

Christchurch Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	135972
Inspection date	01 March 2007
Inspector	Yvonne Campbell
Setting Address	Christchurch Hall, Church Road, Hanham, Hanham, South Glos, BS15 3AB
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Registered person	Christchurch Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

Christchurch Pre-school is managed by a voluntary committee made up of mainly parents of children who attend the group. It opened in 1966 and operates from Christchurch Hall located close to the Hanham and St George border. A maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time. The preschool opens Monday to Friday from 09.15 to 11.45 term time only. Afternoon sessions are also held on Monday and Friday from 12.45 to 15.15. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 38 children on roll. All children receive funding for early education. The preschool serves the local community and surrounding areas. The setting currently supports several children who have additional needs.

Four permanent members of staff are employed. Of these three are qualified to Level 3. The group receives support from an early years teacher.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The hall is clean and tidy and children are learning the importance of good personal hygiene. A cleaner is employed to clean the hall and toilets and staff check the building each morning before children arrive. They also have regular routines for cleaning the tables in between activities and before meals. Packed lunches are stored in a cool part of the building to reduce the risk of the growth of bacteria. Children know that they should wash their hands after using the toilet and do so when they visit the toilet independently. They also wash their hands before snack time. Staff ensure that soap and clean towels are available to dry their hands.

Children are excluded if they are unwell to avoid the spread of infectious illnesses. Staff have a policy which is shared with parents. There is also a list of common infectious illnesses displayed on the notice board for parent's information. Children have appropriate care in cases of minor accidents as several members of staff have a current first aid certificate. Suitable systems are in place to obtain prior written permission from parents for any medication required by children to ease symptoms.

Children's understanding of what constitutes a healthy diet is promoted during cooking activities. A pamphlet with written information is available for staff to read. They provide midmorning and afternoon snacks of fresh fruit, milk or water. Children have their own drinking bottles which are accessible at all times on a low table where they can help themselves. Additional water is available from a jug. Staff ensure that the jug is refilled with water and that clean beakers are available.

Children enjoy a range of energetic activities which promotes the healthy physical development of their bodies. They use the indoor climbing frame to climb and coordinate the movement of their limbs as they move across and slide down the equipment. They are also developing good spatial awareness as staff encourage them to keep at a safe distance of others when using the equipment. Children are very excited about being outdoors. Staff provide a selection of mobile toys for them to use and exercise the large muscles of their legs. They also play for long periods in the large sand pit where they strengthen the muscles of their arms digging and filling containers to create structures made from the damp sand.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a well organised environment where most risks have been identified and minimised. The large hall is arranged into several activity areas including construction play, a comfortable book corner and tables with pencils and crayons for drawings and mark making. Children move around the room freely and choose what they want to play with.

Staff provide a wide range of safe, attractive and stimulating toys to support children's play and learning. They enjoy using the materials and have sufficient space to move items such as buggies and toy cars around the room as they explore the uses of the items by controlling and moving them in different directions. Toys are safe and fit for their purpose as they are purchased from educational suppliers. Staff make regular checks before and after use and any broken items are removed from stock and discarded.

Staff have a sound understanding of the risks in the setting and they have taken action to identify these and to put control measures in place to keep children safe. For example, a comprehensive risk assessment has been carried out and there are daily checks of the indoor environment before children arrive. Staff make sure that the building is secure during the sessions and also when parents arrive and leave with their children. They monitor entrance and exits and have a clear understanding about where children are located at all time. Children are also prevented from having access to hazardous areas such as the toy storage cupboard which is under the stairs. They know that only the adults are allowed to go into the cupboard. However, some chairs used by adult uses of the hall are stacked at more than five chairs high and these are potentially hazardous to children.

