



Staple Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127634
Inspection date	06 October 2006
Inspector	Tracy Larnach
Setting Address	Mill Road, Staple, Canterbury, Kent, CT3 1LB
Telephone number	07960 321508 or 01304 812124
E-mail	
Registered person	Staple 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?

Staple Pre-School opened in 1998. It operates from Staple Village Hall, near Canterbury, Kent. The pre-school has access to two rooms, a kitchen and toilets. Children have access to an outdoor play area; however, this area is not secure.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. It is open each weekday from 09:15 to 12:00. A lunch club operates for up to four days each week from 12:00 to 12:45.

The pre-school opens term time only.

There are currently 31 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 17 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school staff have experience supporting children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The pre-school employs eight staff. Of these, six 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 good.

The pre-school is clean, bright and welcoming. Children learn about health and hygiene through the daily routine; for example, children help themselves to tissues to wipe their noses, they wash their hands before snack, cooking and after using the toilet. Children know why they wash hands as the staff talk to them about germs. As a result, they are developing good health habits. There is liquid soap and paper towels to help prevent the spread of infection. There is a sick child policy, staff on duty who are trained in first aid and parental permission for emergency medical advice and treatment. As a result, staff are able to act in the best interest of a child should they have an accident or become ill. Medicine and accident records are kept appropriately to promote the welfare of the children.

Snacks are provided by the pre-school. A range of healthy snacks such as fresh and dried fruit, vegetables, bread sticks and plain biscuits are provided for the children to select from. Snack time is relaxed, a staff member sits with the children engaging in meaningful conversations. They talk about where fruit and vegetables grow and she encourages children to try new food. Children are learning about healthy choices at snack time and through other activities during the session; for example, when they talked about the fruit and vegetables prior to printing with them. There is a procedure in place to ensure information pertaining to allergies is shared appropriately. This means that children will be treated quickly if they have a reaction. Water is available throughout the session so that children remain hydrated.

Staff ensure that children have the opportunity to participate in rigorous physical play every day. They play outside as often as possible. If they are unable to go outside staff ensure equipment is available inside to promote their large muscle development. Children enjoy the climbing frame and toys such as bicycles, balls and hoops. These activities promote the children's physical wellbeing.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The pre-school is kept secure. Once the children have arrived the door is locked. Staff deploy appropriately both inside and outside to ensure children's safety; for example, a staff member stays by the door and ticks the children in, actual times are used if children arrive late or leave early. There is an effective system in place for monitoring visitors and an arrival and collection policy to keep children safe. If anyone different is picking up a child their parent's must let the staff know and document the change in the appropriate book. There is a staff absence contingency plan to ensure ratios are always met for the safety and wellbeing of the children. A daily risk assessment is in place to ensure the building and outside area is ready and safe for the children's arrival. Staff have a good knowledge of child protection to ensure the welfare

of children. The fire drill log shows a half term practice. The manager uses the register to ensure that all children have a turn so they become familiar with the procedure.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff set up the pre-school with a wide range of activities to promote children's independent choice. As a result, children enter the pre-school and quickly become involved in play. However, group times are sometimes difficult for the younger children, resulting in them becoming fidgety and scooting about on their chairs. Staff are aware of this and are evaluating these times to make them valuable and appropriate for all children. Staff are kind and caring in their interactions and use lots of praise and encouragement to motivate the children and build their self-esteem. Children each have a key worker and are developing close relationships with them. The use of the Birth to three matters framework to plan for the younger children is evolving. Staff are developing the use of observations to inform the planning. Activities are currently planned that support all children's development. This is because they are able to participate at their level and explore using their senses. For example, the fruit and vegetable printing allowed children to touch, see and smell the fruit, mix the paint and print or finger paint on the paper. In addition, each child was proud of their own unique picture. Children explore a variety of natural materials such as sand, barley and wheat. Their coordination develops as they fill containers and empty them out again. The younger children's interest is captured through songs and the props used to tell stories.

Nursery Education

Teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of early learning goals. They plan using what they know about the children from assessments and observations, these are then linked to a play plan. Children's progress is monitored by cross referencing the assessments, observations and play plan to the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage, from this they develop a report for the parents. However, the observations are not clearly linked to the stepping stones to identify the children's next steps and enable staff to evaluate the success of the planning. Staff deploy themselves well in the setting. They ask lots of questions to make children think. They provide a wide range of activities to interest and stimulate the children. Staff have experience caring for children with disabilities; however, there are currently no children attending the setting with disabilities or learning difficulties. The acting manager has the role of the pre-school's special educational needs coordinator at this time. She is aware that she has not had the required training. To compensate she is in regular contact with the manager who is the trained special education needs coordinator for the pre-school and the area special educational needs coordinator. This ensures any concerns are identified promptly and children's needs are met appropriately.

Children speak clearly and listen well. They use speech to explore real and imaginary experiences; for example, outside two children parked their bicycles to go to the movies, sharing their pretend popcorn as they discussed the film they were watching. Children enjoy stories; staff use props to tell stories causing immense excitement and laughter. As a result, children are developing a love of books. Staff label as much as the environment as possible; for example, opening times on the veterinary surgery created in the role play area. Children write for a purpose as there

are plenty of opportunities to mark make during the session. This means that children begin to learn that print carries meaning. Children's name cards are used routinely to 'check in' for snack or label their work at the end of the day so they become familiar with their names; however, staff do not encourage children to write their own names on their work. Children count confidently as they play. There are many activities that involve sorting, matching and sequencing to develop children's mathematical thinking. In addition, activities such as cooking enables the children to solve simple mathematical problems such as, how many more, when they are counting spoonfuls. Toys such as a large tape measure encourages exploration of space and size.

