



Christchurch Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127105
Inspection date	29 November 2006
Inspector	Janette Mary White
Setting Address	The Vicarage, 48 Old Road East, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 1NR
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Registered person	Christchurch Pre-School Church
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?

Christchurch Pre-School opened in 1975 and operates from one room in a church hall. It is situated in the town of Gravesend, Kent. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.15 to 12.00 for 38 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 35 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 14 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs seven staff. Four of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing an awareness of hygiene through planned activities and the daily routine. For example, they know when and why to wash their hands and wipe noses, because staff explain the importance of doing so. There is a risk of cross infection as children use a bowl to wash their hands after art and craft activities. Children benefit from a healthy diet and they are encouraged to develop healthy eating habits; they eat varied healthy snacks, such as oranges, bananas and carrots. They learn about healthy eating through discussions and planned activities, such as cooking. Drinking water is readily available and children can freely choose to help themselves. All children enjoy fresh fruit and vegetables. However, at snack times children are not provided with plates or bowls. All relevant information regarding special diets, allergies and preferences is recorded by staff. This ensures children's dietary needs are met. Children get plenty of physical exercise. They use the outdoor facilities including a balancing board or climbing frame and have good control over their bodies. Children use a wide variety of large and small equipment. They use the sit and ride cars or wheelbarrows. Children manipulate different consistencies of play dough and sand, and use this in imaginative play as they make a pretend cup of tea. They use water with small and large paint brushes and rollers to paint an outside wall.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have easy and safe access to a sound range of toys and resources appropriate for their age. Toys and resources are carefully selected to ensure they are suitable for children and provide interesting choices for them. There is a sufficient range of toys, furniture and equipment that provide varied opportunities for children to relax or to be active. The supervisor and most staff have a sound understanding of child protection issues and sufficient knowledge of what action to take if they have concerns about a child in their care. However, the staff are not fully familiar with all of the procedures.

Staff ensure children's safety by using regular risk assessments, indoors and outdoors, and they make positive use of the security system at the door to monitor visitors to the nursery. The emergency evacuation procedure has not been recently discussed or practised with the children. The children are unsure of what to do and the staff are unfamiliar with the procedures. Children are supervised when playing outside. The play area is enclosed by a fence and a locked gate. Outdoor play equipment is checked, ensuring it is suitable for children's use.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children of all ages and stages of development enjoy their time at the group and children are stimulated by the activities they are offered. They are interested and enthusiastic in their play and staff capture their interest by asking them questions and encouraging them to participate in activities which appeal to them. The setting uses Birth to three matters framework to develop

younger children's play and learning. Children have good relationships with staff and are not afraid to ask for help, support or a cuddle. They participate in a challenging range of activities that include quiet and active play, such as reading stories, action songs and rhymes, and playing in the garden. Some are adult initiated, such as making blow painting pictures and planned craft, and some offer free choice, such as role play, construction, and imaginative play. This balance helps children to make progress in all areas of learning. The staff have a good understanding of the range of experience required to enable children to make progress using their senses and creative activities. Easily accessible books and resources help to develop children's imaginations and communication skills. Investigation through resources including, sand, cooking and drawing helps younger children to represent their experiences and ideas and make connections as they play. However, children are not always encouraged to write their name on their art and craft pictures. All of the children are enthusiastic when taken outside to play and enjoy the outdoor activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the stepping stones and early learning goals. Staff have an effective knowledge of the Foundation Stage. The stepping stones are used to chart children's progress. Staff take note when the children participate in the focused or free play activities. They record their individual responses and this helps to build an accurate picture of each child's progress. Children enter pre-school enthusiastically, behave well, they are confident and happy during the time they spend there. They take turns and cooperate with each other to achieve a common goal. They are keen to participate in all activities and select tasks independently and help to tidy away the toys. For example, they gather all the musical instruments and put them into the correct storage box. Children are provided with activities which build on what they already know and can do. Regular evaluations help staff to focus on the success of activities. A variety of equipment is provided each day providing the children with differing challenges. This develops appropriate physical skills and confidence in their abilities.

Children show a sense of belonging as they learn and play together. They are very secure with the staff in the pre-school and have good self esteem. They all enjoy taking turns to be a 'special helper'. They respond well to challenges and are engaged in meaningful activities. They have access to a range of books. Children are friendly and their confidence is growing as they share their ideas and experiences. They are keen to participate in some types of play, such as pretending to make tea during imaginative play. Children are gaining confidence with numbers and counting. For example, as they count the number of children and toys when tidying away. Children use a variety of resources to make marks. They are developing a sense of time and begin to differentiate between past and present experiences. For example, they talk the sponge painting from yesterday and blow painting last week. They are excited and enjoy action songs, circle games and small group time.

