



Covey Pre-School Playgroup (The)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	136095
Inspection date	16 October 2006
Inspector	Valerie Anne Curotto
Setting Address	Unit 4, Baileys Court, Webbs Wood Road, Bradley Stoke, Bristol, Avon, BS32 8EJ
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Registered person	Sheila Frances Partridge
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?

The Covey Pre-School is privately owned and opened in 1993. It operates from a playroom in a converted barn, in the Bradley Stoke area of South Gloucestershire. The pre-school serves the local area and opens five days a week, all year round. It provides care from 08.00 to 18.00 hours, Monday to Friday. Children may attend for the full day or on a sessional basis. Hot meals are available, supplied by an external catering service, or children may bring a packed lunch. There are currently 71 children aged two to four years on roll. This includes 44 children receiving funded education. The setting currently supports some children with additional needs. A team of 13 staff work with the children, some on a part time basis. The majority hold appropriate, early years qualifications. The setting is registered to care for up to 26 children aged two to under eight years. The owner operates a nursery from an adjacent building, for children under three years of age.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The setting demonstrates a strong commitment to children's health through a wide range of written policies and procedures. These are shared with parents and systems are in place to check that these work effectively in practice. For example, children's health is promoted through daily routines which ensure areas they use are clean. There are appropriate arrangements, such as temperature probes, in place for the hot meals delivered each day. Children benefit from varied and generally healthy snacks each day and have independent access to drinking water. They develop an awareness of healthy eating during informal discussion at meal times and related topic work. They learn to keep their bodies healthy and develop independent handwashing routines, supported by staff. They have fun identifying parts of their bodies during games and singing action rhymes. Suitable rest facilities are limited by available space, although children do make use of a quiet, seating area at times.

Children's individual needs are met as relevant health and dietary information is collected from parents and used appropriately by staff. Record keeping is generally effective and ensures information is exchanged with parents about medication and accidents to promote children's health. Children enjoy daily access to indoor activities which encourages aspects of their physical development. They proudly develop balancing skills on a beam and enthusiastically move like animals to music. While children enjoy spontaneous walks in the local area and use of an enclosed garden, the frequency of outdoor play is not consistently planned to promote access by all children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safeguarded as good systems are in place which promote their day to day safety. For example, staff effectively monitor entry to the building and a password system is in place for the collection of children. Risk assessments are continually reviewed and regular spot checks ensure that written policies and procedures are implemented appropriately, so that children are protected. Children are further safeguarded as staff knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and first aid, is updated regularly. Children learn about fire safety through monthly fire drills and enjoyable visits from local firefighters. They develop an awareness of stranger danger and keeping themselves safe through regular discussions at circle time. They understand guidelines for their play as staff offer sensitive reminders to use equipment carefully. Children play in a colourful and attractive environment. They have good access to a wide range of equipment as resources are well organised around the room. Drawer units make the most of available storage space and children confidently request additional equipment, secured on beams above them.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the security of a regular routine which provides a stimulating range of activities. They have plenty of time to independently explore materials within the day's structure of free play and organised group time. Varied activities are put out by staff who involve children in decisions about what they do. As a result, children are well occupied throughout the day and involved in choices about activities. The strong emphasis on group learning ensures children learn to listen and communicate well with others. They develop confidence, with support from skilled staff, and some eagerly sing verses of songs, independently. Children show good levels of concentration and involvement at circle time. They contribute and share information to develop themes, introduced by staff. Children benefit from high levels of adult interaction during free play, which effectively supports their development. Children show interest in their activities and are able to discuss what they are doing. Children enjoy physical play which is accommodated within the main play room each day. They spontaneously use equipment which is varied by staff or request favourite items, such as stilts, hoops and a parachute.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from a long term plan which provides a variety of weekly topics and interest throughout the year. Children's independence and self confidence is fostered well as there is a strong emphasis on their personal, social and emotional development. Other areas of learning across the Foundation Stage are emphasised at different times of the year. However, some aspects of physical development are not consistently planned for, such as running. Short term planning is based on one main, themed activity each week. This also includes an additional monitored activity on which staff focus their observations of individual children. Planning provides good prompts for staff and highlights general extensions to activities, which promote all children's learning. Children are offered spontaneous differentiation by all staff during free play and small group activities, which contributes positively to their development. Children's individual assessments incorporate a variety of useful assessment tools. These are incorporated into termly reports to parents. Examples of children's work and regular written observations contribute to a meaningful and informative record of children's development.

