

Orton St. Johns Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	256798
Inspection date	03 May 2007
Inspector	Melanie Cullen
Setting Address	St. Johns C of E Primary School, Riseholme, Orton Goldhay, Peterborough, Cambs, PE2 5SP
Telephone number	01733 230194
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Registered person	The Committee
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Orton St. John's Pre School opened in 1994. It operates from premises within St. John's Church of England Primary School in Orton Goldhay, Peterborough. A maximum of 28 children may attend the pre school at any one time. The pre school is open each weekday during term times from 08:45 to 11:15 and 12:15 to 14:45. There is also a lunchtime session enabling children to attend for a full day. There is an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 42 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 41 receive funding for early education. Children come from the local and surrounding areas. The pre school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre school employs 11 members of staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted in the setting because staff follow effective procedures for maintaining a healthy environment. For example, they use antibacterial spray to clean tables before children sit down to eat and clean the sinks and toilets before the children arrive in the afternoon. Good practices are employed to minimise cross infection such as wearing gloves and cleaning the mat when changing nappies. Children begin to learn about managing their own personal hygiene. They independently access tissues and dispose of them in the bin. They wash their hands after messy activities, before eating and after playing outside. However, children do not learn about the reasons why it is important to have effective personal hygiene through the daily routine because staff do not discuss this with them. Children can rest and relax as they wish because there are areas within the room such as the communication area which has comfortable chairs and cushions. Sleep mats are available if children need to sleep. Children who have accidents are managed promptly and sensitively because most of the staff hold current first aid certificates and a suitably stocked first aid kit is kept in an accessible place. Records of all accidents are kept which are confidential and are signed by witnesses and parents. However, there is some inconsistent recording of the specific site of any injury that occurs.

Children enjoy a variety of healthy snacks prepared by the staff. They choose when they want to come to the table for their snack and drink. Children benefit from the range of snacks because they try new tastes such as home made pasta salad, fruit and vegetables, toast and scones. Children sometimes help to prepare the snack and look at whole fruits and vegetables and chop them up to create the pasta salad. Children do not become thirsty because they have milk to drink with their snack and they can help themselves to water from a covered jug at any time during the session. Some children stay for the lunchtime session. Parents provide packed lunches which are stored in large, lidded boxes that have cool blocks to ensure that food stays fresh. Children sit together to eat and are carefully supervised by the staff who engage them in conversation about healthy foods and which foods are their favourites which raises children's interest in food and promotes their learning.

Children's physical skills are developing because they have lots of opportunities to practise. For example, children enjoy free flow between indoor and outdoor play which ensures they have fresh air. They are provided with a good range of equipment such as balancing beams, stepping stones, bikes, bats and balls, footballs, hoops and climbing equipment to encourage their large movements. Children enjoy threading, manipulating puzzle pieces, construction toys, gardening and play dough tools which promote their fine skills. Some children demonstrate roley polley's and put their arms out to the sides to help them balance on the beams and stepping stones. Staff extend the balancing theme through providing large soft cushions in the garden for children to climb and balance on.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is given high priority by the staff who are vigilant in their supervision and adhere to the written policies and procedures for maintaining safety. The entrance to the setting is secured by a padlock and all visitors and parents are greeted by the staff. Visitors and staff sign in and out. During arrival and departure times staff carefully monitor the exit to ensure that children leave with their parents. The setting is organised to allow children free access

between the activities. They can independently use the bathroom area while being seen by the staff which minimises accidents. Children begin to learn about emergency evacuation because regular fire drills are carried out and recorded. They stay safe when on outings such as walks around the local area because staff work to a higher ratio of adults to children and written parental permission is gained beforehand.

