



Caterpillars Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	110465
Inspection date	09 November 2006
Inspector	Alison Large
Setting Address	Calmore Infant School, Calmore Drive, Totton, Southampton, Hampshire, SO40 2ZZ
Telephone number	07905050777
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Registered person	Caterpillars Preschool
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 outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Caterpillars Preschool is a community preschool managed by a voluntary committee. It opened in 1999 and has sole use of rooms at Calmore Infants School, in the Calmore area of Totton.

A maximum of 36 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:00 to 11:30 and 12:15 to 14:45 during school term times. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area and are able to use the school field and playground for additional outside play.

There are currently 56 children from 2 years 6 months to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 38 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area and are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school currently supports a number of

children with learning difficulties or disabilities and is also able to support children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs eight members of staff. Of these four hold appropriate early years qualifications and five are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children begin to understand the importance of good personal hygiene, as they learn to wash their hands at appropriate times, for example, after using the toilet and before eating and are able to talk about getting rid of the germs when washing. Children benefit from the good hygiene procedures in the pre-school, which are implemented effectively by all staff. This helps keep the children healthy and protected from the spread of infection. Accident and medication records are in place and most are maintained well, however, some entries in the accident records do not include sufficient detail, which means records are not clear. Most of the staff team have current first aid certificates, which ensures the children will receive appropriate treatment in an emergency.

Children are learning about the importance of healthy eating through daily routines and the groups healthy eating policy. The pre-school provides a variety of healthy choices for the children at snack time, including fresh fruit and vegetables. Children independently access milk or water at snack time and staff support younger children in developing their independence.

Children have good opportunities to engage in daily physical activities. They benefit from an exciting range of challenging activities and show high levels of confidence as they climb on playground apparatus and balance on beams. They are able to access a good range of outdoor play including wheeled toys and can practice moving their bodies in a variety of ways.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a bright, self-contained environment. Children learn to keep themselves safe in the welcoming environment, the provision is well laid out with child height furniture and resources stored accessibly to allow children to move around safely. There are appropriate facilities in place to meet the needs of all children, such as a nappy changing area and a comfortable book corner where children are able to relax. The developmental needs of the children are met by the variety of equipment that is made available to them. Staff rotate equipment to provide the children with a good balance of learning opportunities.

Children benefit from a safe and secure environment, the main door is kept locked and visitors ring the bell to gain entry and sign the visitors book to ensure staff know who is in the building. Staff are vigilant about children's safety, they talk to the children about safe practice, for example, they know they must not run in the pre-school. Fire drills are practiced when the school alarm is sounded, however, staff have not thought about how to evacuate the children

in an emergency unconnected to the school, which means they do not have a clear understanding of what to do in all emergency evacuation situations.

Children are well protected because staff have a good knowledge of child protection issues and recognise their roles and responsibilities. Detailed policies and procedures are in place and shared with parents to ensure they are aware of the settings responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from the excellent organisational skills of the staff team, they arrive before the children, to set up the morning's activities. Children delight in their time at the pre-school and are able to freely access resources which have been set up for them around the rooms. They show high levels of independence, which is actively encouraged by staff. Children thrive in the stimulating and exciting environment, they are extremely eager to try new things and participate in the extensive range of activities on offer. Children are happy and settle quickly on arrival, talking openly about their own experiences. Staff know the children well and are able to ask open ended questions, encouraging the children to share their ideas and thoughts with confidence. The younger children build excellent relationships with their key workers and peers, and flourish in the range of activities and experiences offered to them.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children relish their time at the pre-school and make rapid strides in their development because the staff have an excellent understanding of how children learn most effectively. Staff have an extensive knowledge of the Foundation Stage and the early learning goals and show an awareness and familiarity with each area of learning, helping ensure children make very good progress across the board. The staff team work exceptionally well together, and take turns to plan the well balanced curriculum, sharing information about each child and incorporating their needs into the short term plans. This ensures every child is able to reach their full potential through purposeful activities and strong support from all staff.

Staff find new and innovative ways to ensure the children are focussed, interested and motivated, for example, the theme for the week is 'occupations' . Children were able to make masks, prepare a letterbox for the post they were making and take part in other fun activities connected to various jobs. The children enjoyed choosing what they were going to make and were engrossed, discussing what they liked to do. Staff get to know each child and their level of understanding extremely well. Children flourish because they feel valued and are able to reach the achievable targets, building their self-esteem and creating confident learners.

