



Cherry Tree Pre-School (Warminster)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	145860
Inspection date	29 November 2006
Inspector	Catherine, Louise Sample
Setting Address	The Community Centre, Firbank Crescent, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 0BY
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Registered person	Army Welfare Centre
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 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?

Cherry Tree Pre-School opened in 1969. It is situated in the Community Centre on the army camp on the outskirts of Warminster. The pre-school serves the army community and is managed by a committee of Army Welfare representatives and parents. The group is open from 09.15 to 12.00 every weekday during term time.

The pre-school is registered to care for 26 children aged three to five years of age. There are currently 23 children on roll, of whom 20 receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

There are five members of staff, of whom three hold an early years qualification and one is currently training. The group receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning about healthy living. They talk about milk making your teeth strong and there are posters and puzzles promoting healthy eating. They are learning about their physical needs. For example, children decide to come in for a drink when they get too hot running outdoors. They are also learning about good hygiene practice. They wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet and staff show them how to do so thoroughly. They use paper towels to dry their hands in order to prevent cross infection. They know why they need to wash their hands and discuss germs. Staff frequently remind children of good hygiene practice such as putting their hands over their mouths when they cough.

Children have healthy food and drink. They enjoy a variety of fresh fruit and raw vegetables at snack time and help themselves to water or milk. Fresh drinking water is available to children throughout the session. Children's dietary needs are recorded and these details are kept out at snack time and during cooking activities to ensure that staff are fully aware of them. Cooking activities are planned to ensure that children's dietary needs are met. For example, they do not use eggs.

Children are protected well from illness and infection. The pre-school's sickness policy includes effective measures. For example, a 24 hour exclusion period for children with sickness and diarrhoea. The policy signposts parents to further information about illness and there is guidance on infection control displayed on the notice board. Children's first aid needs are met well. The majority of staff have attended first aid training and know what to do in a medical emergency. Staff complete the accident book accurately and it is used to identify any hazards. Parents are issued with a head injury advice slip if their child bangs their head at pre-school. Children are helped to keep fit through regular exercise. They use a variety of equipment including a climbing frame, balance bars and a parachute.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are learning about how to stay safe. They are frequently reminded about safe practice such as sitting down when using the scissors. They talk about why it is not safe to use the climbing frame when it is wet. They respond well to fire drill practice. They know why it is necessary to practice leaving the building and carefully follow instruction to ensure rapid evacuation.

Children can move about the setting safely due to effective measures. These include using socket covers and having high handles on the doors so that children cannot open them. The premises are shared with other users and therefore staff accompany children to the toilet. The building is locked during the session and visitors can only gain entry by ringing the bell and signing in. A detailed risk assessment has been made of the premises and staff make daily checks for safety. Children are carefully supervised. For example, if some children choose to

play indoors when others are using the outdoor play area staffing is adapted to ensure they are supervised at all times.

Children's safety outdoors and on outings is ensured. The outdoor play area is fenced and the gate is locked to prevent children getting out. Staff check the outdoor area daily to ensure it is suitable for use by the children. When equipment is wet and slippery children are not allowed to use it. Outings are risk assessed in advance and parental help is sought to ensure that there is a high ratios of adults to children.

Children's welfare is promoted through the staff's sound understanding of child protection issues. Staff are aware of the possible indicators of abuse such as changes in behaviour and unexplained injuries. They are aware of the procedures to follow in the event of concerns. The supervisor has a full understanding of her role. Parents are informed of the pre-school's duty to refer any child protection concerns to the Safeguarding Children's Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident and proud of their achievements. They show staff and visitors what they have done and a child explains that he is doing a puzzle all by himself. Children have a warm relationship with staff. They chat happily to them while doing activities such as making sandwiches and a child praises a member of staff when she jumps during a counting activity.

Children have excellent opportunities to make choices. They independently select what they want to do from a varied range of easily accessible resources. For example, a child decides to take out the train track and another chooses a puzzle. Children can also choose when to have snack and whether they want to play indoors or outdoors at the end of the session. They are going to have an opportunity to do their own planning for a week in the near future which will provide them with an excellent opportunity to choose what they want to do.

