



Penenden Heath Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127441
Inspection date	07 February 2007
Inspector	Susan Jennifer Scott
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Registered person	Penenden Heath Pre School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

Penenden Heath Pre-School opened in 1966. It operates from one large room in the Penenden Heath Social Hall at Penenden Heath. The pre-school mainly serves the local area.

The setting is registered to provide places for up to 24 children aged between two and five years.

There are currently 59 children from two and a half years to five years on roll. This includes 47 children in receipt of funded nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Children who have learning difficulties or disabilities or have English as an additional language are welcome to attend the setting.

The group opens five days a week, term time only. Sessions are from 09:00 to 11:30 hours each morning and from 12:15 to 14:45 hours on each day of the week except Tuesday when there is only a morning session.

There are 11 part time staff work with the children, of these nine staff have an early years qualification equivalent to level two or three. And one member of staff is currently on a training programme. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in an attractive, clean and tidy environment where there are good routines to ensure toys, resources and equipment are clean and hygienic. Children participate in routines and activities that enable them to learn the importance of good hygiene and healthy living. For example, children understand the need to wash their hands before and after eating and when they use the toilets. As a result children's skill in managing their personal hygiene is good.

The children are protected from infection by the good practice of staff who can refer to information on infectious diseases and illness. Children are also protected by the training that staff have in first aid skills so that in the event of an accident staff can deal appropriately with injuries. However, staff have not reviewed procedures to discover if they require training to administer specialist medication such as inhalers or epi-pens. The record keeping and documentation ensures parents are informed of accidents and illness so that children's good health is promoted.

Children benefit from a choice of healthy food and drink at snack times when they enjoy a variety of vegetables, fruits, cheese or crackers. They enjoy the good social opportunities offered to them at snack times when they can choose when to sit at the table and eat or drink. However, they do not consistently use plates for snacks to reinforce their understanding of healthy eating habits. Many children independently pour themselves a drink of milk or water during this routine and can help themselves to water when they feel thirsty. This encourages children to develop healthy habits and promotes their independence. Staff have good systems to ensure that all food and drink complies with parental instructions and children's preferences, enabling them to have confidence in the choices offered.

Children explore the interesting play and learning opportunities in the outdoor environment. This provides them with access to fresh air and vigorous physical play on a regular basis. They enjoy opportunities to use a climbing frame and show good co-ordination when balancing on the beams which are used imaginatively to support other areas of learning.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children arrive happily and mostly settle well. They enjoy their play in a warm and welcoming environment with attractive displays of their work showing that staff value children's

contributions. Children are unable to leave the premises without a suitable adult as security of the premises is very good.

Children benefit from playing in a spacious, well organised environment. This allows them to move around and play safely. They have easy and safe access to a varied range of toys and resources appropriate for their age and which are carefully selected to ensure they are safe for children to use. Resources are used to enable the children to initiate their own play and all children are occupied because staff support their play well. There are sufficient numbers of child sized chairs and tables to allow children to play in flexible groups.

Regular risk assessments, indoors and outdoors, ensure children's safety. Children and staff have a good understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of a fire because these are regularly practised. Staff are effectively deployed to ensure the safety of the children and are vigilant at all times; they supervise the children effectively and ensure they are aware of how to move around safely, encouraging them to tidy away toys.

Staff have an appropriate understanding of child protection and know what action to take if they have concerns about a child in their care. This enables them to safeguard the welfare of children by implementing the written policy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good range of activities that are stimulating and well balanced for all ages and include quiet and active play. Some are adult initiated and some free choice; all help children to make progress in their learning and development. For example, during a music and movement session children are encouraged to respond 'loudly' and 'quietly' using instruments like the tambourine. This enables children to learn vocabulary, to follow instructions and to learn to control their physical responses.

Snack times are successfully used by staff to enable small groups to engage in social activity, and they use these opportunities to build on their understanding. For example, children discuss various food and staff explain how the apple is divided into portions as well as pointing out the seeds which are visible when the apple is cut.

Children are confident when the routine changes and readily participate in whole group activities when staff gather them together and give instructions for them to follow. Children clearly enjoy these times and gain understanding of counting, speaking and listening and various physical activities. Although the staff do not employ the Birth to three framework they do plan and deliver a variety of learning and play opportunities that are successfully differentiated to meet the needs of all children attending.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Children enjoy and learn from a broad and varied range of activities. A weekly plan of activities covering the six areas of the curriculum offers varied play opportunities for all children during planned and free play. Staff ensure that their knowledge of children's individual abilities is used to plan the next steps for individuals through the contributions of keyworkers. They use a system to record children's progress through the curriculum stepping stones, ensuring opportunities reflect children's capabilities and interests in all areas of learning.

