



345 Pre-Schools Springfield

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	140456
Inspection date	07 December 2006
Inspector	Jennifer Liverpool
Setting Address	c/o Actual Work Shop, Alexandra Park, London, N22 7AY
Telephone number	07778 739319
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Registered person	345 Preschools Limited
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?

345 Pre-schools Springfield opened in 1970 and is one of three settings owned by 345 Pre-Schools Ltd. It is a registered charity run by a voluntary committee of parents. It operates from a purpose built hut in Alexandra Park, located behind Muswell Park Primary School in the London borough of Haringey. A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday in the mornings from 09.15 to 12.00 and 12.45 to 15.15 on Mondays, Tuesday and Thursdays for 38 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school serves the local community.

There are currently 40 children age from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 17 children receive funding for early education. Children come from local catchment areas and they attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties.

The pre-school employs eight members of staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted. Practitioners know and understand how to protect children from infection as they follow health and hygiene procedures and there are clear procedures for dealing with sick children. This helps to minimise the spread of cross infection. There are appropriate provision for hand washing and drying facilities throughout the day. Young children are beginning to learn about the importance of hand washing after using the toilet through simple discussions and older children wash their hands independently and routinely. Practitioners are knowledgeable about first aid and hold up to date qualifications that ensures that children receive appropriate care. Although practitioners are aware of food and hygiene procedures as seen in practice, their training certificate in food and hygiene is not available at this time.

Children are provided with a range of snacks each day. Practitioners gather all relevant information regarding children's diet and medical history. This ensures that children's individual dietary needs are met. Children learn about the importance of healthy eating through discussions; planting and growing their own vegetables and participating in cooking activities. Fresh drinking water and milk are available and more able children help themselves or serve others. Children benefit from daily use of outdoors and enjoy many opportunities to take part in physical play. They use a range of play equipment such as trampoline, climbing frames, rockers and tricycle, all of which helps to develop their balance and coordination. Children's fine motor skills are developing well through handling a good range of small equipment such as pencils, scissors, rolling pins for play dough and puzzles.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from playing in a spacious environment that is surrounded by open fields. The premises are secure and practitioners ensure the safe arrival and departure of children. The indoor play area is appropriately organised, allowing children to move freely and independently. Good use is made of all available wall and ceiling space to display children's art work in two and three dimensions. This creates a warm and colourful environment for children to play and learn. Adult to child ratios are maintained throughout the session because there are contingency arrangements in place in the event of planned or unexpected absence. Toys and play equipment are presented in ways that allows children independence and choice. They have access to an extensive range of developmentally age appropriate toys and equipment.

Children are learning about how to keep themselves safe through gentle reminders; for example, when running in the room children are asked not to run indoors because they may hurt themselves or others. Regular fire drill practises help children to become familiar with the procedures so they learn how to leave the premises quickly and safely. Fire safety equipment are checked annually, however, not all fire exit signs are clearly displayed around the room and

the length of time to evacuate is not included in written records. With the exception of the heating system and an outdoor fence, all other furniture and equipment on the premises is maintained to a satisfactory level. Children have opportunities to go out on visits and parents' consent are obtained; however, there are no written procedures in place to show the steps taken to minimise the risk of children getting lost.

Practitioners are aware of the child protection policies. They have a secure understanding of the signs and symptom of abuse and understand the procedure to follow if they have any concerns about a child in their care. This supports children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are greeted on their arrival and young children are helped to settle in by warm and friendly practitioners. This enables children to feel secure within their surroundings. Children are offered a range of worthwhile activities, which ensures that they have fun whilst they learn. They share their news with practitioners as they arrive and are given full attention when speaking. There is good emphasis on helping children to develop communication and language skills through a range of planned activities, resources and practical routines. For example, children have access to picture exchange information cards that show images of changes to the daily routines such as snack and circle times. This is particularly beneficial to younger children and supports the development of children who are less able as they can communicate their needs.

Young children enjoy the feel, colour and experience of paint, play dough and sand. They have good opportunities to become engage and be involved in pretend play through the many variety of small world play equipment, puppets, dolls and daily access to a role-play area. Children's imaginative skills are further developed through the wide variety of dressing up clothes that represents genders, uniforms and cultural clothing. Children are beginning to identify their own names when they arrive and are learning to recognise alphabet letters during circle time sessions. Practitioners working with children under three years have a secure knowledge and understanding of child development and make good use of the Birth to three matters framework to provide a range of stimulating activities and to guide their observations of children's progress.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. Practitioners have considerable knowledge of the Foundation Stage and understand the different ways children learn. Children are provided with a good balance of adult led activities and those that they initiate themselves. Practitioners carry out regular observations and assessments of children's learning, together with samples and photographs of children's work. This clearly shows how children have progressed over a period of time. Practitioners now ensure that the next steps of children's learning are identified and use this information to plan future activities. Practitioners offer a range of teaching methods such as spending time working with an individual child, working with children in small and large groups in order to support children of various

age and abilities. However, written plans do not clearly show how activities are adapted to consistently meet the individual needs of all children.

Children demonstrate keen interests to learn by becoming purposefully involved in activities set out for them. They respond well to adults and form meaningful relationships with their peers. Children can recognise their own names and those of others. A number of children can write their names; are beginning to write for different purposes as they make marks on doctors note pads and more able children who are keen to learn to write are given appropriate support to further develop their skills. Children have opportunities to repeat and create patterns when using coloured pegs, shape cutters and in painting activities. They have good opportunities to sort by colour and the daily use of puzzles enable children to place in order of size. More able children confidently use mathematical language such as big, small and taller when playing in the role-play area and building models using construction sets. Children have opportunities to measure themselves as a height chart is easily accessible to them. Many children can count accurately up to 20 and beyond. Children's recognition of numbers is reinforced from books, posters and resources.

