



Guilden Sutton Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	305080
Inspection date	21 November 2006
Inspector	Suzette Butcher
Setting Address	Guilden Sutton Village Hall, Summerfield Road, Guilden Sutton, Chester, Cheshire, CH3 7SW
Telephone number	07804 362 888
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Registered person	Guilden Sutton 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?

Guilden Sutton Pre-school opened in 1985 and is managed by a parents' committee. It operates from a large room in the village hall which is situated in Guilden Sutton, near Chester. The pre-school is open, during term time only, from 09.00 to 12.00 on four days each week and from 12.00 to 15.00 on Tuesdays. Children have access to an outdoor play area nearby.

There are currently 24 children on roll. Of these, 11 children receive funding for early years education. Children attend from the local community. There are six members of staff who all hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Good health and hygiene routines are followed by all staff to protect children from illness and infections. All the correct procedures are in place, such as signed permissions and accident records, to reduce risks and protect children's health needs. Staff are qualified in paediatric first aid, which enables them to respond appropriately to minor injuries. Staff's knowledge and food hygiene qualifications further enhance the healthy environment. Children learn to accept responsibility for their own health needs as they are helped to understand why they must wash their hands before handling food or after toileting. Older children confidently explain that they are washing away the germs that could make them ill. Younger children are gently reminded to find a tissue to blow their nose. Children are encouraged to develop independence in their self-help skills. Staff offer appropriate discreet support when children take off and put on their shoes and socks for a physical activity or they help a younger child to find the right sleeve in their coat when going outside. Children are offered the opportunity to help to wash an adult's hair when staff realise that this is a stressful experience for children at home. Informal discussion helps children to consider the need for warm clothing in cold weather or putting on their hood to protect them from the rain. They are reminded of the benefits of exercise and walks in the fresh air as an important part of a healthy lifestyle.

Physical play activities form an integral part of every pre-school session, which enables children to make good progress in their physical development as they have fun. Regular outings to the nearby school's outdoor play area or to the well-organised community playground provide many exciting energetic play opportunities. Children learn to use their bodies in different ways as they carefully climb to the top of a climbing frame with adult guidance. They confidently negotiate a large slide or balance skilfully with a friend on a rocking see-saw. A large hall is available in the centre for physical activities indoors. Older children learn to listen carefully as follow instructions and move with more control when they play a game of traffic lights. They practise running fast or walking slowly and remember when to stop. Children enjoy manipulating different consistencies, such as sand or shaving foam. They gain fine motor control when they practise cutting, writing or spreading their own butter on a cracker at snack time.

Children learn about healthy eating in special activities, such as food tasting sessions or during general discussions at snack time. They enjoy making kebabs from different fruits and compare and contrast tastes and textures when marshmallows are introduced. Healthy options, such as apple slices or crackers are available at snack time and children proudly take turns to give out the cups from a tray. Children choose a drink of milk or water and carefully practise pouring their own drink if they wish. Meals and snack times are relaxed, social occasions where children and staff enjoy each other's company and chat happily together. Older children bring their own packed lunch when they attend the afternoon session and this provides an opportunity for informal discussion about choosing healthy items and food preferences. Systems are in place to record children's health and special dietary needs which are met when required. Children are encouraged to bring their own bottle of water each day so that they are able to help themselves to a drink when they are thirsty. Staff remind children of the importance of drinking extra fluids in hot weather to promote their good health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a well-maintained, welcoming environment. Colourful displays, photographs, informative booklets and notices are put out on a daily basis because the room has to be cleared for other providers at the end of each session. Banners with children's art work or washing lines with photographs pegged to them provide imaginative displays at a low level in children's view. This encourages children to develop a strong sense of identity and belonging in the pre-school setting. Children's safety and security is given a high priority within the shared premises where the general public have access to the other rooms and facilities. Children move about freely and safely within the large play room. They are all closely supervised when they move around the building and a high staff ratio ensure that children are protected at all times. Potential hazards and dangers are identified by staff and appropriate procedures are implemented to minimise risks. For example, the playroom door is alarmed to quickly alert staff of any arrivals or departures, and an outdoor play area is carefully checked before children enter. Children are encouraged to recognise potential dangers and to consider the consequences of their actions. They are reminded not to run or they may hurt themselves and to carry a chair correctly so that they do not hurt others. Safety issues are carefully discussed with older children before they make badges with safety pins. Every child puts on a luminous jackets when they go on walks in the local area and they hold onto a rope to protect them near busy roads. Children learn not to be afraid to say no and to seek comfort and reassurance if they need help because staff listen to them and respect their choices. Staff have secure understanding of their responsibility to safeguard children's well-being and children are protected through adequate documentation. However, the child protection policies and procedures have not been reviewed to reflect the changes and contact details of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