Children's mathematical understanding and language is developed consistently at group time. This is used at regular periods throughout the day to reinforce, colour, number and positional language. Children respond well to the familiar characters used to make this fun, such as a clown, scarecrow and dolls. An effective key worker system and high staff ratios ensure children receive appropriate support. Children beat out rhythms with a range of instruments and sing and clap enthusiastically during musical activities. They develop patterns of movement while repeating actions including, turning, sitting down and standing up, in sequence. Children complete simple surveys during the year which promotes their mathematical understanding; they compare how they get to preschool and their likes and dislikes. They confidently use everyday technology, such as cameras and telephones, during spontaneous and planned activities. They learn about growth cycles while growing seeds and discussing the seasons. Children use pens, paints and other implements regularly to make marks and they explore a variety of media during free craft activities. Children develop physical skills using available

space in the playroom, to push prams and manoeuvre sit and ride toys. They improve their hand-eye co-ordination as they catch balls and use small tools with playdough. However, children lack consistent opportunities to freely negotiate open spaces and express a wider range of movement, as these are not routinely planned.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The setting provides a welcoming environment for families and children play in a bustling, lively atmosphere. Children appear settled and relate well to others. They develop positive relationships with the friendly staff and learn to cooperate and negotiate with other children. They increase their awareness of their local community as visitors come in to talk about their jobs and as children go on walks to visit the post box or local shop. Children behave well and they are helpful and friendly. Staff provide positive role models and they reinforce expectations to children in a caring and consistent manner. Any restlessness is picked up quickly by staff who redirect children well, to more productive activities. Children develop an awareness of diversity through topic work and spontaneous discussion. They are familiar with different communication skills, such as Makaton, and learn simple words in European languages. They learn about Divali and other celebrations throughout the year and use multi cultural resources in the role play area. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The keyworker system supports children and their families well, through regular contact. This adds to staff knowledge and understanding of children's individual needs. Children with additional needs receive effective support as staff involve parents and outside agencies in regular planning and review meetings. Partnership with parents is good. A wide range of information is available to parents about the setting, through a prospectus, noticeboard displays and newsletters. Information is routinely gathered from parents about children's development when they start at the pre-school. Children's developmental progress is shared formally at parents' evenings each term, where observations and assessments provide a meaningful record of children's experiences in the setting. An open door policy promotes informal contact and the resolution of any issues at other times.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Effective recruitment procedures ensure the suitability of staff and systems are in place to monitor staff performance and provide them with feedback. This ensures consistency amongst staff in their interaction with children. An ongoing commitment to training and development benefits children as staff continue to develop their skills. Good systems are in place to promote children's health and safety. These include delegated staff and action plans, to address outstanding issues. Children benefit from high staff ratios and good arrangements for emergency cover, which promotes consistency of care and positive interaction with adults.

Documentation is generally well organised, although some aspects of medication and registration arrangements are not comprehensive. Use of space in the setting continues to be reviewed to promote the full range of children's activities, including rest and outside play. Leadership and

management is good. The setting has a clear vision statement and demonstrates a strong commitment to improving the care and education of all children. It is working with the local authority to monitor and develop the provision as it works towards a quality assurance scheme. The manager leads by example in her interaction with children and provides good support to staff to develop their skills. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Three recommendations were made at the last inspection of children's care in 2004. These generally related to information available to parents, including the lost child and child protection policies and aspects of the prospectus. These have now been developed sufficiently and the setting continues to review and update the operational plan, to inform parents and reflect practice within the setting. Two recommendations were made regarding children's education at the same inspection. The first related to improving all staff's understanding of the learning intentions, to enable them to support children more consistently. Good systems are in place to support staff understanding and practice. These are achieved by in-house training and discussion of issues at team meetings. Staff understanding of the Foundation Stage is evident in their support of all children, which consistently promotes individual children's development. This, in turn, is monitored by the manager who provides useful feedback to staff on their interaction with children. Staff development has also had a positive impact on the second recommendation. This related to clearer learning intentions across the six areas of children's learning. These continue to be monitored through ongoing evaluation of children's activities.

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 children have consistent opportunities for outdoor play and access to a restful, comfortable area when required
- continue to develop the operational plan to enhance children's care

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 children have consistently planned opportunities to move freely and use a wide range of movements

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