Children benefit from effective planning. Planning is closely linked to the Foundation Stage of learning and covers all areas of children's development. It is based on themes such as 'space' and includes a broad range of activities such as cookery and music. Children also benefit from a wide range of resources. For example, they have access to an extensive range of different arts and crafts materials with which to experiment and a selection of multicultural instruments.

Nursery education.

Teaching and learning are good.

Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. They settle well on arrival and have positive relationships with one another. For example, a child shows concern for another who cries when the fire alarm goes off. They are well behaved. They know the golden rules and are able to take turns and share. They are motivated to learn and eagerly take part in activities such as making sandwiches. They have many independent skills such as pouring their own drinks and putting their pictures up on the wall. They are finding out about other cultures and ways of life through activities such as making Diwali lamps.

Children have easy access to a varied range of writing materials and are encouraged to use mark making as a means of recording. There are examples of print displayed around the nursery to help children realise that it carries meaning. They have good opportunities to recognise their names. For example, they put their name cards in a box at snack time. They are confident speakers who talk about what they are doing and initiate conversations with others. They enjoy using the book corner and listening to staff reading to them. They are learning to identify the initial sounds of their names and to clap the number of syllables.

Children have good opportunities to count. For example, they count the number of children in their key group and count dots on a giant dice. They use size and number language in their play. A child talks about having two fish of different sizes. They are becoming aware of basic addition. They count groups of objects and then add them together. They explore different shapes through construction activities and have easy access to a varied range of resources to help their mathematical development including a calculator and a tape measure.

Children are learning about the world around them. They have plants which they water and helped to re-pot. They examine natural objects including shells and fir-cones. They can choose from a variety of different construction materials. They have daily opportunities to use information and computer technology. There is a child sized computer desk to ensure children can use the computer easily. Children talk about home and their families.

Children have good opportunities to use their imaginations. They have easy access to a wide range of art materials with which they can experiment freely. They explore sound by using musical instruments and singing. They also explore texture and smell. For example, smelling cinnamon sticks and feeling fir-cones and shells. They enjoy role play in a well resourced home corner.

Children have varied opportunities to develop their physical skills. They move freely around the outdoor play area and use both small and large scale equipment to develop their fine and gross motor skills. They have good opportunities to use tools such as scissors, knives and glue sticks. They are learning about healthy practice and recognise their own physical needs.

Children benefit from effective teaching methods. Staff offer praise and acknowledgement which helps to boost children's self esteem. For example, a child correctly counts the number of dots on the dice and staff tell him how well he has done. Staff ask questions to make children think and offer support without interfering in children's play. They make regular observations of the children's progress. These observations are collated weekly and used to inform future planning. They are also used to identify the next steps that individual children need to take. Staff have a good working knowledge of the Foundation Stage and this contributes to their ability to identify what children can learn from particular activities. They are also able to challenge more able children by adapting activities.

Overall children are making good progress in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children play an active role in the setting. They help to tidy up, pour their own drinks and put their leftovers in the bin after snack time. They are going to have the opportunity to actively contribute to their learning in the near future when they are going to plan the activities for a week. Children have positive relationships with one another. For example, chatting about what they are doing in the mark making area. They help one another with tasks such as using the sellotape. They contribute to the community. They have recently raised money for Children in Need and took part in the Jeans for Genes day.

Children are well behaved. They willingly take turns and share. They take turns at throwing the giant dice and share mark making equipment. They often say please and thank you spontaneously and know the golden rules such as 'being kind to your friends'. Children's behaviour is managed well. Staff follow consistent methods and regularly remind children of the golden rules. They use praise to acknowledge and encourage desired behaviour.

Children are learning about wider society. They regularly use multicultural resources including dolls, dressing up clothes and musical instruments. They celebrate festivals such as Chinese New Year and Diwali and discuss where different foods come from. Staff are careful to ensure that all children have equal play opportunities and respect children's cultures.

Children with learning difficulties and /or disabilities are cared for well. The special needs co-ordinator works closely with the parents and other agencies to ensure that children's needs are fully met. She draws up individual education plans that set achievable targets and reviews these regularly with the parents. She ensures that all staff are aware of the targets children are working towards. The pre-school works closely with speech and language therapists who visit regularly and also with School Start. Staff liaise with the parents of children who speak more than one language at home to ensure that they have an agreed management strategy.

