



Sticklebricks Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	106379
Inspection date	25 January 2007
Inspector	Judith Harris
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Registered person	Sharlene Adell Jones
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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?

Sticklebricks Pre-School and After School Club has been registered since 2000 and operates from one large room which the pre-school have sole use of. They expanded in 2003 into full day care and out-of-school care. It is close to Sticklepath Primary School, on the outskirts of Barnstaple. The pre-school opens on weekdays during school term times, from 09:00 until 11:30, and 12:30 to 15:00, with a lunch club from 11:30 to 12:30. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The out-of-school club opens on weekdays in term time from 08:00 until 09:00 and 15:00 to 18:00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 26 children can attend the provision at any one time. There are currently 37 children on roll in the pre-school, of these 28 receive funding for early education. There are 25 children on roll at the after school club. The pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties.

The nursery employs four members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The pre-school and after school club (ASC) have a good range of health and hygiene policies and procedures which are effectively used and follow environmental health and hygiene guidelines. Good hygiene and hand washing routines ensure children are learning effective simple hygiene practice. Children are able to go to the toilet without aid where possible and wash hands after, they are encouraged to do this by gentle reminders. Children take part in a cooking activity; they go to wash their hands before cooking. An adult talks to the children about why they wash hands and the children talk about how germs can effect us. The adult wipes the tables with ant-bacterial solution and talks to children about ensuring the surface is clean. Before they sit for snack all the children go to the bathroom and staff supervise hand washing to ensure all hands are clean.

There is an effective medication policy in place and medication records are well kept with good detail and shared with parents. The sick child policy provides details of exclusions. Children are sent home if they become ill while they are in the pre-school and parents are asked not to bring children who are clearly infectious.

All children can access the outdoor play space which has a paved area for bikes and a grassed area with a climbing frame. Children play outside daily weather permitting. If outdoor activities are not available then physical play is set up indoors. The provision of activities clearly allows the children to practise physical skills and to exercise.

The pre-school work closely with parents to ensure children are provided with healthy balanced meals and snacks and are developing an understanding of healthy eating. Parents provide packed lunches for the children that stay and the pre-school provide information for parents about providing healthy balanced lunches. Pre-school children have fruit and crackers for snack with water or milk which they pour themselves. ASC children have crackers and fruit with a drink when they come in from school and toast later in the afternoon for a more substantial snack. At pre-school story time adults talk to children about healthy eating and how foods help you grow strong and healthy. There is a water dispenser in the play room so children can help themselves to water at any time.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in well organised space which is set up to provide areas for different types of play and an area for physical activities. Children move freely and safely in the play space, they have direct access to the toilets and garden. The pre-school has a secure entrance and security of the premises is good and well maintained. There is a main door, which has a buzzer on it which sounds every time the door is opened to alert staff. Visitors ID is checked and they are asked

to sign the visitor's book. Children's arrivals and departures are carefully monitored by a member of staff who stands at the internal door to see children in and out; at all other times the internal door is kept shut.

Children have safe access to a suitable range of toys and equipment which are clean and well maintained. There is an effective system for cleaning toys and equipment which parents are involved with. On a daily basis staff check equipment as it is put out to ensure that it is safe, clean and suitable for use. Children have free access to the toys that are suitable for their ages the staff closely monitor their choices to ensure they are using toys and equipment safely and suitably.

Children's safety is effectively supported by the regular risk assessments. There is an annual risk assessment format provided by the Pre-school Learning Alliance. Daily checks of the premises, toys and equipment are used to support safety and minimise risks or hazards. The pre-school and ASC use a generic risk assessment form that shows what the risk is and the action taken. Fire safety procedures are effectively used and clearly support children's safety; pre-school and ASC practise the fire drill twice a term. At each exit there is a plastic envelope in which are children's names and contact numbers are kept to take out of the building in an emergency. Children are kept safe on outings; parents are asked to come to ensure ratios are one adult for every two children and a risk assessment is carried out for every outing made. The pre-school have a first aid box and registers which are taken on outings. Children are learning to keep themselves safe; they play on the balancing beam with an adult, supporting them. The adult talks about moving safely and waiting until the person before has cleared the beam before stepping on to it. After school club children are collected from the school. Three members of staff go the school; they go into the reception class to collect any younger children and the older children come into the playground. Children walk back to the club with staff

There is a good simple child protection policy in place that shows what the procedures are for recording and reporting any concerns. Training has been taken and the manager and staff are familiar with the procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children in the pre-school and after school are provided with a wide range of age appropriate activities that meet their needs and challenge and extend them.

Children are well settled in the pre-school where they are developing good levels of personal independence. Children have a good sense of belonging and they are secure in the daily routine. Children move around the room with confidence, they are excited by the activities and they take part with enthusiasm. The range of activities includes a "take bear home" scheme which effectively links pre-school to home. Each child gets to take bear home for the night and they bring back a report and photographs of the bear's stay. Reports and pictures are displayed to encourage conversation with the children. Children have good daily opportunities to practise and develop physical skills both in the pre-school and in the outdoor area. Children play on a balancing beam; they use very good levels of concentration and support each other. Children cut with scissors with adult support they use tools well and are clearly developing good physical

skills. The pre-school offer a good balance of child led and adult directed activities. These allow children to take part in creating something for the themed activity; as well as having good opportunities for purely creative play. Children are painting the spider for the display and have collage and free painting activities. Children use their imagination to develop games and the flexible daily routine allows the children time and space to develop and extend imaginative play. Children are developing good pre reading and writing skills. Children are able to find their own name card and they are actively encouraged to practise writing their name on their work. There is a graphics table and children have opportunities for practising handwriting in the role play areas. Maths is very well integrated into all activities within the pre-school. Children count at registration time to see how many are present. Children count the spiders legs as part of a game; they look at how many legs a spider has they are able to identify numbers and they count from one to eight. Children take part in a range of activities that help them to gain a good understanding of the wider world. Annual planning shows that pre-school look at different festivals including Hindu and Buddhist festivals, they taste food from different countries and look at how people dress. Children take part in a cooking activity, making Angel Delight, an adult reads instructions and pours the powder and then the milk there is lots of good interaction asking questions about the consistency of the mixtures and how it mixes.

