



Quintrell Downs Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	102851
Inspection date	30 November 2006
Inspector	Samantha Powis
Setting Address	The Village Hall, North Way, Quintrell Downs, Newquay, Cornwall, TR8 4LA
Telephone number	07792 228908
E-mail	
Registered person	Quintrell Downs 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Quintrell Downs Pre-School has been registered to provide care for children since 1991. It operates from the village hall in the small community of Quintrell Downs, near Newquay. The pre-school is open each week day from 09.30 until 12.00 during school term times. On Tuesdays, the group incorporates a toddler session. The setting serves the rural and village communities.

A maximum of 24 children aged from two to under five years may attend the group at any one time. There are currently 15 children on roll, four of these children receive funding for nursery education.

The setting employs three staff. All hold a level III qualification in childcare. The group is supported by the local authority and the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PLA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is suitably maintained due to effective practices followed by both staff and children. Children learn about hygiene as part of the daily routine, and are encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet and before having their snack. Appropriate resources are provided to minimise the risk of cross infection, such as liquid soap and paper towels. Tissues are provided and children are supported in using them to promote their health. They are reminded to put their hands over their mouths if they cough, to stop germs from spreading. There is a policy regarding the exclusion of children who have an infectious illness which is adhered to in practice. This helps to prevent the spread of infection. Medical emergencies are dealt with promptly, due to staff being first aid trained and having access to a basic first aid kit. Records of accidents and administered medications are maintained, to ensure that important information is shared with parents to support children's ongoing health.

Children are offered a substantial snack during the session, which prevents them from becoming hungry. They enjoy items such as cereals, toast, crackers with cheese and noodles. Most choices help to promote children's health. Staff establish information about children's individual medical or dietary needs, however, they do not always develop the skills or knowledge to ensure they can deal with the child's needs fully.

Children's health is promoted as they regularly engage in physical activities. However, the outside area is not used each day, which means children do not benefit from playing out in the fresh air. Children enjoy using the bicycles and wheeled vehicles to negotiate space and learn to balance. They climb the steps on the slide and bounce on the small trampoline. They also have opportunities to use small and large balls and hoops and move their bodies to music. They use a suitable range of resources and tools to develop small muscle control, including manipulating play dough and using small equipment such as scissors.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children's safety is compromised as the systems in place to ensure any new staff and committee members are suitable are ineffective. For example, there is no evidence of checks having been completed on the current committee, and they are unaware of the procedure to follow should they take on a new member of staff.

In general, children's day to day safety is protected due to a combination of adequate supervision and the provision of a safe and secure environment in which they can play. Staff carry out basic checks daily and annually, which means that hazards are identified and addressed. They ensure that any physical play equipment is set up to ensure safety is maintained. For example, thick mats are placed around the slide and trampoline. Emergency evacuation procedures are practised regularly, however, not all exits are used, which means children are not familiar with all possible routes. Toys and equipment are checked as they are used, and items replaced as necessary to ensure they are suitable. At times, space is not used effectively to ensure children's safety is

maintained. For example, a physical play session, where the bicycles and wheeled vehicles were used, led to several minor accidents.

Staff have a sound understanding of child protection procedures, which supports them in their role of keeping children safe. The child protection policy for the setting supports staff in ensuring any concerns are dealt with appropriately.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enter the nursery confidently, and generally settle quickly. They interact well with staff, who have developed secure relationships with the children. Staff reassure the children with a chat or a cuddle, and get them involved in an activity. Children are valued and listened to and staff interact sensitively with them during the session.

Staff have a limited knowledge of frameworks such as Birth to three matters. This means that younger children are not always sufficiently supported in their learning. Basic assessment records are maintained on their development, however, these relate to the foundation stage curriculum, which is more relevant to the older children attending.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and plan a sufficient range of activities to cover all areas of learning. Children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. Staff use an appropriate range of methods for helping the children to learn. This includes some effective use of open ended questions when children are engaged in activities. For example, children are encouraged to engage in simple calculation as they thread the beads, taking a required number of beads off to allow the member of staff to tie the necklace for them.

Staff time is generally used successfully. Children enjoy the involvement of an adult in the activity they are engaged in. However, activities are not always appropriately introduced to the children, to ensure they are accessible to all of them. For example, an activity where children explored the properties of ice was given no introduction by the staff, and therefore, many children were not involved and did not have the opportunity to learn. At times, children are not successfully grouped to fully support their learning. At register time the younger children find it difficult to concentrate for an extended period of time, which limits the older children's involvement.

There are systems to record and assess children's achievements, which include observations of children during their play. However, these records are not used to help plan for the next step in children's learning. Therefore, children are not always sufficiently challenged. The group have an identified Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), however, their knowledge of the code of practice is limited. Therefore, the group is not consistently pro-active in ensuring that children are fully supported in reaching their full potential.

Children are becoming confident within the setting. They link up with adults and their peers when playing. They see themselves as part of the group, and talk about events in their own lives. Children are encouraged to develop independence during their activities. They attempt to pour their own drinks at snack time and a small step is provided in the toilet area, which allows the older children opportunities to be independent in their personal care. Children are generally well behaved, however, at times staff fail to notice when children are not sharing well, and therefore, they are not supported in negotiating or helped to understand right from wrong. Children enjoy learning about their own communities and the wider world. They have visitors to the setting, such as the local vicar, who talks to them about festivals and celebrations. They use a range of equipment that increases their confidence in using modern technology, for example remote control vehicles and cash registers.