A range of suitable resources are available in storage and organised around the room on a daily basis to meet the needs of the children attending each session. Colourful, labelled dividers direct children to play and learning opportunities or restrict access to less safe areas. Equipment is available in low-level units to promote children's independence and opportunity to choose their own activity. This enables children to make informed choices as they are introduced to a selection of activities that are appropriate for their stage in development.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy themselves and are helped to achieve in the pre-school setting. Young children develop a stronger sense of identity and belonging when they find a large, named photograph of themselves and proudly peg it onto the row of photographs of all the other children who have already arrived. Staff have recently attended training on the 'Birth to three matters' framework and this has enabled them to adapt and extend their current good practice for the younger children in the group. Planning is differentiated to include a range of stimulating and exciting sensory play activities with hands-on experiences for younger children. Children thoroughly enjoy painting their feet to make footprints on paper or using their different senses as they choose an object from a feely bag full of exciting items. Special activities create powerful opportunities for children to explore and share their feelings and learn to relate to others. For

example, children watch in awe and gently assist when a mother cares for and bathes her young baby in the pre-school. This is reinforced and developed through discussion and role play activities with small groups of children.

Staff effectively record observations on individual children's development and a starting point is established and recorded for each child during their first term in pre-school. This enables staff to successfully identify what each child knows and can do, and establish that children make progress. However, recording systems have not been adapted to include relevant areas in the 'Birth to three matters' framework, which means that individual children's next steps in learning are not clearly identified. Consequently, the rate of individual children's progress is not fully established and significant strengths and weaknesses are not highlighted.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are confident and strongly motivated to learn in the inviting play environment. They make significant progress in all areas of their learning because staff have a very secure knowledge of the early learning goals and a good understanding of the underlying principles of early years education. The Foundation Stage is effectively linked to 'Birth to three matters' framework in practice, which provides a firm foundation for children's learning. This is reflected in the long, medium and short-term planning. Current training programmes are enabling staff to regularly review the quality of their teaching as they introduce relevant aspects of Highscope to further enhance all areas of learning. This means that children are becoming more actively involved in their own learning programme when they are regularly consulted and offered a choice of good quality play and learning opportunities. Staff record their observations about individual children's play and learning, and this information is reviewed effectively to inform planning for the next week. However, individual children's progress is not collated and recorded until the end of each term, which restricts opportunities to identify the next steps in learning for each child.

A good balance of adult-led and free play opportunities are available for children to choose from. Children confidently decide to build a trolley in a construction activity or they ask if they can make a badge with their friends. They are actively involved throughout the pre-school session and happily move from one activity to the next. Staff are aware of when to stand back and when to intervene sensitively as they skilfully introduce new ideas or quickly change an activity when children begin to lose interest. Children are given time to explore and practise new skills and apply their learning. They laugh in delight when they successfully activate familiar programmes, using a mouse on the computer and share their pleasure with the rest of the group. Children play imaginatively as they initiate their own role play games in the home corner. Staff maximise the opportunity to facilitate and extend children's language and imagination as they participate in pretend play and accept their role in the game. Activities are adapted to meet the needs of a wide range of children with appropriate challenges for more able children. For example, children have fun exploring and experimenting with shaving foam on a table top. They enjoy the sensory experiences as they feel different textures, make patterns and note different smells. Staff ask questions to make children think and children subsequently comment that 'it looks like they are covered in snow'. Older children are invited to write their name or draw different shapes in the foam. Children are encouraged to count, recognise and calculate amounts during everyday activities. They make connections between other areas of learning

when they create big and small circles on the ceiling with torches, or proudly exclaim that 'I am four too' after counting four objects. A writing and drawing area provides a variety of opportunities for children to practise and try new experiences as they confidently find a pair of scissors or experiment with making curly strips of paper. Older children look for their own name card to match the letter shapes and sounds.

Children eagerly gather together for group times where they look forward to interesting stories and exciting adventures. Familiar daily routines, such as deciding what day it is and what the weather is like, provide consistency and security for children. Language and communication is skilfully developed and reinforced through songs, pictures, gestures and signs. For example, the 'Good Morning' song is supplemented with appropriate sign language and children proudly choose the correct picture symbol for the song they want to sing. Ring games and action songs link sound patterns and rhythms whilst children have fun. Children listen carefully and attentively to lively stories where they are invited to participate and take an active role throughout. Each child is given a soft toy owl or teddy and invited to practise and join in as the story teller repeats the phrase, 'I want my mummy'. Children excitedly predict what will happen next and learn the meaning of unfamiliar words, such as cocoon. Older children enjoy considering which book they want to borrow from the school library and happily share information about their favourite book about tractors and fire engines. Younger children happily examine a book of photographs of vehicles or familiar places.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are very well-behaved, polite and considerate towards adults and each other. They learn from and consequently reflect the staff's calm, respectful and consistent example. This creates a relaxed, calm atmosphere throughout the pre-school where children and staff relate warmly to each other and every child is valued as an individual. Children feel secure in the setting where they are offered appropriate support and encouragement. Staff frequently offer every child enthusiastic praise and celebrate individual achievements. For example, they exclaim in delight and praise a child's 'brilliant counting' or 'really sensible passing'. Consequently, children develop confidence and positive self-esteem. Children happily share resources as they play and make sure that everyone has enough items in a construction game. Younger children learn to take turns and play cooperatively with gentle prompts and guidance from staff. Children's opinions are respected and valued when they are consulted about future activities. Their ideas are discussed and implemented if possible. Children learn to understand and respect rules as they follow clear boundaries. They are aware of the purpose of a five minute warning before tidying up time and quickly take an active role in clearing away resources when they hear the tidying up music. Staff take time to explain the reason for agreed guidelines before an activity and check that children have understood. For example, children understand why they must not put large hoops around anyone's neck in a physical game.