Whole group times are used to skilfully engage all children and encourage them to participate as well as to review their experiences. For example, examples of children's work is discussed and praised at this time, building their confidence and encouraging self esteem.

Children approach staff for support, indicating good, trusting relationships are built. They are interested in the opportunities available and spend time concentrating on self-chosen activities. Children independently organise their play, selecting from the choices offered and are confident enough to take risks during group activities, often solving their own problems.

Children develop their interest in books which are provided on the interest table to support their understanding of the topic. For example, there are several 'Topsy and Tim' books which describe visits to the Doctor or Hospital to underpin their knowledge of the current theme of 'People who help us'. They develop very good listening skills as staff provide clear instructions and encourage good conversations.

A stimulating range of equipment develops children's mathematical thinking, such as challenging puzzles, games and varied construction sets. Children explore shapes and patterns when they match simple shapes to the pieces of paper they have cut out and when they weave using coloured paper strips.

Children enjoy and learn from a range of activities that allow them to explore and investigate; for example, they have fun using the cooked spaghetti and coating it with glitter and paints to make prints. They are able to observe and contrast the differences between the uncooked and the cooked spaghetti as both types are provided for them to experience.

Children enjoy the challenge of performing star jumps and use their physical skills confidently when using the balance beam. They demonstrate good dexterity when using scissors to cut paper or dough and when they pour drinks from the jug at snacktime.

Children's creative and imaginative development is encouraged through activities such as making musical shakers, painting, and singing to musical tapes. Staff are skilled at promoting participation in movement, music and singing activities which children clearly enjoy.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a range of resources reflecting positive images such as posters and pictures, toys and books, though these do not always promote a balanced view of society and reflect the identity of the community. Staff are fully aware of the individual needs and preferences of all the children and work hard to cater for these.

Staff work closely with parents to promote the individual needs of children. They liaise closely with a variety of agencies to ensure that children experience inclusive practice and enjoy their experiences here. Strategies to enable individual children to progress well and feel secure and confident are in place and successfully shared with other professionals and parents, although there are no individual play plans.

Children play harmoniously together and respond positively to staff. They have good relationships with staff who have high expectations of behaviour and make their expectations explicit. For example, children are encouraged to pass food to each other at snacktime and to thank each other. The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are given information on the activities and receive information on the Foundation Stage curriculum and funding. They have opportunities to discuss their children's progress with their child's keyworker, focussing on the records of assessment. All relevant information is gathered on the registration form to ensure children are cared for according to parents' wishes. Parents contribute to an initial assessment of their child to ensure staff have a good knowledge of individual needs and achievements. This enables staff to build on what children already know. Parents are encouraged to become involved in the management committee or to offer whatever support they can.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children benefit from an organisation which has secure systems in place to support and value them. Systems for induction, training and regular staff meetings are in place and the management committee supports staff effectively.

Staff are able to update their knowledge and skills through regular training. They ensure methods of working with children under three are appropriate but do not yet implement the Birth to three framework. The staff have investigated and use programmes such as write dance and use this to support children's development and learning effectively. As a result, children outcomes to promote children's welfare, care and learning are constantly developing.

There are policies and procedures in place to meet the National Standards. Consequently, children benefit from a staff team that have a secure understanding of good practice. The required documentation is regularly updated and reviewed as well as being available to parents, although some is completed in pencil.

Leadership and Management is good. Children benefit from a strong staff team and a management committee who share common aims. Staff work closely together to ensure the effective delivery of the programme and experience good support and guidance from the supervisor, enabling them to be clear about their roles and responsibilities. The staff use the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage well to plan and provide a balanced curriculum. The success of the programme is mainly due to the commitment, enthusiasm and skill of the staff team who interest the children and effectively promote their choices and independence.

Children benefit from assessments of how well their needs are met because staff monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the nursery education.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous care inspection there were two recommendations. One was to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues which has been accomplished through attendance at a course and sharing the information amongst the staff. A second was to devise and make available to parents, a written statement on learning difficulties and disabilities which is consistent with current legislation and guidance and ensure that this is understood and implemented by all staff. The statement of learning difficulties and disabilities is consistent with recent legislation and there now are two members of staff who share responsibility for implementing policies and liaising with the local authority staff.

At the previous education inspection there was one point for consideration. This was to further develop the system for evaluating activities and ensure that all staff can access the information. There is now a system to evaluate activities used by staff who can refer to this to modify and supplement the activities they deliver to ensure these meet the needs of all the 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 can be seen 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):

- review procedures to ensure that administration of specialist medication meets all requirements
- ensure all mandatory documentation is a reliable and permanent record

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 a selection of resources to reflect the home language of children attending

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