



Ford Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY269577
Inspection date	11 July 2005
Inspector	Ann Marie Lefevre

Setting Address	Ford First School, Ford, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland, TD15 2QA
Telephone number	01890 820 217
E-mail	
Registered person	Ford Pre School
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Ford Pre-school was registered in September 2003. The group provides places for a maximum of 16 children at a session. The children are aged from 2 to 5 years. There are currently 23 children on the roll who attend the various sessions. Children who have special needs and those who have English as an additional language are welcomed and supported in the setting. The group participates in the Foundation Stage of Learning initiative and there is provision for funded three and four year old

children to attend. Sessions are available on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 08.45 to 11.15 in term time.

Childcare is provided within Ford First School, which is located in a small rural village. Children attend from the village and the surrounding areas. Many of the children attending will progress to the school reception class. The children are accommodated on the ground floor of the two storey building. The school hall was used as the main playroom, however, an additional, specially refurbished pre-school unit is now used as the main early years area. Toilets are adjacent to the playroom. There are facilities for the provision of refreshments. The school hall is still used for more active play and for joint activities with the school. There is an enclosed outside play yard adjacent to the playroom. Further areas are available in the school grounds for fully supervised play.

The provision is committee led. There are two regular staff members, one with a teaching qualification, two regular volunteers and also committee members who are relief helpers. Staff and volunteers are participating in, or plan to complete, appropriate professional training. Students are welcomed into the setting. The group benefits from the support of teaching staff in the school and from a Local Authority Early Years adviser.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children gain a very good understanding of the importance of keeping their bodies healthy. They have many practical opportunities to learn about the importance of health and hygiene in their daily routines and activities. Children develop their sense of independence well as they gain easy access to the bathroom and also the outdoor play area which are adjacent to the playroom. Children are becoming knowledgeable about germs and keeping the play space clean and tidy. They are encouraged to take responsibility, to be aware of hygiene and wash their hands appropriately, for example, after going to the toilet, before meals and after messy play. Children are happy to help tidy playthings away and offer enthusiastic assistance in such as using a dust-pan and brush to help sweep up after snack time.

Children's health requirements are highlighted in the detailed and very well organised recording systems and policies in relation to health needs. These are carefully maintained to ensure that parents and the staff are kept fully informed about any health issues. The accident book was not immediately accessible, after a recent reorganisation. However, this was located and seen to be in good order. A high proportion of staff and volunteers have completed appropriate first aid training, there is a very well stocked first aid kit and staff are keen to ensure that children benefit from being cared for in a healthy environment. Children's health is very well protected in practical ways by the application of sun screen to their skin and their heads being shaded by sun hats prior to outdoor play during hot weather.

Children learn about healthy eating and benefit from having a balanced diet, which includes good quality foods such as the fresh fruit enthusiastically prepared by the children for their snack time, with close supervision from staff. Children are extremely confident as they carefully help themselves to drinking water from a jug in the playroom whenever they wish. Staff are able to ensure that any special dietary needs are met effectively. They work closely with parents and obtain information about the children to make sure that children have the necessary nutritional balance for positive growth in a caring and secure environment.

Children are able to develop their physical and emotional wellbeing in an excellent range of stimulating experiences. They learn about why exercise is good for them and are able to participate in fun activities which exercise their bodies as well as develop their thinking skills. They thoroughly enjoy being outdoors in the fresh air as they use the enclosed outdoor play area and the extensive school grounds for a range of exciting physical activities such as practicing for sports day. In addition, children are able to do lots of energetic physical activities in the school hall and in the playroom as they enthusiastically join in circle games doing actions to rhymes and songs. They use a wide range of large and small play equipment well to help promote their coordination and dexterity. Children are also able to develop their emotional wellbeing as they build good relationships and socialise happily with other children and adults.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are really very welcoming, well organised and comfortable for children to use safely. Children benefit from being able to access the designated childcare areas with close, age appropriate supervision and support from the staff. They learn about safety, both in and outside the setting, in daily routines and activities such as being careful when playing on large play equipment and when participating in fire drills. Staff ensure the premises are safe and secure so that children are well protected. Many safety measures have been taken, for example, a secure entrance door, socket covers, and a secure outdoor play area to ensure that children can play safely. Staff take effective measures to ensure that children do not gain access to any potentially hazardous areas or materials. Regular, formal risk assessments are undertaken in the setting to make sure the premises are kept safe for the children attending.

Staff are vigilant and take effective measures so that play resources, equipment and furniture are maintained in a safe and clean condition for the children attending; all items are checked regularly. Staff ensure that the toys and activities are appropriate for the age and stage of development of each child to use safely.