Children benefit from an effective working relationship between staff and parents. Parents are kept well informed about the provision through a large notice board and regular newsletters. They have the opportunity to make suggestions and are invited to give feedback. They are encouraged to become involved with the pre-school. For example, they are invited to help with outings.

Partnership with parents is good. They are made aware of the Foundation Stage of learning and know what their children are learning. They regularly see their children's records of progress and have opportunities to meet the key worker responsible for their child. Parents are given ideas of how to support their children's learning at home. They are asked for general information about their children when they join the pre-school. However, they are not asked for information about what their child can already do when they begin funded education sessions. Therefore, information from parents is not used to assess the starting point for each child.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from a well organised environment. The room is laid out into different areas such as a mark making area and a maths area. This ensures that all areas of children's development are catered for. Children self select resources from low storage units which ensure easy access. There is plenty of clear floor space for children to play freely. The environment is welcoming with bright displays of the children's work and colourful posters.

Children's welfare is promoted through the keeping of all necessary records, policies and procedures. For example, the parents sign children in and out to ensure that an accurate record of attendance is maintained. The pre-school has a full complaints procedure and is aware that a record of all complaints must be made. The policies and procedures have recently been reviewed to ensure that they are up to date and meet regulations.

Children's care and education are enhanced through suitable and well trained staff. Three staff have relevant qualifications and another is currently working towards a Diploma in Pre-School Practice. The remaining member of staff is hoping to begin training in the new year. Staff have opportunities to attend relevant training and workshops. All staff are vetted and the pre-school has robust recruitment procedures to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. At present the pre-school does not have a formal induction procedure for new staff. Therefore new staff are not always fully informed about their role and responsibilities.

Leadership and management are good. The supervisor has been in post for less than a term but has made many changes with the enthusiastic support of the staff. Staff work well as a team. There is clear deployment to ensure that they all take turns at different tasks and that children are well supported. They meet weekly to complete children's records of progress and to discuss planning. They also have formal staff meetings once a term. A new committee has just been elected. The treasurer is based in the same building as the pre-school and therefore has day to day contact with staff and parents. The supervisor monitors how successfully the pre-school provides care and Nursery Education. She has drawn up a detailed action plan of changes that she wants to make and has already achieved some of these. She evaluates all planning and uses the results to inform future planning. For example, the evaluation for an activity designed to let children explore the smell and texture of different spices showed that it was unsuccessful because it needed adult support which will be provided in the future. The supervisor and staff assess how effectively they provide education and assess their strengths and weaknesses. They are keen to develop sensory play and further develop the teaching of phonics.

The provider meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was required to ensure children are given independence during creative activities. It was also required to ensure staff are aware of the procedure to take if an allegation was made against themselves or a volunteer and to ensure the complaints procedure contains Ofsted's address and telephone number. Finally it was required to ensure

the equal opportunities policy contains details of how inappropriate practices and attitudes will be challenged.

Children now have free access to art materials and are given independence to choose what they wish to do with them. This ensures that children can use their imaginations in creative play. The pre-school has a full child protection statement that includes procedures for dealing with allegations against members of staff. This enhances the welfare of the children and protects the staff. The pre-school has a full complaints procedure that includes contact details for Ofsted. This ensures that parents are fully aware of how to make a complaint about the setting. Finally, the pre-school has an equal opportunities policy that states that inappropriate practices and behaviour will be dealt with in the strongest manner. This ensures that anti-discriminatory behaviour is challenged.

At the last education inspection the provider was required to give children more opportunities to practice letter sounds and to ensure that art work is not adult directed. Children have regular opportunities to practice letter sounds. Staff use opportunities such as children selecting their name card at snack time to talk about the sounds of initial letters. They are also helping children to become aware of syllables in words. These measures enhance children's communication skills. Children have good opportunities to explore a wide range of different art materials. Art activities are generally child led unless there is planned focus activity. This ensures that children can experiment freely and have independence during creative 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.

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):

- ensure that staff undergo a formal induction procedure

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 that parents have the opportunity to contribute to the child's baseline assessment

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