

Magic Dragon Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	107008
Inspection date	18 December 2006
Inspector	Nigel Lindsay Smith
Setting Address	Church of Good Shepherd Hall, Bishop Road, Bishopston, Bristol, BS7 8NA
Telephone number	07791 659967 or 0117 924 3446 (Mrs Lord)
E-mail	
Registered person	Magic Dragon 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 satisfactory. 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?

The Magic Dragon Pre-School is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children at the pre-school. It opened in the 1970s and operates from the Church of Good Shepherd Hall in Bishopston, Bristol. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The setting opens from Mondays to Thursdays during school term times. Sessions are from 09.30 to 12.00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 35 children from two to four years on roll. Of these, 11 children receive funding for early education. The pre-school serves the local and surrounding area. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six members of staff. Of these, two have appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is well promoted. The premises, toys and equipment are kept clean. The risk of children becoming ill is minimised as the policy for excluding children who are sick is shared with parents. Children learn the importance of good hygiene through washing their hands. Children are protected if there is an accident as parents give permission for emergency medical treatment. All accidents are clearly recorded and shared with parents in a confidential manner. Permission from parents to administer medication is not sufficiently clearly stated.

At snack time children select from items such as fruit and breadsticks and a drink, and sometimes spread butter and jam to make their own sandwiches. They make safe choices as staff are aware of allergies and any special dietary needs. Snack time is a social occasion as the children sit together at tables accompanied by the staff. They learn about healthy eating during a food topic theme.

Children enjoy daily opportunities for physical development. They exercise in a well-renovated outside area. They also develop their large muscle skills through indoor activities such as pedalling trikes, using a trampoline and negotiating an obstacle course. They develop an awareness of the effect of activity on their bodies through comparing their heartbeat after exercise. They have frequent opportunities to develop small muscle skills through activities such as manipulating tape and handling scissors when wrapping parcels.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a bright and welcoming setting which includes an interest table covering topics such as the festivals of Christmas and Eid, and photos of the term's activities. A large main room gives sufficient space for a variety of activities to be offered, and two additional rooms provide flexibility to work in groups.

Children are kept safe through daily checks of the premises based on a written risk assessment which is updated annually. They safely use the equipment as staff ensure that it meets safety standards when obtaining it, and carry out subsequent checks. There are satisfactory arrangements to ensure that only people nominated by parents are able to collect the children. The door to the premises is secured so that visitors are monitored by staff. Children take part in fire drills which ensure that staff are familiar with the procedures for evacuation, although this did not take place in the term when the inspection was carried out.

Children are safeguarded as there are appropriate child protection procedures, and contact details for the local social services department are available to facilitate staff obtaining advice and support if needed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children prepare well for the session by joining in a "circle time" based on their age group. They form positive relationships with each other and staff. Children are able to choose equipment from a well-organised provision, thus they begin to make choices at an early age. Children are

grouped according to age and ability for planned activities, which are appropriate for them. Staff are beginning to familiarise themselves with Birth to three matters materials to use in planning for younger children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from the staff's good interaction and questioning as they are encouraged to think and solve problems in both self-initiated and adult-led activities. The range of activities planned for children promotes positive learning outcomes for all areas of learning. Staff make thorough observations of children as they play; they are working to produce a format for assessment to be of maximum effectiveness. They link observations to planning to ensure that all children's individual needs are met.

Children learn to take responsibility, for example they enthusiastically help to tidy the equipment away before snack time, and sweep up in the outside area. They become aware of themselves, their families and others through taking "Bertie Bear" home and talking to the other children when they bring him back.

Children communicate confidently. They enjoy listening to stories which are backed up by imaginative use of well-prepared props such as a saucepan for a space hat. They excitedly anticipate what will come out next from a comprehensive collection of "story sacks", and count monkeys in a rhyme about monkeys and a crocodile. They enthusiastically respond to questions about stories. When asked to identify some antlers used as a prop a child says "They are pincers. Crabs and lobsters have pincers." They recognise their names as they select their name cards each day. They have good opportunities to practice writing as staff incorporate this through many of the activities, for example writing tickets in the home corner, using wipe-clean boards and chalk boards, and drawing and writing in the garden.

Children extend their understanding of nature by growing and tending plants, and handling creatures brought in by zoo volunteers. They learn about technology through using remote cars, calculators and light boxes. They look at a range of photos and take pictures themselves.

Children use their imagination well and choose from a variety of cutters to create play food with dough, and "cook" it. They take part in a project to build a pirate ship and use it in role plays and stories. They sing and use musical instruments. They have good opportunities to count and to compare shapes and sizes during a range of activities. For example, children count how many flowers have opened in the garden, and identify how many monkeys are left during the monkey and crocodile rhyme. They recognise shapes such as diamonds and rectangles as they move into their groups.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children behave well and are sociable, encouraged by the adults, who are calm, polite and kind, and give praise appropriately to them. Their good behaviour is encouraged by clear explanations from staff about what will happen next and what their expectations are. They learn to recognise a sign to stop what they are doing, and that a part of the session has finished as staff ring a bell. There is an appropriate policy for managing challenging behaviour.

Children's understanding of cultural diversity is supported by a good range of multi-cultural books and other items borrowed from a resource centre. They learn about a variety of cultural

celebrations, such as Chinese New Year. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are supported appropriately so that they become included in the nursery routines through initiatives such as the wide use of props to illustrate stories and songs.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents receive a prospectus, and detailed information about the Foundation Stage. Positive links with parents are fostered through written information between home and the pre-school. Parents are positive about their children being well-prepared for the transition to school. The pre-school has an appropriate system in the event of any complaints being made, and for recording them.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a high ratio of adults to children which means their activities are well-supported. All staff are vetted, and satisfactory arrangements are in place to ensure their suitability through the interview procedure. The pre-school plans to introduce a written induction procedure and a staff appraisal system. The setting does not ensure that a minimum of 50 per cent qualified staff are present at each session.

Staff attend training events, so that children benefit from current ideas and developments. Documents are retained securely and confidentially, for the required time-scales.

The leadership and management are good. The staff team work well together, sharing responsibilities. There are regular team meetings to develop the programme. Planning in the Foundation Stage is thorough and staff assess the effectiveness of the activities for use in future planning. The pre-school is taking part in a quality assurance scheme and use it to develop their practice.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the pre-school was asked to encourage children to wash their hands; children now wash their hands regularly, with older children taking themselves to the toilet independently. They were asked to produce a written statement about child protection, available to parents, and to implement a written behaviour management policy; these have both been implemented and the prospectus informs parents of the policies. They were asked to ensure that staff are aware of what to do in the event of a fire; this has been achieved through practising fire drills as described in "Staying Safe". They were also asked to group children for some activities; this has been implemented.

At the last inspection of Nursery Education the pre-school was asked to evaluate groupings of children to ensure that they are appropriate for the activity and to enable variation for different ages; this has been achieved as groups are varied for the second part of sessions to take account of age and ability.

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.

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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 that permission for any medication given is clearly stated
- ensure that fire drills are carried out regularly
- further develop the use of Birth to three matters materials in planning for younger children.
- develop an action plan to ensure that at least half of all child care staff hold a level 2 qualification appropriate for the care or development of children

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):

- further develop the format for assessing children's achievements

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