Children are keen to participate in all the activities, particularly when staff provide good support and helpful suggestions. They learn about the similarities and differences between themselves. They show an awareness of change, for example, the changes in the weather, such as wearing coats and 'Wellington' boots in winter and shoes and summer dresses or shorts in warmer weather. Children count confidently with adult help and enjoy number rhymes and songs. They

are beginning to use mathematical terms, such as 'more' and can identify mathematical shapes. Children's understanding of space, shape and measure is developing. They use language, such as 'bigger' to describe the different size sand castles. They act out scenarios through role play opportunities, such as pretending to making dinner and a cup of tea. Children are developing hand eye co-ordination and some are very competent with using scissors. However, the opportunities for children to freely access information communication technology are not offered regularly. Use of the outdoor areas ensures children's developing physical skills are regularly promoted. For example, in the garden, children play with a stepping path, ride on toys, musical instruments, a swing and wheelbarrows. Overall the provision plans and provides activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

There is a policy on equality which promotes anti-discriminatory practice for all children. They have access to varied resources, toys and equipment to stimulate their individual development. All children are welcomed and play a full part in the group because staff value and respect their individuality and the family context for each child. Staff gather information regarding children's background needs, such as their religion and language at home. Although, opportunities in everyday practical or play situations do not always fully include children with English as an additional language. Children have extensive opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through planned activities and visitors to the nursery. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are recognised and supported in the setting and staff enable individual progress for children. Children's behaviour is good. Staff effectively support younger children in sharing and turn taking. They set consistent boundaries for two to five year olds which helps them learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Although, group rules are not promoted in a way to enhance children's independence and self help skills. For example, in words and pictures. Children's understanding of right and wrong is increased as they respond to gentle reminders to care for their environment, the resources and each other. Children have good relationships with members of staff and other children.

The partnership with parents is good. This contributes significantly to children's wellbeing in the pre-school. Parents are offered a good variety of information on Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum, including planned activities. Examples of the children's work which, can be taken home or displayed. Effective information is shared and parents feel their children are included. New parents to the setting feel that staff are already getting to know their children's characters. Parents are pleased with the service they receive and are able to verbally communicate with their child's key worker. The parents are not aware of the complaints policy. This policy is now in a written format for the parents. The supervisor has a positive understanding of the policy for parents to make a complaint, but is unfamiliar with the complaints procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Most staff, including the managers, are qualified and staff are vetted. Children are never left alone with unvetted persons. Currently there is a system in place to retain Criminal Records Bureau information. The retention of this information now meets the data protection procedures. Staff are inducted and records identify future planned training events. Their professional development is addressed although, these appraisals are not held regularly and they are still developing the induction programme for new staff. Children's care and learning, safety and wellbeing are promoted. Staffing ratios meet with requirements, and children have space to move around and make choices as their play. Toys and resources are well organised to encourage safe easy access for all children. Policies and procedures contribute to the efficient and safe management of the provision and help to promote children's welfare, care and learning. Records about individual children are shared with their parents. Records of attendance show when the children and staff are present. However, the core times are not clearly recorded. The registration certificate is displayed and now the up to date insurance is also displayed.

The leadership and management is good. Good progress has been made in developing the pre-school so that all children benefit from the educational provision and make good progress. Daily discussions ensure staff are fully informed, included and valued. Staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage is good and leaders have clear aims for the personal development and achievements of all children. All staff work effectively as part of a team. They are committed and the integration of care and nursery education enhances children's learning. New staff receive support to discuss strengths and areas in which to improve. The providers are continuing to improve the recruitment and vetting procedures in line with recent changes in regulations. All recommendations from previous inspections have been met. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The previous inspection highlighted one recommendation to; assess current toys and equipment for positive images of disability.

Since the last inspection; they have assessed and extended the resources to reflect positive images of disability.

As a result, children have opportunities to choose activities which meets their own interest and play with a wider range of toys and resources reflecting positive images of disability.

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 good hygiene practices are in place in order to prevent the risk of cross infection.
- develop staff's understanding of the child protection procedures including allegations of abuse made against a member of staff or a volunteer.

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):

- provide further opportunities for children to freely access information communication technology.
- continue to develop opportunities for children with English as an additional language to be fully included in all activities.

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