Children under three are provided with the same wide range of activities. However planning for them is carried out using differentials on the Foundation Stage and not the Birth to three framework. Planning shows how activities can be adapted if required to meet children's differing need and for ensuring that younger children are able to fully take part in all activities. Children's needs are being met through this planning system.

After school club children are confident and with good levels of personal independence suitable to their ages. Children choose what they want to play with from the wide range of activities provided but also have free choice from all the resources and equipment. The staff make good use of their interaction with the children to support and encourage them at the activities. Children are happy to share, they play well together developing different types of games. The children's time in the club is organised to allow times for different types of play, they can choose from outdoor play, creative activities, table games and computer games. The children are happy and settled in the club with a good sense of belonging.

Teaching and learning are good; children play in a comfortable, relaxed, environment. Children are excited and animated as they take part in a wide range of well planned activities with good levels of adults support. Children have lots of opportunities for free play with time and space to develop and extend their play. Children freely access toys and resources and make independent choices about activities. The planning provides a good structure but is flexible and staff are confident enough to vary the planned activities to support children to lead the play. Activities are planned using long, medium and short term plans. The long term plans show the theme the medium plans show how these link to the Foundation Stage and each area of learning. The weekly plans show what the children will do, what the activities are and what resources will be needed. The pre-school have a very effective system for taking information from parents about starting points for children. Children records are well kept and clearly show what progress children are making and what their next steps will be. Children are interested in the activities and adults engage enthusiastically with them to support their learning and

development and providing suitable challenges. The staff interaction is good but they do not make the best use of all planned and naturally occurring situations to extend children's learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Equal opportunities are well supported and all children are actively encouraged to take part in activities. Children are treated with equal concern and the pre-school and ASC work with parents to help them ensure that children's individual needs are being met. The range of activities include some that help children gain an understanding of the wider world. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are effectively supported by the pre-school. The manager is the special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) for the provision and she works closely with area SENCO who gives good support and provides training. The manager is Portage trained and uses this to support children where appropriate. There is a good inclusion policy which is effectively used and shows regard for code of practice and the ways in which the pre-school and ASC will ensure inclusion. Progress records are well kept and shared with parents these show what children's next steps are and how these will be achieved.

Children behave very well they are settled and well occupied with good levels of independence. If there are any incidents adults step in immediately to defuse the situation and carefully explain to children how their behaviour affects others. Children are encouraged to share and take turns, and are supported to become involved in an activity. The manager is responsible for behaviour management.

Partnership with parents is good. The pre-school and ASC communicate well with parents and from the first visit parents are made welcome. There is a policy for admissions and procedures for settling children into the pre-school. The pre-school have effective systems for taking information from parents about children's starting points, parents complete a form at admissions with details of children's abilities and interests. Progress records are completed from observations and the pre-school have regular open evenings for parents to share this information with them. Parents are always asked to add comments to children's progress records to help they pre-school get a true picture of each child. Parents make positive comments about the pre-school. The complaints policy with details of how to contact Ofsted is displayed on the notice board. All relevant records are effectively shared with parents.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children play in a well organised space with good levels of adult support. Adults are well deployed which clearly supports the children to develop confidence with good levels of safety.

The pre-school and ASC have a good range of policies and procedures which are effectively put into practice to support the children's care and education. Staff are all effectively vetted through the pre-school's system and all records are present, up to date and shared with parents

as required. The day is arranged to allow pre-school children to leave before the ASC children arrive.

Leadership and management are good. The pre-school is managed by the manager and owner who work very well together as a team with well defined roles. They have a positive vision of what they want the pre-school to provide and are committed to achieving this. The staff team is small and well supported; there is a formal annual appraisal system and informal meetings can be held at any time. Staff are very well motivated with a clear understanding of their roles. The manager and owner actively support training for all staff and a good selection of training has been taken up. The combination of good team work and clear vision ensures that children are provided with a wide range of well planned activities in a comfortable environment. The effective planning is well supported by the system of key-worker observation and records for each individual child. The systems are clearly supporting the children's learning and development.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care and education.

Improvements since the last inspection

Actions set at the previous inspections required the provider to risk assess the premises, activities and resources, to ensure the premises were secure and to mend the broken fence. The provider has fitted locks to the outside of gate; provided socket covers for all unused sockets, mended the fence in the garden and developed a risk assessment system. The provider was also asked to ensure that staff ratios at the out-of-school club were adequate and that children were not left with un-vetted staff. The provider has employed extra staff for ASC to meet ratios and developed a system to ensure staff are vetted.

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 records may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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.
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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.
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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):

- develop planning system for under three's that relate to the Birth to three matters framework.

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 best use is made of all planned and naturally occurring situations to extend the children's learning;

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