Children enjoy a wide range of play materials and use equipment that is safe, suitable and covers all areas of development. The setting is organised into clearly defined areas of learning and the children are encouraged to self select most activities. For example, they choose tools from the work bench and put on safety goggles without prompting from staff. They select mark making materials from low level drawers and baskets. The equipment is well maintained which promotes children's safety and they enthusiastically help to tidy away at the end of the session which begins to develop a sense of responsibility for maintaining a safe environment for everyone. Children learn about safety because staff talk to them during activities. For example, children working at the tool bench are shown a good example from staff who also wear the safety goggles and they talk to the children about holding the nails low down which helps them to avoid hitting their fingers with the hammer.

Children are learning about protecting themselves because they practise emergency evacuation drills. They wear sun hats and have sun cream applied in sunny weather. Staff provide shade in the garden and children talk freely about the sun being hot and that sun cream protects their skin from burning. Children learn to take turns when using large equipment and know they must look before they jump from equipment to ensure the floor is clear.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff understand their role and responsibility to manage any child protection concerns in a confidential and professional manner. Local Safeguarding Children's Board guidelines are followed and records are kept that contain sufficient detail. Most of the staff have attended safeguarding children training which contributes to their awareness of any concerns and the correct procedures to follow.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy attending. They settle quickly to play at their chosen activities and demonstrate that they are familiar with the daily routines. They benefit from the free flow play inside and outside and the balance of free play, small and large group activities. Children naturally gravitate towards the small group activities where the staff are supervising because they receive lots of praise and encouragement for their efforts and achievements. Staff ensure that children lead the play and become involved by asking questions about what they are doing which develops their curiosity and confidence to try new experiences. Children are interested in the activities because they are appropriate for their individual needs. They can access a range of equipment according to their own ability. For example, children have access to a variety of papers, writing materials, scissors and hole punches in the mark making area and choose whether they try to write, draw and colour or try out the hole punches and scissors. Children enjoy singing and rhymes. They join in enthusiastically with choruses and most follow the actions. They dance with the staff and use their whole bodies while listening to action songs on the compact disc player. Staff have a working knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and use this effectively to plan activities for younger children and to record their achievements and progress.

Nursery Education

Children are motivated to learn because they are provided with a wide range of stimulating and fun activities that offer new experiences and opportunities to practise existing skills. Their efforts are valued. For example, models and partially complete art work is 'kept safe' by the staff who put them to one side while children have their snack. Children can display their models on low level units and add captions to describe their creation. Children create a series of pictures and tell staff the story that goes with their art work. Staff value their creativity and write the story to be displayed alongside the pictures. This develops their confidence and self-esteem. Children lead the play and staff respond positively to their requests to continue or extend the play. For example, a group of children using the slide move a pop-up play house to the base of the slide so they disappear into the house when they slide down. Staff ensure the activity is safe and children are encouraged to continue with the game they initiated themselves. Children are building positive relationships with staff and their peers. They sit together during snack times and activities. The whole group comes together twice during the session and children say hello and goodbye to each other through a song they all join in with. Children are confident to approach staff for reassurance or to ask for items they want and some give the staff cuddles when they arrive and leave. Children's independence skills are promoted because they hang up their own coats, put them on to play outside and try to put their own shoes on. Some children are able to dress themselves in the dressing up clothes and ask for assistance if needed. They are independent in the bathroom area, pour their own drinks and help to prepare food for snack time.

Children benefit greatly from the attractively presented and highly appealing communication area where they can access a wide range of books, story boards and puppets. They sit comfortably in this area and spontaneously look at books with each other or with a member of staff. Some retell familiar stories from the pictures and they hold books correctly and turn the pages. Children are provided with lots of examples of text throughout the setting which includes different languages and forms of writing as well as sign language. They have opportunities for name recognition at various times during the day. For example, when they arrive they find their name on a leaf shape that they have written themselves and attach it to the 'name tree'. Children can access the mark making area at any time and staff encourage them to write their name on pieces of art work. Children enjoy using mathematical concepts through various activities. They join in with counting songs such as 'Five currant buns' and 'Five little men in a flying saucer'. They have opportunities to sort small items into groups according to number, size and shape. They play with water, sand and compost, filling and emptying containers. They play games with dice and have access to sand timers. Children begin to learn about capacity, shape, space, measure and number recognition.