Children benefit from the carefully planned and well maintained documentation in relation to child safety in the setting. Recording systems are used in conjunction with detailed written parental consents to ensure consistency of care for each child. Children are well protected as staff continue to develop their already very good awareness, knowledge and skills by participating in appropriate training including

child protection. There is a child protection policy in place and, although staff have had no concerns to date in relation to the children, they have a very good understanding of what to be aware of, who to contact and what to record.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy attending the pre-school. They settle very well and enjoy being with their friends and the staff members. Children are comfortable in the setting and benefit from the staff's sensitive and calm approach to their care and learning. Staff have a good awareness of the Birth to three matters framework and this is reflected in the actual care of the children. Children build very positive relationships with staff who respond well to the children's differing needs.

Children develop their natural curiosity in a safe and secure environment. They have many opportunities to participate in a wealth of exciting activities and projects. All children are valued by the staff, who help them to develop their confidence and sense of self. Staff have a sound knowledge of the children and the wishes of the parents to ensure there is consistency and continuity so that each child can learn and progress effectively.

Children develop their sense of growing independence as the staff allow them to explore and investigate in many stimulating activities. Activities are organised to allow for flexibility and spontaneity which enables the children to choose what they want to do and introduce their own ideas. Children use the play areas well to develop their imagination, for example, choosing outfits from the dressing up rail and looking like a princess, using the home corner to do role play using play food and utensils, or using chalk to draw exciting things such as rockets on the outside soft surface play ground.

Children are able to develop relationships with their peers and enjoy participating in an extensive range of group and individual activities, as well as just sitting and having fun with a friend.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make very good progress as they benefit from the staff's good understanding of the Foundation Stage of Learning, early learning goals and the six areas of learning. There is detailed planning in place which is used well in practice. Staff monitor the children as they participate in activities and use this to inform future practice. However, some of the more structured learning activities do not always gain the children's full attention. The wealth of exciting play opportunities occurring simultaneously in the play area is one of the strengths in the setting, but the close proximity in which they occur, at times, makes it difficult for children to concentrate on specific learning tasks. Staff use lots of effective teaching methods and tools, for example, the organisation of the play areas reflects the six areas of learning, there are exciting wall displays of children's work and posters, there is consistent use of upper and lower case letters for labelling, and play resources, activities and daily routines are used to provide learning and life experiences.

Children gain confidence in their abilities and build very good relationships as they interact with their peers and with staff. They are able to participate in many new and exciting experiences and are encouraged to take an active role in the group. Staff are very skilled at using clear and simple language and guidance which enables the children to learn and develop well. Children are able to express their ideas and thoughts and communicate well during incidental and planned activities. Children benefit from the positive community spirit in their immediate home area and in the pre-school setting as well as building an awareness of the wider world and different cultures.

Children chat about their families and friends, telling of happy events and family outings. They are eager to learn and they listen well to stories and guidance from adults. They actively become involved in projects that extend their understanding and knowledge. They respond well to age appropriate challenges and new concepts without undue pressure being put upon them.

Children have many opportunities to appreciate books in the setting and are able to choose from a selection to take home on loan. They use the book areas freely, are respectful as they handle books, carefully turning the pages and becoming familiar with the written word. Children have many opportunities to practice mark making and staff are guided by the school with regard to formative writing.

Children learn about numbers and simple mathematical concepts in many activities and daily routines. They are able to develop their number recognition skills and counting skills and learn about simple addition and subtraction by using a range of manufactured and home made resources, such as large plastic containers hung in the outside play area with different consecutive written numbers and corresponding amounts of spots. They are able to learn about capacity in water play and understanding such concepts as half empty and half full. They recognise shapes and use these in their drawings.

Children gain a good understanding of how things work. They learn about modern technology as well as the natural world. Children are enthusiastic as they carefully use a digital camera to photograph each other, their work and their achievements. Staff show them the pictures on a lap top computer screen and print out their picture to take home and show in the pre-school. Children eagerly participate in simple science experiments, for example, filling rubber gloves with water and seeing that they became bouncy, soft and floppy. Children are able to discuss textures and shapes as they look at different types of sea creatures and where they come from.

Children thoroughly enjoy participating in the many art and craft projects. They use large and small equipment, and a variety of materials very well to create lots of exciting pictures and models. Children are enthusiastic as they join in music and movement; singing and doing actions to circle time rhymes and songs, or playing a wide range of musical instruments.

