



## Shepherdswell Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	127535
<b>Inspection date</b>	23 February 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Annie Williams
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<b>Registered person</b>	Shepherdswell Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Shepherdswell Pre-School is a committee run pre-school that first opened in 1972. The pre-school is situated within the rural village of Shepherdswell, Kent and occupies premises within the village hall. The pre-school serves families from the local community and the wider surrounding area.

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 13.00 term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 38 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 18 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties

and/or disabilities [LDD] and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs nine members of staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and four are working towards a qualification.

The pre-school receives support from the Local Authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

The premises are clean because practitioners apply effective cleaning strategies such as, wiping tables with anti-bacterial spray and cleaning toilets. Accident records and medicine records contain relevant information but it is not clear if medication has been given. A sick child policy, up-to-date first aid training amongst the practitioner team and parents permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment means that practitioners are able to act in the best interest of children in the event of an illness or accident.

Children learn about the importance of personal hygiene through the routine of hand washing. Younger children receive gentle reminders and assistance from practitioners. All children learn about the importance of healthy foods at snack time and are provided with many healthy choices; they talk about the 'yummy' fruit and vegetables that are carefully prepared for them. Children know that these are important to keep them healthy. Careful thought has been given to promoting healthy eating by practitioners; they involve parents by encouraging them to bring in fruit and vegetables every day for their children to share at snack time. Children who stay for lunch club enjoy a sociable occasion; they chat with practitioners and their friends about the contents of their lunch boxes. Children confidently use the water dispenser when they are thirsty, enabling them to keep their body hydrated.

Every day children experience physical exercise to keep their bodies healthy and develop their large muscle skills. Children climb, jump, balance and run with confidence. They are able to move around the setting freely and safely because practitioners plan the environment carefully.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Careful consideration is given to arrival and collection time to ensure children are protected and that they can only leave the premises with authorized adults. The pre-school is very welcoming to children and adults; in particular the downstairs room displays children's work and shows the children that they are valued. The entrance hall is carefully prepared each morning so that parents have the information they need. There is a variety of toys and equipment that are clean and in good condition to enable children to play safely.

The premises are sometimes used by other adults during the pre-school opening hours so practitioners are vigilant about children's safety; they escort them to the toilet and ensure that

the door to the pre-school is kept locked. Children are aware that practitioners are a safe person to go to because they all wear a red shirt with the pre-school logo. Fire drills are carried out periodically and fire detection equipment is accessible in all areas of the building to contribute children's safety.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by practitioners because they have a clear knowledge and understanding of their responsibility to protect children. However, the child protection policy does not include all of the required information, for example, procedures to follow if allegations of abuse are made against a member of staff or volunteer. As a result, practitioners and the committee are unaware of these procedures to fully safeguard children's welfare.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy at pre-school and settle quickly. They respond positively to practitioners who are kind and caring in their approach towards them. Children have a variety of experiences at pre-school; they delight in exploring and investigating with wet play such as, foam. Mark making features regularly throughout the session; children make marks with paint, in the dough as they push trains through it and in the foam with their fingers.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Practitioners have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn. As a result, children are making satisfactory progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Children clearly enjoy their time at pre-school and readily talk to and play with their friends. Activities are organised to enable children to play together and as a result positive relationships are forming.

Children are clearly comfortable at the pre-school. They have the confidence to know that practitioners allow them to initiate their own learning experiences, for example, painting with brushes at the easel develops into painting with their hands. The role-play area is popular amongst the children; they prepare a picnic by packing the backpack and going into another area laying out a cloth and setting out a picnic. Children dress up as fire fighters or princesses to explore what it's like to be someone else. A range of musical instruments are available but children are unable to freely explore the sounds that the instruments make because they are overly directed and the instruments are not readily accessible. The attractive display boards in the downstairs room show practitioners clearly work hard to produce pre-cut templates but this does not allow children to represent their unique perceptions of the world.

Children respond positively to practitioners praise and are very well behaved. They are developing independence in most areas, for example, they confidently access water to quench their thirst. The very healthy snack bar is popular and children confidently choose from a range of attractively presented and healthy foods such as, yellow peppers, melon, celery and cucumber. Although the snacks are extremely well presented and reflect practitioner's hard work, children do not regularly take an active part in the preparation of the food to further promote their independence. Children make choices from the range of activities set out by the practitioners

but independent self-selection is not yet fully established to further extend aspects of children's independence. Children learn to take care of their environment through tidying away and plans are intended to introduce 'Timmy' the tidy up toucan to give children a tidy up warning so that they have time to complete their chosen activity.

Useful questioning techniques are applied by practitioners to make children think. Children are confident speakers. For example, at snack time they sit together with their friends and compare their snacks commenting what is the same, matching the colours of their cups and the contents of their dishes. Children readily approach practitioners to ask for assistance or share information; practitioners respond by crouching down to the children's level to respond to them. Children receive opportunities throughout the session to see print in the environment and choose their names. For example, on arrival they select their names and stick them on to the pre-school fish pond board and then later in the morning they select their name and post it in the box at snack time. Children receive many opportunities to make marks and 'write' for a purpose following the positive role models of practitioners, but this is not always extended. For example, by encouraging children to label their own work and by pointing out print in the environment. The book corner is well defined and attractively presented with easily accessible books, puppets and cushions. Consequently, children are frequent visitors to the book area and are supported by practitioners in finding out how a book works. Further importance is placed on the value of books by the weekly visit to the village library bus to choose books for the pre-school.