Children have lots of opportunities to explore and investigate. For example, they plant beans and sunflower seeds and make 'predictions' about how many days they will take to grow. They discuss the need to care for the seeds and that water and light will help them grow. Children look at whole vegetables such as carrots, swede and turnips and place the tops in trays of water and look at the shoots that grow. Children use construction toys and wood with real, miniature tools at the workbench which allows them to build and assemble materials. They show curiosity about information and communication technology and play with some programmable toys such as calculators and alphabet speakers. Plenty of opportunities are available for children to work creatively. They listen to music, play a variety of instruments, dance and move in different ways. They feel the texture of paint, play dough and enjoy messy activities such as treacle, shaving foam and porridge. Children create pictures through paint, sticking and chalk. They play imaginative games in the home corner and outside areas and work together to decide who is to take on which role.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and use this to effectively plan appropriate activities to extend children's learning. Children benefit from the organisation of the setting which has clearly defined areas of learning. They are familiar with their surroundings and know where to find the items they want. Staff position themselves with activities during the session and children approach them because they receive plenty of praise and encouragement. Staff engage children in the activity and allow them to lead, they extend their confidence and vocabulary skills through positive language, appropriate questioning and facial expressions. During large group activities children are encouraged to speak, share their experiences and choose songs and rhymes for everyone to join in with. The planning is completed by all staff members and is closely linked to each child's next steps for learning which is identified by the key worker. Observations are recorded on an ongoing basis that are transferred into individual children's files along with samples of their work and photographs which are used by the key worker to identify the next steps for each child. Progression can be seen through these records and are shared with parents regularly. Key workers record the purpose and learning intention of activities in the files to assist parents in being involved in their children's learning. Children enjoy working to themes such as 'Jack and the beanstalk' because staff extend activities in all areas of learning to incorporate the theme such as art and craft, planting beans, balancing and climbing. The staff are thorough and creative in their planning to ensure children are provided with a stimulating range of activities that are appropriately challenging. This planning by staff ensures that activities are pitched correctly for the children attending and are meaningful to them. Staff know the children well, are able to anticipate their needs and are fully aware of times when particular children require extra support in order to succeed.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated as individuals and with respect. Staff ensure they give children time to speak and listen to them on their level. Their contributions to group discussions are valued and staff are aware of children's different levels of confidence and ability. All children receive appropriate support. Careful discussion takes place between key workers and parents to ensure that individual needs can be met. The setting works in partnership with other professionals involved with particular children who visit during the session for one to one time or to observe. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator has completed the appropriate training and Individual Educational Plans are completed for children who have learning difficulties or disabilities. Children are informed which activities are available to them by the staff and can move freely between them throughout the session. They make choices and decisions about their play and when they come for snack. They show a clear sense of belonging in the setting and approach staff for reassurance and support as required. Children are familiar with the daily routines and benefit from the staff's clear explanations of what is expected of them. Children begin to learn about the wider world. They have access to a wide range of resources, books, pictures and play materials that celebrate and show positive images of diversity. The staff provide opportunities for children to become aware of other countries through the use of a globe and art and craft activities such as African masks as well as discussion. Children use dressing up clothes and play food that helps them to learn about other cultures.