Children's sense of time is fostered through communication cards, egg timers, changing advent calendar dates and photographic displays. They examine insects and discover wild life through the use of magnifying glass and binoculars. Well planned topics such as 'Ourselves' and 'planting' enable children to learn about themselves and their surroundings, observe growth and change and discover the features of living things. Children's understanding in these aspects of learning is further extended as they are encouraged to recognise similarities and differences through painting self portraits and visiting the local garden centre to see a wide range of flowers and plants. Children have access to a cassette player and occasionally they use cameras, however they do not have enough programmable toys or information technology to stimulate their curiosity of how things work. There are good resources for building and model making including recycled materials and construction sets. Displays of children's work show that they are using their imagination to express their ideas in both two and three dimensional form. Children are developing good painting techniques through exploring with paints and creating tie-dye effect, splash and butterfly painting. Overall, the children are having fun whilst they learn.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed and practitioners are committed to providing an inclusive environment for all children. They support children who have learning difficulties well ensuring they make good progress in their development as they are proactive in providing appropriate care through working jointly with parents and specialist agencies. Children who attend for a variety of session are able to participate in all activities as practitioners share ideas with each other and repeat activities throughout the day. Children learn about themselves, their community and the wider world through discussions, planned activities such as drawing self portraits and celebrating cultural and religious festivities that includes Diwali, Jewish New Year and Christmas. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is well fostered.

Children's behaviour is good and they respond well to practitioners instructions and guidance understanding what is right and wrong and the reasons. Children are beginning to understand

how to behave in a group situation as they asks practitioners to use egg timers to know how long to play with tricycles in order to let others have a turn. Practitioners give constant praise and encouragement and consequently children show high levels of confidence and self-esteem. They cooperate well together during activities, outdoor play and when acting out real life experiences in the role-play area.

Partnership with parents is good. The parents are actively involved in the management committee of the pre-school. They are consistent in participating in the parents' rota scheme, which is beneficial to their children and has a positive influence on their learning. Practitioners' welcome parents' involvement. They invite them to take part in reading stories to children and sharing their ideas or skills. Parents make comments about being happy with their children's progress and seeing how the pre-school operates on a day to day basis. Practitioners ensure that parents are kept well informed about their children's progress and achievements as the need arise; on a daily basis as they see samples and displays of children's work and through regular written assessments. The notice board keep parents informed about topics, curriculum and events and they have access to clear policies and procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The management of the setting failed to notify Ofsted of a significant event, namely the change of manager. This was raised and pointed out that it is a breach of regulation. The pre-school responded appropriately and are committed to taking immediate steps to remedy the situation. As a result of this, no further action will be taken on this occasion because the manager is already known to the children and has been appropriately vetted prior to being employed.

There are good aspects of care particularly in relation to children's play and learning, promoting their welfare and development and working in partnership with parents. All of which enables children to enjoy their stay at the pre-school and progress in their development and learning. As a result, the needs of the range of children who attend are met. There are satisfactory recruitment procedures in place. With the exception of one training certificate, all other written documentation relating to practitioner's suitability to work with children are in place. Children's health needs are met and staff is able to keep them safe. Although the premises are secure and the layout of the room is organised, some electrical equipment needs to be further maintained and evacuation routes clearly identified. All mandatory records are in place and contribute to children's welfare. Although the attendance record is completed on a daily basis, it does not always include required details such as arrival and departure times.

Leadership and management is good. Practitioners work well together as a team. They have defined roles and responsibilities to ensure that the pre-school runs smoothly. The management actively encourages training and development, which supports children within the setting. The use of observations and assessments has been greatly improved and evaluates how children are progressing towards the early learning goals. These are now beginning to identify the next steps in each child's learning to further develop their knowledge and understanding. Effective systems are in place to identify areas for improvement and this had made good impact on the quality of teaching and learning. There are good links with parents who are actively involved

in the management of the pre-school; children's care and learning through the parent rota scheme and contributions. This has enhanced children's learning.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Children Act inspection the pre-school was asked to extend the range of resources to reflect positive images of language and disability and maintain all required records, policies and procedures.

Practitioners worked in partnership with parents to develop the provision for anti-discriminatory resources to include books, posters and small world play equipment. Children have access to these on a daily basis and as a result, they are helped to learn about differences in their community. All policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and parents are encouraged to read and sign records to confirm notification of accidents and medication administered to their children. By meeting the recommendations, the setting has improved the quality of care and children's welfare.

At the last Nursery Education inspection, it was recommended that the pre-school develop the use of observations to plan the next steps in children's learning and extend the selection of books to include factual information to support topics and children's interests.

Practitioners have developed written observation records to clearly show where children are at in their development and hold regular meetings to discuss and identify the steps to be taken to build on children's knowledge and skills. This has enabled children to make good progress in their all round development and learning. Children now have access to a greater range of books that are factual, informative and is used appropriately to support their interests and learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 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):

- devise a lost children's policy
- meet any recommendations made by the health and safety officer, ensure exit routes are clearly labelled and review the recording of fire drills
- maintain up to date written documentation of the daily attendance register with all required details.

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):

- extend the resources for knowledge and understanding of the world by providing more programmable equipment and information technology to enable children to make use of it to further support their learning
- further develop planning to clearly show what children are to gain from activities, and in addition, how activities are adapted to meet the needs of children of various abilities.

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