Staff ensure that the setting is very well organised with resources to ensure that children have many learning experiences as well as lots of fun. There is a balanced range of activities in keeping with the six areas of learning and designated play areas to reinforce children's understanding and knowledge. Staff prepare well for the

sessions and ensure that all necessary materials and equipment are in place for the planned activities and also for the additional freeplay. Staff are sensitive to the differing needs of each child. Children who have additional requirements are well supported in the setting. Children are sensitively encouraged to participate and be fully integrated into the group. There is a close partnership between staff, the school, parents and additional advisers to ensure that each child really benefits from their placement.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the staff's positive attitude towards equal opportunities and respecting individual and differing needs. There are many good opportunities for children to develop their awareness of their local and wider communities. They are not only able to experience celebrations and festivals such as Christmas and May Day, but also learn about other religious and cultural celebrations such as the Hindu festival of Diwali and about Buddhism. They learn about ceremonies such as washing the body with sacred petals and participate in art projects using their hand prints to create a large picture of the special cows of India.

All children are valued and are seen to be special. Children with additional needs are helped to participate fully within the group. Staff work closely with parents to ensure that all children obtain the necessary care and learning opportunities to gain maximum enjoyment and stimulation in the setting. Children with English as an additional language are able to settle well.

Children learn about sharing and valuing others from the excellent role models provided by the staff. Staff gently and sensitively support, praise and encourage children in their daily routines and activities which helps them to develop their self esteem, confidence and sense of belonging. The children are very polite and well behaved. They are really keen to take part in all aspects of pre-school life; they show how they can help during snack and tidy up times and take responsibility for undertaking helpful tasks. The children are very happy and relaxed in the group and they respond well to the smiles and encouraging words from the staff. Children are able to make choices in their play and daily routines and are showing increasing confidence as they select playthings and participate in activities. All staff and volunteers are adept at encouraging children to share their opinions and take an active role in the group. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

The partnership with parents is good and this significantly contributes to the overall good quality care provided for the children. There is a strong sense of community in the setting. Parents are able to participate fully in the exchange of information necessary for their child's care. They are kept well informed about daily issues, are aware of planning, topics for activities, and the six areas of learning. The staff team have prepared a wealth of good quality information, notice boards are used very well, there is an information booklet, regular newsletters and also verbal updates to ensure parents have a sound knowledge and understanding of the service provided for their

children. Parents contribute their ideas and time to fund raising and helping with activities. Children's artwork is being used to decorate a t-shirt which is to be worn by a parent participating in a charity run. Children's individual development files are available for parents to see how they are progressing, and children regularly take a chosen book home to read with family members. Many examples of the children's work are displayed in the setting and children also take lots of their art and craft projects home to show what they have achieved.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the nursery is good. The staff are well led; they work together as a cohesive team and also contribute their individual skills. Staff and volunteers take a really professional approach to their work. The staff team is supported effectively by the pre-school committee and by the teaching staff in the school. This is reflected in the very well organised child care areas in the setting, in safety measures taken and in the range of good quality resources and equipment provided. Clearly defined, sensitive daily routines enable children to settle well and feel secure.

There is a high ratio of staff and volunteers in relation to the numbers of children attending. Children benefit from having small numbers participating in group activities as they are able to have more individual staff attention in these small groups.

Very well structured and informative files, notice boards and other means are available to inform staff and parents. A wide range of policies and procedures such as child protection, behaviour management and equal opportunities are used to inform practice and protect the children who attend. There are detailed and well ordered recording systems in place including individual child records, and written consents from parents. Staff continually update and develop these for the benefit of children attending, their parents and for staff. There are well structured registration systems to record attendance which are undertaken with parents and children on arrival and departure. Staff complete a further register with the children during snack time later in the session, and this includes introductions to visiting adults so that children are aware of why strangers are in the setting.

Children benefit from the good quality care provided and from the staff's positive attitude towards their own training and personal development. The setting has achieved a Healthy Pathways Award and a very detailed file has been produced in relation to this which is used to inform staff practice.

Staff have completed a wide range of appropriate courses relating to the health, welfare, safety and the educational needs of the children, and continue to assess and develop their already considerable skills.

Overall, the needs of all children who attend are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

From the previous Care inspection the group was asked to ensure that all entries in the accident book are signed by a parent of the child concerned, or by the designated person responsible for collecting the child. This recommendation has been addressed fully.

This is the first Nursery Education inspection.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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 the accident record is readily available for staff.

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):

- ensure that planned and more structured activities are organised so that children can concentrate effectively and are not distracted by the wealth of activities going on around them.

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