure that all children are well cared for. Children are confident, caring and self-assured, with a clear understanding of the routines and boundaries of the setting. Staff have a calm approach to all situations. This reflects on children's behaviour which is exemplary. Staff use lots of praise and encouragement to promote positive behaviour. Children are encouraged to take turns, reminded not to run, and thrive on receiving reward stickers and ink stamps for bringing in items from home to follow the theme of the week. This promotes positive behaviour and raises children's self-esteem.

Very positive feedback is provided by parents who report they are very happy with the setting and kept informed of their child's progress. Staff discuss any issues of concern with them and parents are always willing to provide any practical support they can. This promotes a good environment for staff and children. Good information is gained from parents about their children which enables appropriate care to be given. A complaints log is maintained.

Children have access to a range of books, resources and activities that promote their understanding of diversity. They have opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them, for example, they celebrate Chinese New Year and other festivals. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children with additional needs are very well cared for. The settings Special Education Needs Co-ordinator is very knowledgeable, enthusiastic and has a good understanding of the recording process and how to work with individual educational plans. The setting works very well with outside agencies and staff and children are supportive of each other. This promotes all children's self-esteem and ensures the welfare of all children is recognised.

Detailed information is gained from and given to parents ensuring the appropriate care is provided for children. A comprehensive prospectus detailing relevant policies, procedures, opening and closing times is available to parents. Parents receive daily, verbal information about their child's care and play which contributes to children's well-being. This ensures children are settled and their care needs are well promoted.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff work very closely with parents. Regular newsletters, and a parents' information board, provide parents with up-to-date information on events within the pre-school. Parents' open days allow parents to gain an insight into their children's progress within all areas of the pre-school. Staff work very closely with parents, initially when children first join the setting and throughout their time at the setting. This benefits the children's well-being and learning. A relaxed relationship is established, which facilitates good open communication between parents.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The setting creates an exceptionally well organised and welcoming environment for children. Staff and volunteers are very well motivated, experienced, caring and keen to extend their knowledge and understanding of childcare. For example, staff and volunteers regularly attend relevant childcare training including the Birth to three matters framework. This enhances children's welfare and encourages their natural curiosity to learn new skills. Children engage enthusiastically in different play opportunities by the thoughtful arrangements of the layout of the room. For example, children are able to enjoy different play experiences when sweeping up and changing dolls nappies in the home and book corner, or while painting and completing craft work in a separate section of the room. Very good organisation of toys, resources and space, enables children to self-select and move around freely. Children's work is beautifully displayed around the room and this is changed regularly.

Staff and volunteers work very closely with each other and are deployed effectively for the benefit of the children. Excellent organisation of sessions and supportive adult input, ensures that children are made to feel secure and promotes their confidence. The management committee are very supportive to the staff and a robust system for recruiting and maintaining staff has been established.

Documentation is very well organised, stored safely and securely. This promotes confidentiality and meets the National Standards. All consent forms are in place. The system to record children's and staffs attendance does not identify times of arrival and departure. However, most children arrive and depart at the same time and any deviance is noted on the register.

The leadership and management of the setting is outstanding. The setting has very high expectations of providing excellent nursery education for children. Children's time at the setting is significantly enhanced by the dedication of staff and volunteers. An effective team, involving staff, volunteers and the management committee, use systems to regularly review and evaluate activities and processes. For example, staff evaluate each session, and use information gained to inform future planning. Observations include peer observations to highlight any areas for development for adults within the setting. The group is well aware of its own strengths and weaknesses and regularly self-evaluate. They do this via discussion at staff meetings, asking parents for their views, as well as considering children's input. This information is used to make further improvements and amend any concerns in the care and education of children. The pre-school meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting were asked to expand resources and equipment and replace worn and dated materials; conduct regular risk assessments on the premises to identify actions to be taken to minimise identified risks; ensure fire exits are marked; to develop the behaviour management policy to include a statement on bullying; to ensure that the complaints procedure includes contact details for Ofsted; ensure that Ofsted are notified of any significant events; further develop the operational plan and make it available to parents; devise an effective

monitoring system for staff training and induction and to ensure that records are always available for inspection by the early years child care inspector.

Resources are now regularly reviewed, maintained and cleaned to a good standard. Regular risk assessments around the setting contribute to children's well-being and identify and address potential risks to children. The fire exit is now appropriately marked. This supports the safety of the children that attend. Equipment that is worn and dated is steadily being replaced as funds allow. The behaviour management policy is clear and the complaints procedure is relevant and meets National Standards. Staff receive a full induction process that includes health and safety and child protection considerations and clear training logs record staff development. The operational plan has been further developed and is available along with policies of the setting during each session. The setting is fully aware of when to notify Ofsted of any significant event and has up-dated contact details for Ofsted following a change of offices. All these measures help towards the welfare of children in the settings care.

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 outstanding.

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 the daily registration system for children and staff, shows actual hours of attendance
- ensure children have access to fresh drinking water at all times

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk