



Ide Hill Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127275
Inspection date	07 December 2006
Inspector	Melissa Tickner
Setting Address	The Village Hall, Ide Hill, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN14 6JR
Telephone number	01732 750621
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Registered person	Ide Hill Preschool
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?

Ide Hill Pre-School is committee run and opened approximately 30 years ago. It operates from the village hall in Ide Hill, near Sevenoaks, Kent. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.15 to 12.15, Monday to Friday, during term time only. An optional lunch club runs on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, when children can stay until 13:00. All children share access to an outdoor play area.

There are currently 23 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, seven children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area. The pre-school supports 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, four 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 good.

Children are developing a good understanding of being healthy. They thoroughly enjoy their varied snacks which are nutritious and rotated on a daily basis. For example they tuck in to apple, cucumber and pieces of pitta bread. They talk about healthy food and eating with staff as they eat their snack and as they drink their milk or water staff discuss the health value of drinking and why milk is good for you. Children independently help themselves to cups of water at other times when they are thirsty. These aspects ensure that children are well nourished and developing an understanding of healthy eating and remain hydrated. The system of recording dietary needs is clear and ensures all staff understand individual requirements.

Children are aware of good hygiene practices; they wash their hands after toileting, before cookery and eating their snack. They recognise the need to do this 'to get rid of the germs' and know to dispose of their tissues after blowing their noses. These aspects help avoid the spread of infection and promote good practices. Staff use clear methods to ensure good standards of hygiene such as the use of antibacterial cleaners for table tops, washing their hands before preparing food and serving children's snacks on plates. Three of the six staff are first aid trained and at least one first aid trained member of staff is present every day, ensuring that children can be cared for appropriately should an emergency arise.

Children are developing strong skills in physical development. They play outdoors every day and in most weathers, thoroughly enjoying the opportunity to develop their skills and benefit from the fresh air and physical play. They show great skill in using the scooters and ride on toys and navigate around one another skilfully. They recognise the effect of activity on their body, saying they are hot and need to remove their coats after playing actively for some time. Children enjoy indoor activities; they take part in the runner beans games, stretching, running wiggling and jumping, showing they can move in a range of ways. Physical activity is actively planned for and other opportunities available to them include use of large scale indoor equipment, Tai Kwando sessions, using the parachute and regular 'welly walks'. As a result of all these aspects, children are developing a strong awareness of the importance of physical play, are able to develop their physical skills well and make good progress in this area of learning.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and friendly environment. They have use of a large bright and inviting hall, and once a week when this is unavailable, a smaller side room. Staff make good use of the space, hanging posters and laying out a wide range of activities around the hall creating a welcoming atmosphere for children. Children can choose from a very good selection of activities, resources and toys set out for them. Many of these are made of natural materials and are good quality for example a range of wooden fruit and vegetables within the home

corner set up as a café. Staff are also in the process of creating a set of picture labels so that children can see pictorial evidence of the available toys and resources. All aspects of safety indoors have been well considered and daily risk assessments are completed. Staff promote children's safety in practice, they encourage children to sit carefully on their chairs and supervise the outdoor play area well. Security of the hall is well maintained with external doors locked and a buzzer alert system in place and when the small hall is in use stair gates are in place and the door is locked. These aspects ensure children are cared for in an appropriate and safe environment, which is organised effectively to meet their needs.

