



# Knebworth Pre-School Group

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	146762
<b>Inspection date</b>	14 November 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Jo Blackman
<b>Setting Address</b>	Trinity Church, Park Lane, Knebworth, Hertfordshire, SG3 6PD
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<b>Registered person</b>	Knebworth Pre-School
<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?

Knebworth Pre-school opened in 1966. The pre-school operates from two rooms, a kitchen and an outdoor area with the optional use of other rooms. It is located within the Trinity Church hall in Knebworth, Hertfordshire. A maximum of 28 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open five days a week, term time only. Sessions are from 09:00 until 15:00 on Mondays, Tuesday, Wednesdays and Thursdays and from 09:00 until 12:00 on Fridays. Children attend both full and part time sessions. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 46 children from 2 years 6 months to 5 years on roll. Of these, 28 children receive funding for early education. The pre-school serves the local community. The nursery supports children with learning disabilities and difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs eight staff, two of which are part time. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and two members of staff are currently working towards a higher level in an early years qualification. The pre-school has held the Hertfordshire Quality Standard accreditation for the last seven years.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children learn to be healthy through their daily routines, they know about good practice such as, washing their hands before having their snack. Staff ask the children "why do we wash our hands", children respond as a group with "so we don't get germs". They are competent in these skills and are quick to ask for assistance if they need it. Children have indoor shoes which they change in to as they come in to the building, they are learning about basic hygiene as they talk about leaving their muddy shoes outside. Staff follow well established health and safety policies to ensure that the well-being of the children is promoted. Children have their nutritional needs met as they enjoy a wide range of healthy mid morning snacks. They learn about foods that are good and bad for them and enjoy making their own sandwiches which are eaten by the children at snack time. Some staff have attended food hygiene training and all staff adhere closely to setting's procedures in order to protect children's health.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities both inside and outside in the garden. During their regular exercise sessions children dance, jump, run, march and clap, refining their balance and spatial awareness skills. In the garden they have varied opportunities to develop their physical skills with the outdoor equipment that is available to them such as, a climbing frame and wheeled toys. Children move freely about the outside area, they negotiate competently to take turns on the ride on toys. They show an awareness of taking care and not running or riding into each other. Children's well-being is maintained by the recording of appropriate information which ensures that their health is monitored and their personal needs are met at all times. However, medication records are not kept confidential and therefore, parents have access to information that is not relevant to their child.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment where there are creative displays of their work and resources are well organised. Their safety is prioritised and staff carry out daily safety checks, identifying hazards and taking steps to remove or minimise these. A risk assessment is regularly completed and staff are able to refer to additional safety information if required. This helps to ensure that children are able to move around safely, freely and independently. The daily implementation of practical policies and procedures ensure that staff are aware of safety practices and are able to promote children's safety. The emergency evacuation procedure is displayed clearly and therefore staff, parents and children are sufficiently familiar with the procedure.

Children are developing an understanding of taking responsibility and keeping themselves safe. They are consistently given clear explanations by staff to help them understand the relevance of safety rules, for example, they understand why it is important to find a space when participating in exercises, being careful not to bump in to anyone. Children use toys and resources that are appropriate for their ages and stages of development. Staff regularly check these to ensure that they are clean and safe. Children's welfare is very well promoted because staff have attended additional training and have a good knowledge of child protection procedures and are able to identify, report and follow up any concerns in line with current guidance.

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

The provision is good.

Children are appropriately grouped and benefit from having dedicated staff who are aware of their abilities and interests whilst fully supporting their learning. They are offered a range of activities that promotes their language and understanding. For example, the role-play area is currently an 'emergency care centre' where children use their imaginations to become fire, police and ambulance people. They use dressing up clothes and helmets to further develop their play and are skilled in using telephones, pencils and paper when calling for 'emergency help'. The children thrive on the staff interaction, whilst learning about the work of the emergency services. Children initiate their own play and have a range of resources to choose from, including construction, a wide range of dressing up clothes and art and craft materials enabling them to explore and investigate in a meaningful and pleasurable way.

Children's attitude to learning is good because they are supported by staff members who are knowledgeable about how they learn and have a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Children's self initiated play is acknowledged by staff to be of importance, they observe and join in where appropriate. For example, a group of children play 'Cinderella', they use dressing up clothes and talk about 'getting married', staff observe and allow children the freedom to use their imaginations, enabling children to play independently and cooperatively with each other. Themes and topics including shapes and colours are well planned, offering children opportunities to be fully involved. For example, children bring items such as a toy elephant from home to go on the 'E' tray, this is then further developed through the planned 'show and tell' time where children talk about what they have brought in from home. Consequently, children are offered a good balance of activities and experiences to enhance their learning

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress and their overall development is promoted because staff have a thorough knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage, planning and adapting activities appropriately. Children's progress in all areas is well balanced as staff use comprehensive methods for assessing their starting points. Information gained from this is then used to highlight areas to be covered, determining future activities. Using this information enables staff to highlight potential areas of concern and monitor individual children's progress. Staff plan with reference to the Foundation Stage to ensure that children are offered a range of relevant topics. The planning

of activities is completed by all staff, it is practical and comprehensive and this ensures that staff are able to check that all areas of learning are covered within the plans.