Children sit quietly when appropriate and listen to stories with enjoyment. They join in with the parts of the stories that are familiar to them and talk about their own experiences. Children are beginning to recognise letters which are familiar to them, such as on their name cards. However, there is little text used on displays to promote children's understanding that print carries meaning. Children are encouraged to use descriptive language as they explore objects. For example, as they are feeling the ice they use words such as slippery and cold. Children frequently engage in practical counting activities, developing their awareness of number. They are beginning to engage in simple practical problem solving activities. They recognise and identify simple two dimensional shapes such as squares and circles, and compare objects by their size. The children enjoy filling their paper bags with sand and then compare how heavy or light they are, learning that if the bag is full up it is heavier.

Children enjoy singing and join in enthusiastically with action rhymes and songs. They engage in painting and sticking activities, and are encouraged to use their own imaginations when creating their pictures. They are proud as they see their own art work on display. Children become involved in role play, acting out their own experiences within a safe environment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

Issues and concerns relating to children's care and welfare are not dealt with appropriately to improve the service offered to children. Although the setting has a basic complaints procedure, it is not consistent with current legislation. The provider is not familiar with the requirement to maintain a record of complaints, which is a regulatory requirement.

Children's individual needs are given appropriate consideration by staff. Registration forms request information about children's likes and dislikes and medical conditions or allergies. This helps to ensure their needs are met and any preferences are respected. Basic procedures are in place to support children with special educational needs, however, the staff lack a full understanding of the Code of Practice. Children have opportunities to learn about their own communities and beliefs and also explore others. Visitors to the setting increase children's experiences. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children develop some understanding of established boundaries, as staff remind them of these. However, at times, inappropriate behaviour goes un-noticed by staff. Children receive praise

regularly, which encourages them to be kind and helpful. For example, most children are very keen to help at tidy up time, and are thanked by the staff for being so helpful. Children are polite, encouraged as staff act as good role models.

Partnerships with parents and carers are satisfactory. Positive relationships are established with parents, which helps them to work with staff to support the children's needs. Parents feel confident to talk to staff and are provided with some information about plans and activities. There is limited information offered to parents about the foundation stage curriculum, and parents are not asked to share what they already know about their child to help staff plan for each child's needs. Regular newsletters offer parents information about topics and events, and encourages them to involve their child in bringing items such as photographs from home, helping to establish closer links. As well as discussion on a daily basis, children's progress records are shared with parents annually, which helps to keep them informed of how their children are getting on.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Procedures for ensuring that Ofsted is notified of changes within the setting are not effective. The committee for the pre-school changed at the beginning of this year, but as yet, no action has been taken to notify Ofsted of this change. This is a clear breach in regulation. There is no system in place to ensure that when new staff and committee are appointed, they are subject to checks to ensure their suitability. This means that children's safety and well-being is not adequately supported. The committee do not have a clear understanding of their individual roles and responsibilities or of the regulations to which the group must adhere. This means the provider is unable to safeguard children's welfare. The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Space within the pre-school is organised appropriately at most times to meet children's needs. Children settle quickly on arrival, due to staff spending time setting up the room to look interesting and inviting to them. Examples of children's own art work displayed on the walls makes areas look bright and welcoming, and promotes children's self esteem. Effective deployment of staff ensures that children are suitably supervised throughout the session. Systems to support children's learning and development are satisfactory overall.

The setting have a range of policies and procedures to support staff and committee in their roles. However, the complaints policy does not reflect current legislation and there is no policy to follow when appointing new staff or committee members. Other documents, such as the daily register, are generally used effectively to support children's well-being. Consideration is given to the storage of personal information, to ensure confidentiality is respected.

Leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. The manager of the setting works closely with other staff to ensure the curriculum offered to the children is interesting and fun. They receive some support from outside agencies, but insufficient time is taken to monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum to ensure it is challenging children's individual needs. Staff attend training when possible to increase their own skills to support the children, however, opportunities to share this knowledge between staff are limited.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the setting was asked to improve the systems for recording administered medication and to ensure Ofsted are notified of any significant changes. A clear procedure has been introduced when staff administer medication, this includes obtaining written parental consent and recording accurate details, this helps to ensure children's ongoing health is safeguarded. The setting has taken no steps to address the second recommendation. A new committee has been appointed, yet Ofsted have not been notified of this change. This means that the setting is in breach of regulations, and therefore fails to ensure that children's safety and welfare is protected.

At the last education inspection, the setting were asked to improve assessment and planning and to develop partnerships with parents to encourage them to share what they know to better support the children's progress. The group have received some support and now plan activities to ensure children are offered opportunities in all six areas of learning. Assessment records are in place, however, these are not always used effectively to inform future plans, which means that at times, activities are not appropriately challenging for children to support them in taking the next step in their learning. Although parents are kept informed of their child's progress, they are not always asked to share information about their child's learning at home, which means that development records reflect only what the staff observe at the pre-school.

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 satisfactory.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- make sure Ofsted is notified of any significant changes, including changes within the committee
- produce and implement a procedure for recruitment and vetting of staff and committee, in line with regulations

- improve knowledge and develop systems for the recording of complaints, in line with regulations

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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):

- develop procedures for ensuring that children with special educational needs are well supported within the setting
- further link planning and assessment systems, and review the way in which activities are introduced and children are grouped, to ensure all children are offered appropriate challenge according to their individual needs

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