Children's well being is safeguarded and promoted as staff are mindful of child abuse and have had recent child protection training. They know some signs and symptoms of abuse and a system for recording concerns. Practice is supported by a thorough child protection policy that gives staff examples of how to ensure children remain safe in the setting. For example, ensuring there is an open lay-out of play areas and checks and probationary periods for new staff. The child protection guidelines are accessible to parents on the notice board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children show their joy at being in the setting by leaving their parents without distress and quickly joining in the play and activities. Most children are independent and can attend their own need to attend the toilet. However, some children still require support and a private area is provided for staff to carry out care procedures such as changing nappies. Children can also rest if they attend for a full day as soft cushions and a comfortable area is provided for them to lie down if they wish to do so.

The quality of teaching and learning is good and children are making progress in all areas of development. They are confident and outgoing and join up with others to form pairs or small groups during play. For example, observed two children who were very happy in each others company and spend a lot of time talking with each other and changing clothes for imaginative play. Staff encourage a sense of togetherness by engaging children in activities such as the parachute game where they all work together to create scenario of wind and waves. Children also learn that when working together they can achieve the otherwise impossible such as moving three children sitting on the parachute.

Children are confident users of language and they express themselves clearly to communicate with others and to share ideas. They freely approach adults in the preschool and start conversations about what they are doing or make enquires about why a strange adult is present. Children understand that words can be written down and that they have meaning. Staff provide laminated name labels and arrange them around the tables at snack and lunch times. Children are learning to recognise the shapes of the letters of their names and find their place. Staff also provide opportunities for children to take part in mark making activities and some children show good pencil control.

Children are familiar with the use of mathematical language during their day to day activities. Whilst waiting to go and wash their hands before snack time, they count the number of girls present and then count the number of boys. Staff encourage them to think about whether both numbers are the same or whether there are more or less children when comparing the two groups. Children have access to mathematical imagery which helps them to visualise the number

of objects represented by the number shapes. For example, two penguins displayed with the letter two. Children also recognise the shapes of things in the environment and use terms such as circles and ovals. Staff further extend children's understanding of shapes with a display from Goldilocks and The Three Bears using small, medium and large shapes of circles, triangles and rectangles to create a scene from the story.

Children know what their bodies look like both externally and internally. A popular book in the book corner shows a life size diagram of a child's body with the bones and the organs. Children are fascinated by the book and they spend long periods looking at the contents then lay the book on the floor and lie on top of the diagram matching their limbs to those they see in the book. Children are very interested in building structures from connection resources. They build high off the ground and enjoy watching them collapse as the structure becomes unstable. Some children show a clear understanding of the need to have a stable base to build on and are good at estimating whether they need large or smaller pieces to complete their created structure. Staff develop children's awareness of the families they live in through topic about People who Help Us when they talk about the support they have from their immediate family and other people in the wider community.

Children use their imagination and show their understanding of their world when playing in the large open front dolls house. They move the furniture around and place the small people characters on different floors. They enjoy singing favourite songs especially those with actions.

Staff have a good understanding of the learning opportunities needed to help children make progress. They plan activities using long, medium and short term written plans and clearly state the learning aims of each week. The routine and sessions are organised well and provide a balance of activities which offer children individual choice in what they do. There are also whole group activities and one to one discussions which are non-threatening and enable staff to further develop their understanding of children's learning needs. They encourage children to talk about what they are doing in order to develop children's thinking skills. Staff make observations of children's progress towards the early learning goals. These are mostly recorded in post sticks. However, although staff have a clear understanding of individual children's progress, the observations are not organised in a coherent way and do not inform future planning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met well through ongoing discussions and communication with their parents. Key workers are known to parents and they are available at arrival and departure times to greet parents and to listen to news or any concerns they have. Children are allowed to join free play at their own pace. For example, children who are new, shy or tired are allowed to take time out and observe others at play before joining in. Staff provide suitable activities and play resources to help children develop the understanding of different people in the community and the wider world. They have access to books and play people which they use at their leisure. They are also aware of some cultural festivals such as Eid and take part in art activities and see posters which show customs such as henna hand-painting.