Children thoroughly enjoy using the outdoor play area which provides them with plenty of space in which to play. However currently there are some exposed parts of the hedge and their outdoor play area is not fully enclosed. These aspects pose potential hazards to children. Clear procedures are in place for keeping children safe when on outings. Staff have a good awareness of child protection issues, consequently children's welfare and well-being is considered a high priority and is promoted by staff at all times. All these aspects help keep children safe and as a result, children are beginning to understand safety and why keeping themselves safe is important.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and confident at the pre-school. They arrive with enthusiasm and confidence and settle quickly through staff's warm welcome and support. All children are welcomed and treated as individuals; staff meet their needs extremely well. Children under three are supported well and staff plan for them in line with the Birth to three matters framework. Children are settled, happy and enthusiastic throughout the morning. Staff organise sessions well to ensure children develop close relationships with their key workers and have the space and time to use all the available play opportunities.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have developed a clear planning system, with long, medium and short term plans ensuring clear coverage of all areas of learning. Clear daily planning sheets identify the aims and objectives of activities and children's observations are taken in to account when planning activities. Staff are skilled and knowledgeable in their roles. All staff show great levels of enthusiasm and commitment to helping children make good progress according to their individual levels of ability. They are skilled at recognising children's individual needs and helping them make progress according to that. Staff become absorbed in children's activities, talking to them about what they are doing, asking them questions and extending their thinking and skills. For example children delight as they play with the musical instruments and explore the sounds created by a rain maker. Staff talk to the children whilst they take part in their activities, encouraging them to make good progress throughout all activities. Staff are extremely encouraging and sensitive to all children, recognising their interests, needs and abilities. They offer children clear demonstrations, explanations and examples when introducing new activities for the first time. Consequently children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Children are motivated and enthusiastic and are offered some interesting and challenging activities to stimulate them and help them make

progress. Staff are skilled at deploying themselves effectively to offer children appropriate support and space to initiate their own activities and play independently or with their peers.

Children make good progress in all areas of learning. They show they have formed strong friendships and relate well to one another. Children play at their favourite activities for extended periods of time and join in activities to promote their confidence. For example they are encouraged to stand at the front and sing a nursery rhyme to the rest of the group if they wish. Children arrive and settle quickly showing they have a strong sense of belonging. Children develop good mathematical skills; they count throughout many of their activities, such as how many blocks are in a tower they are building and count the number of teachers and children. They understand the concept of more or less as they notice there are more staff present one of the days. They understand several other concepts such as same and different, open and closed and over and under, which they talk about during the story they act out outdoors. They have a strong awareness of shapes and new ones are introduced, for example one child is thrilled as she learns about the shape semi-circle and remembers it when asked later. Children recognise shapes such as star, triangle, and diamond as they stick them on their Christmas cards.

Children communicate well and with confidence; they thoroughly enjoy choosing and singing favourite nursery rhymes, they talk about the sounds of letters and are encouraged to sound out the letter of the week. Children delight as they listen to stories being read to them; they engage in discussions about the story and ask and answer questions showing they are interested and absorbed in the story. They also choose to use the book corner and help themselves to books whenever they wish. Children enjoy plenty of mark making opportunities and write shopping lists and take orders in the café, they attempt to write their names on their work and enjoy creative activities that promote mark making skills. Children also enjoy using the chalks and chalk board, pens, pencils and paint.

Children are developing a strong awareness of knowledge and understanding of the world. They take part in activities to promote exploration, such as using the sand tray with different materials including pasta shapes, shredded paper, shaving foam and spaghetti. They can investigate using their senses at the investigation table. For example they can use the magnifying glasses and binoculars and look at a bean plant they have grown and compare it to a younger one. They can construct with stickle bricks, popoids and bricks and are skilled at this. Children show an interest in developing their ICT skills as they enjoy using the play telephones, tills, microwave and washing machine. They do not have use of a computer currently to help them develop skills to be able to complete a simple programme on the computer. However staff have plans to promote this aspect in the future. Children develop a sense of place and of other cultures and beliefs as they take part in activities to help them identify with their local surroundings, also cultural activities such as celebrating Diwali, Hanukah, the Chinese New Year and inviting visitors in to promote other cultures and countries. For example children took part in an 'Indian day' which involved music and dancing, dressing up and food tasting.

Children thoroughly enjoy creative activities and are developing their skills in all aspects. They enjoy being creative in arts and crafts activities and access a wide range of creative resources to support them in creating their own work. They enjoy decorating Christmas baubles, painting with vegetables and fruit, and creating Christmas cards. Children take part in musical activities and explore sounds getting louder and quieter when using musical instruments of their choice.

They also thoroughly enjoy opportunities to sing, including practising songs for their Christmas nativity. Children have strong imaginations and staff provide a wide range of good quality resources to foster this. They have an extremely well stocked home play corner which is regularly rotated and children play in this for extended periods of time. They use their imagination as they take part in a 'bear hunt' acting out the story with the staff member who reads it to them.