Children's language and literacy skills are generally promoted, including developing their listening skills. They attentively listen to stories which are told by staff members. However, there are limited opportunities for children to access books independently, affecting their ability to understand the meaning of print. Phonic recognition is introduced and reinforced in a sensitive way, such as when children are attempting to write their name. Children use mathematical language confidently and there are sufficient resources, including weighing and problem solving such as, how to make the two buckets weigh the same, promoting children's mathematical understanding. However, there are limited opportunities for children to develop their calculation skills and use of positional language in every day maths.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is well promoted. For example, staff help children to learn about 'growing' through the planting of seeds, where children can care for the seeds and watch them grow. Children benefit from a range of different teaching methods to keep them motivated and on task, ranging from group activities to one-to-one sessions on the computer where they demonstrate their skills confidently. Children are beginning to understand the concept of time as they investigate how a sand timer works during registration. Children have good opportunities for developing their physical skills through their participation in daily exercises, they learn about spatial awareness and the different ways in which they can move such as, marching, running, hopping and dancing during the musical sessions. Children have regular access to a well resourced outside area further promoting their physical exercise.

Children are involved in creative activities such as drawing, cutting, painting, role-play and sensory games. Some activities are linked to a current theme, while others are self initiated. Children are secure and demonstrate a sense of trust as they confidently initiate conversations with staff and turn to them for help in sorting out any problems. They are clearly aware of the expected codes of behaviour. For example, children take turns whilst building a train track together, they work together place alternative piece of track. Children are beginning to make firm friends and are learning to care as one child asks another if he is alright after parents leave and he is upset. All children are praised by staff who promote positive behaviour with verbal rewards such as "well done, you are very kind"

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

The provision is good.

Children receive a warm welcome from staff as they arrive, they separate from their carers and settle quickly at an activity of their choice. Children's experiences are shared with parents on a daily basis and staff ensure that parents are kept informed of how their children are progressing. Children are enthusiastic as they take part in the planned activities or make independent choices for free play. Their confidence and sense of belonging is established as they record their own attendance with the daily 'apple' system where children find their name on a tray of named apple shapes and then place it on to the apple tree. Children's spiritual, moral, social and emotional development is being fostered. Children are learning to respect others, they are very kind to each other and are willing to help each other when required. For

example, on a child's first day at pre-school the other children are keen to 'look after' him, helping the child to feel secure.

Staff demonstrate a good awareness for meeting the needs of individual children with learning disabilities or difficulties. There is a designated person who ensures that all staff have a knowledge and understanding of the settings special needs policy, in order to promote children's welfare. Children with English as an additional language are well supported. Staff are aware of their individual backgrounds, and adapt activities to ensure that all children are able to take part and enjoy all that is offered within the pre-school setting.

Children take turns and show a good understanding of each other's needs. They are able to access a range of resources and planned activities that promotes equality of opportunity and develops their understanding of the wider world. For example, children have been introduced to a variety of foods and music from China. Whilst celebrating Chinese New Year the children make lanterns, a dragon and eat a Chinese take-away that is ordered in to the preschool. Children's behaviour is good. Staff use praise consistently throughout the session and children respond well to this. There are suitable strategies in place for dealing with inappropriate behaviour if required.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is good.

Parents are warmly welcomed in to the setting and are aware of the daily activities being offered. They are kept well informed of themes and topics through regular newsletters and information displayed on the informative parents notice board. Regular parent evenings ensure that they have the opportunity to see how their children's skills are developing through discussion with the staff, the assessments and pieces of the children's work on view. Parents receive good quality information about the Foundation Stage and the education opportunities that are provided by the pre-school. They are actively encouraged to become involved in their children's learning and participate in fundraising activities.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Overall, the needs of all children are met. Their well-being is monitored and maintained as systems are in place to ensure that the staff working with the children are qualified to do so. Children's individual needs are recognised and met with appropriate documents and policies in place that comply with regulation. Staff have a commitment to training, they have access to information which enables them to continue to develop their understanding of children's care and learning through training opportunities. Children benefit from well motivated staff who are good role models. Staff take joint responsibility for planning and ensuring that resources are appropriate. They are involved in all aspects of the children's learning, sitting alongside them and extending their language. They prompt discussion and ask the children appropriate questions to ensure that they are progressing in their learning.

The leadership and management of funded children is good. The staff team work well together, there are monitoring strategies in place to evaluate the plans which identifies strengths and areas for improvement and curriculum planning is reviewed by all staff. There is a strong

commitment to developing all areas of the setting and to promote staff development. A clear staff induction process and regular appraisals ensure that the pre-school policies and procedures are understood by all staff and that these are consistently applied. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities in extending the children's learning. They are committed to ensuring that all children make progress towards the early learning goals. Plans and observations continue to be reviewed to ensure that activities and themes extend and develop the children's learning in all areas. Staff are sensitive to children's needs and take time to make sure that children are encouraged to join in and enjoy new experiences.

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

At the last inspection the pre-school were asked to devise a procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. There is a written policy in place which provides guidance to staff of the procedure to follow should an allegation be made against them. Staff were asked to ensure that the complaints procedure included the regulators details. Parents have access to the complaints procedure which states the name, address and telephone number of Ofsted, should a complaint arise. They were asked to devise and implement a policy for lost children. Children's safety is effectively protected as there is a written policy in place providing procedures to follow in the event of a child being lost. The pre-school were asked to ensure that suitable arrangements are in place for the vetting of all members of the committee. Suitable procedures are in place to ensure that committee members are effectively checked, further protecting children's safety.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since 1 April 2004 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 good.

### **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 any medication given is recorded confidentially.

### **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):

- increase opportunities for children to access books independently
- increase opportunities for children to use maths in every day situations. For example, calculation and positional language.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)