Staff work closely with parents and have developed effective systems to identify and meet children's additional needs. These include close observations of children as they interact with others in the environment. A named member of staff acts as a coordinator between parents, care professionals and the Area Special Needs Coordinator. Children have Individual Play Plans

so that staff are fully aware of the support they each require. The coordinator ensures that special resources such as cards with symbols to promote the development of speech are accessible and progress is monitored and reviewed.

Children behave well as appropriate strategies are in place to help them understand right and wrong and what is expected of them within the setting. For example, they know the non-verbal clapping signal that staff give when it is time to clear up and they respond immediately and show that they have heard by standing still and raising one arm. They are developing a sense of community responsibility and they help the adults to pack the toys and move them into place to be stored away. Staff are polite to children and model examples of good behaviour such as saying please, thank you and using low tones of voice when asking children to comply with a request such as not climbing on the chairs.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered during interaction with their peers and also in their positive responses to adult instructions about behaviour. They are learning about new life as they plant seeds which grow into plants and vegetables. They also learn about different cultures during activities such as henna hand-painting.

Staff have established close and trusting relationships with parents who share information with them and value the advice they offer. Parents of new children are allowed to stay with children during a settling in period. They say that staff are very friendly and approachable and their children always come home happy and talk about what they have done. Staff ensure that parents know about the plans and activities in the preschool. Notices and posters such as one about World Book Day are displayed and parents are encouraged to share the event with their children by bringing in their favourite books for the children to share with the group. There are periodical newsletters and individual letters are sent home if necessary. Children have continuity of care as significant contact and discussions with parents are recorded on a contact form and is kept in the records.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents are informed of learning topics and they are invited into the setting to share their skills and give demonstrations. For example, parents who work in a dentists and a hairdressers spoke to children about the topic on People Who Help Us. Parents know how well their children are progressing as observation and assessments are shared with them in special parents evenings. A complaints procedure and a form are accessible to parents on the notice board so that they free to record any unresolved concerns they have about the care or education given to their children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children feel free to play and explore in the stimulating and organised environment. Staff show good understanding of their role in supporting play and learning. They are appropriately deployed and offer sensitive intervention when needed. For example, an adult is often present in the book corner to read to children and enhance their enjoyment of stories. Children sit close to staff and look at the pictures as the story is read. The staff group is experienced and well qualified. Most of the permanent staff have Level 3 qualifications. They work well together and share routine tasks, such as rearranging the room in between activities and the supervision of outdoor play. They do this in a coordinated way which enables children to feel secure as familiar routines are maintained with minimum disruption.

Staff have a clear understanding of the policies that support practices as the operational plan is accessible for reference. The plan also contains evidence of staff qualification, specific areas of responsibility, such as named persons and training courses attended by staff. A suitable procedure is also in place for the supervision of students who are placed in the preschool as part of their child care training. Children have sufficient care and attention as the adult to child ratio is maintained at all times. There is also a contingency plan for emergency help in case of unplanned staff absence. Children are signed in and out by their parents and registration forms are filed in a secure folder.

Leadership and management is good. The pre-school is managed by a voluntary committee of parents. The Chair keeps in close contact with staff and they have regular informal discussions in the setting and also at the formal committee meetings. The preschool leader has an organised management structure in which staff feel happy and relaxed and feel free to share their ideas. Staff work closely with the Early Years teacher who supports the planning of activities and also with care professionals such as The Special Needs Coordinator. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection staff agreed to recommendations to ensure drinking water is readily available to children at all times and to improve fire safety by recording all details of fire drills in the log book.

Children's good health is now promoted to ensure that they do not become thirsty during pre-school sessions. Water is available to children in their own drinking bottles, which are accessible on a low table in the hall. Children know their own bottle and they help themselves to water or drinks brought from home.

Staff have now improved procedures which keep children safe by developing a system for recording and evaluating fire drill. Children have frequent fire drills and staff have evaluative evidence that their system is effective and meets the needs of the setting.

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

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 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):

- assess the risk to children in regard to access to chairs stacked in the hall and take action to minimise these.

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):

- further improve the provision of nursery education and ensure that observations and assessment are used to inform future activity plans

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