Children generally behave well. They play alone, alongside each other or in small groups and begin to negotiate and discuss issues with each other. They generally respond to the staff when they give occasional reminders to be careful and to think of others. Children benefit because staff always explain the reasons why boundaries are in place for safety and why certain behaviour

is unacceptable. Children have plenty of interesting activities available to them and are informed by staff when they have five minutes before tidying up time which helps them prepare for ending their activities. Staff use a sand timer as a visual aid for children during this time. This helps to minimise behaviour issues. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The staff's awareness of providing children with opportunities to be confident, learn about and celebrate everyone's individuality, to accept differences and to show care and concern for each other contributes to children's whole development.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. They are provided with lots of information via notice boards, newsletters and displays about their child's learning, the curriculum, the group's planning, ethos and procedures as well as forthcoming events. Key workers make themselves available at the beginning and end of the day to discuss any issues that arise. Parents confirm that their child's experiences within the setting has enhanced their development. Parents are encouraged to come into the main room and help their child find their card for the 'name tree'. They are involved in their child's learning through a library system where they can borrow books to read at home and are invited to read and contribute to their child's assessment records on a regular basis. A suitable system is in place to record any complaints from parents relating to the National Standards and confidentiality is maintained for every family.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care, welfare and enjoyment are promoted in this welcoming setting. The staff are committed to keeping their knowledge up to date and regularly attend relevant training courses which enhance their day to day practice with children. The management and staff team regularly review their practice through the use of a self evaluation system. Changes to daily routines, policies and procedures are made if necessary. The management team have a good working relationship with the committee and receive regular support from the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

The staff team work well together, staff are effectively deployed within the setting and ensure that the ratios are maintained at all times. All the required documentation is in place, is kept up to date and confidentiality is maintained. Staff's practice with the children is clearly reflected in the written policies and procedures. Robust systems are in place for the recruitment of new staff. Leadership and management is good. Individual families' requirements are met whenever possible and parents regularly approach the manager to request changes to, or additional sessions. All staff have an annual appraisal and the staff members carry out the manager's appraisal. De-briefing sessions take place at the end of each day where staff have opportunities to share their experiences during the day and students are asked what they have found helpful. The whole team are involved in the planning of activities which links to the six areas of learning and is underpinned by the key workers knowledge and observations of individual children. This allows for specific activities to be incorporated into the planning to continue children's learning. Staff meet together before each term commences to undertake three or four days of planning and training. This helps to strengthen the team to enable them to meet all the children's needs effectively. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provision agreed to develop staff's awareness of effective ways to manage children's behaviour according to their age and stage of development, to review the admissions policy and to review the procedures for the induction of new staff. Staff have

attended training and the policy has been reviewed and amended to ensure that issues are managed in a way that promotes positive behaviour. The admissions policy contains all the required details and information and an induction procedure for staff has been developed and implemented. The setting also agreed to provide children with more opportunities to use their imagination and develop their creative skills. Children have a variety of activities available to them each session to encourage their imaginative and creative skills such as role play areas and small world characters as well as art and craft activities including materials they can self select. Children's models and pictures are put on display to be celebrated by everyone.

The provision agreed to address three issues regarding the nursery education provision. To implement a system for recording children's progress through the stepping stones, to provide more opportunities for children to take part in small group activities and challenge them more during free play and to give greater emphasis on children's enjoyment of books. The setting has an effective system in place to record children's progress through the stepping stones as recorded in this report. Children have lots of opportunities to participate in small group activities which promotes discussion and the communication area is very attractive and appealing to children and includes a wide variety of books, story boards and puppets. The action taken by the provision enhances children's enjoyment and development in all areas.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted received one complaint relating to National Standard 1: Suitable Person, National Standard 3: Care Learning and Play, National Standard 7: Health, National Standard 8: Food and Drink, National Standard 11: Behaviour and National Standard 13: Child Protection. This involved allegations made against staff members behaviour towards the children. Ofsted carried out several unannounced visits to observe, interview staff and check documentation and two actions were raised under National Standard 3: 'amend the daily routine to ensure that it provides a variety of opportunities for children to be active indoors and out as well as time to relax (with particular regard to the length of time children are expected to remain seated)' and National Standard 11: 'ensure adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development'. An actions response was received and reviewed and the provider remains qualified for registration.

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 sufficient detail is recorded in the accident records (regarding consistent recording of the site of any injury)

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):

- develop ways to ensure that children learn about the reasons for personal hygiene through the daily routine.

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