Children are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals in all areas. Children's social skills are developing extremely well, they are keen and eager to join in all the activities, asking questions and showing curiosity. Children's vocabulary is developing well, they understand that text has meaning as they handle books and make good use of the book area and are able to borrow a book each day to share at home. Children count confidently up to and above 10 throughout the day, they use mathematical language with confidence, talking about shape,

size and quantity during their play. Children have a good sense of time and place, as they recall past events and activities. They use their imaginations well during role-play and art and craft activities.

Assessment is rigorous and children's achievements are well recorded. Staff use this information and knowledge of children's interests to plan activities. Teaching is consistently inspiring and challenging for all the children and staff ensure children are continually making progress, in an exciting and vibrant learning environment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Staff have a clear understanding of equal opportunities and children benefit, because they have equal access to the vast array of resources, activities and staff attention, helping them feel valued and respected. Children are treated as individuals and staff take time to get to know each child and their families well, helping to build strong relationships. Children have access to a range of multi-cultural resources throughout the pre-school, developing their understanding of the world around them.

The pre-school supports children with special educational needs. The supervisor works as the settings special needs co-ordinator, she has attended training and has a clear understanding of her role, liaising with parents and other agencies effectively to support the children and their families. Staff manage the children's behaviour consistently and with a calm and relaxed approach. Clear rules and boundaries are in place, ensuring the children know exactly what is expected of them. Children are beginning to understand right from wrong and behave well because staff give clear explanations, relative to each child's level of understanding.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Staff pay high priority to establishing and securing the links between home and pre-school, ensuring parents are actively involved in their child's learning, for example, children are regularly able to take a book home to share with their parents. Parents receive detailed information, they have access to their child's progress records at any time and staff keep them informed of topics and themes through the regular newsletters, helping to build good links with home. Parents feel staff are friendly and approachable and they are able to discuss issues with the staff at any time. Staff develop strong relationships with the parents and take time to get to know the families well and children benefit from the well established relationships they build within the group.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Daily routines are organised exceptionally well and run smoothly. The children move freely from one activity to another, which ensures they are fully occupied, interested and stimulated throughout the session. Staff deployment is effective, enabling staff to provide high quality support and supervision, for all the children. Children are well protected because policies and procedures

are implemented effectively. Documentation is mostly maintained to a high standard and is readily available for inspection at any time.

Leadership and management is outstanding. The committee strongly support the staff team and clear roles and responsibilities are defined, enabling each member of the team to contribute fully to the running of the group. The setting successfully assesses its own strengths and weaknesses through monitoring, evaluating and reviewing practice as a whole. The staff team work well together, providing a vibrant environment for the children. The whole staff team are responsible for planning and evaluating the curriculum and the delivery of the nursery education. Children benefit from the knowledge and experience of the staff. They are committed and dedicated to ensuring the quality of care and education is continually improved for all the children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the pre-school were asked to ensure parents are aware of the pre-school's policies and procedures; to ensure record system provides confidentiality for parents; to ensure registration systems accurately record times of attendance and to provide a range of resources reflecting positive images of disability. Policies and procedures have now been updated and shared with parents, the registration system has been changed, confidentiality is maintained on necessary documentation and resources reflecting positive images have been increased. This ensures the children care in the pre-school has been enhanced and is well promoted.

At the last nursery education inspection the group were asked to make better use of displays to increase opportunities for children to be able to recognise familiar words and numbers; to increase opportunities for children to develop early writing skills, encourage all children to write names or make marks on their work and provide more and better access to writing tools and materials so that children can write and record for a variety of purposes; to increase opportunities for simple forms of addition and subtraction to develop from everyday experiences; improve and develop planning so that it can be recognised how activities and routines link to the promotion of the six areas of learning, and find ways of sharing this planning with parents; to continue to review assessment records and find ways of standardising how the outcomes of assessment can be used to inform future planning for all children in the group. Staff have worked hard to ensure these recommendations have been met and effective learning now takes place ensuring all children make good progress toward the early learning goals.

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.

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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 the recording of accidents is completed in full detail
- devise and implement a plan to ensure all children are aware of what to do in an emergency evacuation which is not linked to the schools procedure

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 *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