Children enjoy plenty of mathematical activities; they sort, match and classify when playing with the farm animals and playing board games with practitioners such as 'the shopping list game'. Counting is a regular feature of the day and children learn mathematical language introduced by practitioners when chopping fruit such as, half and whole. There is a number line that children are able to refer to in their play and magnetic numbers allow children to explore number shapes. A recent display of the very hungry caterpillar shows how children have used numbers as labels. Different size shape templates and puzzles allow children to explore shape and space but more able children find the puzzles too easy. Photographs and displays show how children learn about change and growth through the life cycle of a butterfly, making jelly and growing beans and cress. The pre-school has a computer which children use to support their learning; they are beginning to use the mouse and enjoy completing simple programmes such as choose and tell nursery rhymes. Children use a range of equipment that enables them to develop their small muscles; they cut, paint, draw and place small pegs in boards. They freely move around the setting and do so safely upstairs and downstairs.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled at pre-school; they arrive happily and immediately go off to play. Children learn about right from wrong because practitioners remind them of how to behave. Children respond well to practitioners praise and encouragement and are very well behaved. They are encouraged to show appreciation of other cultures and beliefs, for example by investigating different foods. A display and photographs show how children have recently found out about Chinese New Year. Books, resources and posters further support children's knowledge and understanding of the differences in our society. Children find out about the

local and wider world through visits to the post office and village library bus. Children with LDD are well supported within the setting by knowledgeable practitioners who work in partnership with outside agencies. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is satisfactory. Parents are extremely happy with the care provided at the pre-school. They are greeted very warmly by friendly practitioners and are welcomed into the setting every day. The reception area is carefully prepared each day to welcome parents and keep them informed. The operational plan is out each day for parents but not all policies are up-to-date. Parents are provided with a prospectus informing them of the educational programme. However, systems have not yet been established to enable parents to contribute towards children's development records and to establish children's starting points so that they are fully involved in their child's education.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The Leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. Practitioners are a happy team and work hard to provide children with a range of experiences. The manager has a clear vision of the setting and is developing systems to monitor, review and evaluate practice to identify strengths and weaknesses to improve the nursery education. Many systems have already started to develop, such as planning and observations. Practitioners meet regularly to discuss the educational programme. Planning and assessment continues to evolve. Observations are made on each child but they are not yet used to inform the planning based on children's interests and next steps. Planning identifies all areas of learning and includes a learning objective but does not yet include differentiation to provide appropriate challenges for children and practitioners are not always familiar with the learning objective. As a result, they are unsure of what the children are expected to learn from the planned activity.

Adults working at the setting have undergone checks to establish their suitability and over half hold a relevant qualification. The remainder of unqualified staff are studying for a qualification in early years. The recruitment procedures are satisfactory and have recently been updated to ensure clear guidance for the committee to develop rigorous and robust recruitment procedures. The registration certificate is displayed and the attendance register confirms that the provider complies with the conditions of registration. The routine is generally well balanced and all the required documentation is under review and stored securely to maintain confidentiality. Policies and procedures are generally understood by practitioners, contributing towards the welfare and care of children. Deployment of staff is good so that children are supported in the pre-school. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Following the last inspection two recommendations were made. These were to request written permission from all parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment and to ensure that all records relating to day care activities are readily accessible on the premises and available for inspection at all times. Parental permission is obtained on entry for seeking emergency

medical advice or treatment and all records are accessible and stored securely on the premises, contributing to positive outcomes for children.

Since the last educational inspection most staff are new to the setting. The new manager has set in place systems to support the staff in the care and education that they provide. The pre-school and the routine is arranged to enable children to use their initiative in their play. Planning and assessment continues to evolve. Planning includes all areas of learning and identifies a learning objective. Regular observations are undertaken on the children and practitioners are beginning to identify children's next steps in learning in order to inform the planning. Consequently, children are making satisfactory progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals.

### **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.

## **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 satisfactory.

### **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):

- further develop children's independence by further exploring independent self-selection and involving them in the preparations of snack time [applies to education also]
- make sure records give clear information about the administration of medication
- ensure practitioners and parents are informed of the procedures to follow if allegations are made against a member of staff or volunteer and develop the child protection procedure to reflect the safeguarding children's welfare board

#### **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):

- use the useful observations made by practitioners to identify children's next steps and inform the planning based on children's interests, what they already know and can do and what they need to learn next [applies to care also]
- ensure all children are provided with sufficient challenge in the activities that they complete
- include parents in establishing children's starting points and provide them with opportunities to contribute to their children's development records
- continue to develop leadership and management of the setting by setting in place systems to monitor, review and evaluate strengths and weaknesses in the educational programme.

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