As a result of all these aspects, children are making good progress at the nursery and enjoy and achieve in all activities in which they take part.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are extremely well met by the staff who recognise children as individuals, are supportive to them and caring in their interaction. For example, staff skilfully support children with English as an additional language and encourage children in line with their particular interests. Staff keep clear observation records to enable them to support children in making good progress, according to their individual ability. Staff are skilled in helping children feel valued, supported and well cared for. As a result, children are developing good levels of confidence and independence at the pre-school. They develop an awareness of the wider society and other cultures through well planned activities and a variety of resources and activities depicting positive images. The nominated SENCO is currently completing relevant special needs training and has a good understanding of special needs issues. This helps to ensure that children with special educational needs are supported and have their needs met. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is managed with an extremely positive emphasis. Staff use praise and encouragement with children constantly, and encourage good manners, sharing and turn taking. Children begin to develop their social skills as they are encouraged to look at one another as they talk and listen to each other. Staff place a positive emphasis on reinforcing children's desirable behaviour and make good use of positive words and actions. If children have achieved something particularly well they also receive a certificate. Staff value children's work, contributions and efforts. Methods used by staff for managing children's behaviour are effective and work extremely well in practice. This contributes to helping children feel secure and understand the behaviour rules of the setting.

Partnership with parent is good. Parents are actively involved with the pre-school and operate a supportive parents committee. Parents are kept well informed through regular newsletters, annual parents' evenings, contact books and daily discussions between parents and their children's key workers. Parents feel well informed about their children's progress and are also actively encouraged in their children's learning through the 'information and activities at home' sheet which helps encourage parents to extend their children's learning at home. Parents are also invited to take part in welly walks and other activities organised by the pre-school. Parents can view the planning displayed on the notice board and receive information to help them feel well informed about the Foundation Stage of education. Systems to work with parents are effective and help to keep them informed about their children's care and education.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

A committed and dedicated manager, supported by an extremely enthusiastic team of staff operate well run sessions and are consequently promoting strong outcomes for children. Documentation is well organised and stored, with the majority of required paperwork in place including evidence of how the group are progressing and evaluating themselves, and a well organised, detailed operational plan in line with the outcomes for children. Some minor aspects of paperwork require updating or implementing, such as updating and reviewing policies.

Clear systems are in place for the recruitment of new staff and this is supported by a policy. However health checks are not currently completed on new staff. Systems are in place for the induction of new staff but no induction documentation is currently in place. The manager ensures all staff hold appropriate police checks and many of the staff are qualified, ensuring a safe and suitable staff team care for the children at all times. Good ratios are maintained and staff deploy themselves well, supporting children effectively. This enables them to offer a well run session, contributing to them offering children good learning opportunities.

Leadership and management is good. Staff work extremely well as a team and are knowledgeable, committed and enthusiastic about their roles. Staff are keen to attend regular training opportunities and their developments and achievements are assessed through staff appraisals. Staff show they are keen to make changes and progress to the benefit of the pre-school and have clear systems in place to assess their strengths and areas for development and regularly review these. Clear evidence shows how staff have made changes recently to promote good outcomes for children and have become actively reflective, welcoming new ideas, suggestions and improvements. These aspects contribute to positive outcomes for children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspections were completed in March and October 2004. Several recommendations were set in relation to both care and education.

Staff now keep documentation relating to their appraisals and a policy has been implemented on equal opportunities. Resources to promote the diversity of our society have been expanded. The complaints policy has been updated and makes reference to the requirement to keep a complaints record.

Staff have reviewed their systems for planning and this now includes detailed plans covering short, medium and long term planning. All plans are in line with the six areas of learning and shows how resources are used and learning objectives. ICT resources are available to children such as a till, telephone, remote control car and a tape recorder however no computer is currently available to help children's understanding of operating programmable programmes. The book corner has been organised with bean bags and cushions to create an inviting, welcoming area. Books are regularly rotated to provide children with variety and during the inspection this area is accessed independently by children.

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):

- improve the security of the outdoor play areas to ensure they are fully enclosed and safe
- develop and build on aspects of paperwork to ensure all documentation is in place and in line with the National Standards

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):

- consider expanding the range of ICT resources to enable children to complete simple programmes and develop their ICT skills

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