Children's design and making skills are promoted as they build with a range of objects. They look closely at differences as they play and use descriptive words such as hard, soft and 'squelch.' Children develop a sense of time as they know the routine of the day and talk about significant events in their lives such as outings with their families. Children are learning to operated simple equipment as the staff put phones and cameras in the role play area. Children learn about their own and other's cultures, traditions and holidays; for example, they are currently learning about the Harvest Festival. Children become creative as they participate in a range of crafts. They are encouraged to look at the patterns, use their senses and feel textures. Children enjoy singing songs and become animated as they sing songs such as 'Dingle Dangle Scarecrow', watching their shadows as they dance in the sun. Less emphasis is put on exploring sounds with instruments as they are generally not an option to choose from but brought out for marching bands. Children play imaginatively in the role play area which is changed regularly. They also use their imagination as staff take them on imaginary trips; for example, they pack, get on a plane and travel to Spain. Children move confidently and safely with control. They show sense of self and others; for example, all children enjoyed the bicycles and many were able to pedal competently, travelling at speed across the playground. Children are developing their small muscle skills as they are able to freely use a range of small manipulative toys such as threading, peg boards and hammering with developing control.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are mostly settled in the pre-school. Activities such as a weekly coffee morning during the six week summer holidays contribute to the children settling in well. In addition, it helped staff get to know the children. Staff use positive methods of behaviour management and the children behave well. Staff praise the children for their achievements, this develops their self esteem. However, the use of stickers is not positive for all children. Children are encouraged to take care of their needs; this develops their independence. Positive images are reflected in the environment and holidays and traditions are acknowledged from children's own and other cultures. Children learn to be accepting of others as the staff are positive role models. Children are interested, excited and motivated to learn. They are confident, will speak in a group and are learning to concentrate. There is a lot of laughter during the session as staff are animated with the children. Children are clearly happy and are developing a sense of humour. They are beginning to develop good relationships and are making friends. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Parents are warmly welcomed as they arrive at the pre-school. They receive information about the pre-school and have access to the policies and

procedures. Staff are aware of the requirement to maintain a complaints log. However, the new procedure has not yet been shared with parents.

Partnership with parents is good. The prospectus contains information about the Foundation Stage and the parents receive regular newsletters to keep them informed. Staff ask parents about their children's interests which helps them to assess children's starting points when they enter the pre-school. This continues throughout the year as staff are interested in what the children do at home. Reports on the six areas of learning are prepared for the parents which are sent home before each holiday. Parents can view their children's developmental records at any time. They can contribute to the reports if they wish. As a result, parents are involved in their children's education and informed of their progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The routine is organised to include a range of activities for the children to choose from, a snack, outdoor play and quiet times. The committee has recruiting procedures to ensure staff are suitable to work with the children. They support the staff and undertake regular appraisals to ensure staff are happy in their work and remain suitable. Most of the required documentation for the safe and effective management of the setting and for the welfare and care of children is maintained and stored securely. An uncollected child policy is on file but the lost child policy is missing. However, staff questioned know what to do and are clear on the procedure to ensure children's safety. In addition, the operational plan needs review to ensure the policies and procedures reflect current practice.

Leadership and management is good. Staff meet together regularly to discuss the pre-school and accomplish the planning. They work very well as a team and each have strengths they share. There are systems in place to review, monitor and evaluate the nursery education programme and identify strengths and weaknesses. The pace and routine of the session is generally well organised; however, some children find group times difficult; as a result they become fidgety and interrupt children who are interested. Staff are deployed well and systems are in place to ensure children are monitored and challenged. As a team staff are keen to improve.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last education inspection there were no significant weaknesses to report; however, it was noted that consideration should be given to develop ways in which children can be given prior warning of tidy up time and encourage children to use books more often during free-play. At the last care inspection there were two recommendations made; these were to devise a system for planning and implementing a suitable range of activities for children under three years and to ensure that attendance is recorded in line with current guidance.

Since the last education inspection the routine has been restructured so children have longer to choose what they do and finish all tasks. This gives them plenty of time and a warning for tidy up is no longer an issue. Staff do however, gather the children together to remind them

it is tidy up time so they are all aware it is time to help put the toys away. The staff continue to monitor the children's use of the book area. They are regularly deployed there to sit with small groups of children and read. This encourages the children to visit this area. As a result, they learn how a book works and develop a love of books and reading. Since the last care inspection staff have developed the planning for the children under three. They now use the Birth to three matters framework. This is evolving to ensure outcomes for younger children are appropriately fostered. Children's attendance is now recorded in a way that ensures accountability of all children to promote their safety and wellbeing.

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

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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 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):

- continue to develop the use of the Birth to three matters framework to meet the needs of the younger children
- ensure the complaints procedure is shared with parents
- ensure the lost child procedure is in writing and shared with parents
- update the operational plan to ensure it reflects current practice.

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):

- ensure the observations are linked to stepping stones to show the next steps in the children's learning

- continue to review the routine of the session to ensure group times are appropriately managed and meaningful to the children (this applies to care too).

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