The inclusive pre-school environment provides a broad range of resources, play opportunities and activities for children, which reflect positive images of diversity and acknowledge cultural differences. Many displays include children from different cultures and children have fun dressing up in clothes from different countries. Staff foster positive links with children's own

culture and language, involving parents in activities, such as food tasting and celebrating different festivals. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are actively involved within the group with appropriate adaptations made as required. Staff undertake relevant training to increase their knowledge and skills, which enables them to provide support for a wider range of children. The setting is proactive in developing a strong partnership with parents and relevant agencies to support individual children and their families. This positive approach successfully fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs.

Children's care needs are met through an effective partnership with parents. Clear information about the setting is readily available and documentation is in place to promote good continuity of care for children. A file is available with useful documents on subjects, such as road safety or infectious diseases. Information is shared on a daily basis during informal chats and when the supervisor describes the day's activities to the group of parents waiting to collect their children. Parents are actively involved in committee work and group projects. They are invited to coffee mornings, open days, special outings and to take their turn as a parent helper within the pre-school. Parents comment that they are very happy with the quality of care provided. They praise the staff and describe the setting as 'excellent'.

The partnership with parents in relation to nursery education is satisfactory. Staff share information with parents about their child's progress and development on a regular basis. Parents are also invited to read their child's diary of observations and record of progress, but they are not offered regular opportunities to contribute to their child's record. Parents are given information about the Foundation Stage and displays provide information on the 'Birth to three matters' framework. However, parents are not offered clear and meaningful tasks to undertake with their own child to take an active role in their child's nursery education and create stronger links between home and pre-school for children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Appropriate recruitment and employment procedures are in place to ensure that new members of staff are suitable. Staff are all aware that any person who has not been vetted does not have unsupervised contact with children. Adequate annual appraisal systems are followed to monitor the continuing suitability of staff and identify future training needs. Staff are all well-qualified and they continue to attend relevant training to increase their knowledge and enhance their skills. Most documentation and policies relating to the continuity and care of children are in place and reviewed on a regular basis. However, the complaints policy and procedures have not been amended to meet legal requirements. This is because key staff members have not familiarised themselves with the requirement to maintain appropriate systems for the recording of complaints for other parents, which is a breach in regulations.

The pre-school is well organised with areas designated for different learning activities. Staff follow a clear timetable each day when they put out and remove all resources, equipment and displays, and ensure that the organisation of the room does not have a detrimental effect on children's play and learning. Staff work well together as a team and they have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Key-worker systems have recently been introduced to promote consistency for children and their families. Strong links are maintained

with the nearby primary school. For example, older children change their chosen book in the library each week and the whole groups visits the outdoor play areas on a regular basis.

The quality of leadership and management for nursery education is good. Management's clear vision and high standards successfully steer the work of the setting. They demonstrate a strong commitment towards the continual improvement of the quality of care and education that they provide. The whole staff team are currently involved in the 'Moving On' pilot scheme where they attend regular meetings with the Early Years Support Teacher to monitor and evaluate the quality of their early years provision. The scheme provides an effective framework for the identification of the setting's strengths and weaknesses and enables management to prioritise areas for improvement and development. A realistic action plan is agreed with dates to review progress and identify further actions. The programme also empowers individual staff members as they gain confidence and learn to critically analyse the quality of the teaching and learning they provide for children. This creates an effective programme for improvement. Regular staff meetings are held to review and plan the education programme and to identify children's progress over time. Staff are currently attending Highscope training and the relevant principles and central aims are gradually being introduced into the setting to complement and extend the current good practice in early years education.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the providers agreed to review two procedures related to documentation. The record of visitors now includes times of arrival and departures and the policy for behaviour management includes appropriate methods used to manage children's behaviour. These changes have improved the overall quality of care for children.

At the last inspection for nursery education, the providers agreed to review the organisation of daily activities and to define the role of parent helpers. Routines have been reviewed to ensure that routine tidying away of furniture does not disrupt the children and the role of the parent helper has been clearly defined. These revisions have improved the overall quality of the nursery education provided.

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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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):

- review child protection policies and procedures to include details of the Local Safeguarding Children Board
- further develop recording systems to clearly identify next steps in learning for individual children (also applies to nursery education)
- improve knowledge and develop systems for the recording of complaints, in line with regulations.

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):

- increase opportunities to actively involve parents in their child's nursery education and record of progress.

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