



## Pied Piper Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	127449
<b>Inspection date</b>	10 January 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Melissa Tickner
<b>Setting Address</b>	The Community Centre, Crundwell Road, Southborough, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 0LL
<b>Telephone number</b>	07980 332992
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Pied Piper Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day 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](http://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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Pied Piper Pre-school is committee run and opened over thirty years ago. It operates from the community centre in Southborough, near Tunbridge Wells, Kent. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open on Mondays and Fridays from 09:15 - 11:45am and Tuesdays - Thursdays from 09:15 to 15:15, during term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 23 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 12 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six members of staff. Of these, four 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 satisfactory.

Children are developing a satisfactory awareness of keeping themselves healthy. They understand they need to wash their hands before eating, although they do use shared bowls of water which does not help avoid the spread of infection. Staff talk with children about the importance of keeping hands clean and offer them simple explanations about germs. Positive practices are adopted by staff such as use of antibacterial spray to keep table tops clean, hygienic preparation of snacks and encouraging children to throw pieces of food away that have fallen on the floor. Children are provided with a varied, healthy snack on a daily basis, such as cucumber, carrot, apple and banana pieces. They drink milk or water and are able to access water at other times, to ensure they remain hydrated. Children staying for lunch bring their own packed lunches; however systems in place currently do not ensure that the group's healthy eating message is consistently applied at lunchtime, when some less healthy lunch items are being brought in.

Although no staff currently hold a valid first aid certificate, the supervisor and another member of staff are currently half way through completion of a relevant course, which will ensure there are a minimum of two qualified first aid staff available. Clear systems are in place regarding the exclusion of children who are ill or infectious, dealing with accidents, incidents and medication administration. Documentation supports these aspects, however not all areas currently maintain strict confidentiality, and staff are not always recording existing injuries that children may have on arrival at pre-school.

Children make satisfactory progress in the area of physical development, the outdoor area is not currently fully utilised, but indoor physical activities are planned for on a daily basis. For example children enjoy climbing on the climbing frame, showing they have developed climbing, stepping and sliding skills. They enjoy using the goal and footballs and show they are developing skills such as kicking, catching, and throwing. Children also enjoy action songs and music and movement. Children develop fine motor skills through use of cutters, rolling pins and creating items with the play dough. They also enjoy using a variety of small world toys which help develop these skills.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a suitable environment that is appropriately safe with well maintained security. However it seriously lacks any visual stimulus, displays, posters or children's art work. The supervisor does, however, have plans to make appropriate changes to create a more welcoming and friendly atmosphere. Staff promote children's safety in practice, they supervise them well at the climbing frame, discourage running indoors and ensure all visitors to the setting are checked and signed in. Suitable safety equipment such as socket covers are also used. These aspects help ensure children are kept safe whilst at pre-school. Current risk assessment

documentation is very brief and requires expansion. Children have access to a suitable range of resources and toys, some of which are accessible in low level drawers to promote choice. This area is also currently undergoing expansion to ensure a wide variety of good quality toys are always available to children.

Fire drills are practised to help protect children in the event of a fire; and an appropriate log book is kept. The frequency of these however, could be increased. Staff adopt clear procedures to help keep children safe when playing outdoors or going on local outings, however full details of these are not kept. The supervisor, who is the nominated person for child protection, has a clear awareness of child protection issues. This helps keep children appropriately safeguarded. The child protection policy currently requires some revisions.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are settled and happy at Pied Piper Pre-school. Staff provide a warm welcome to all children and they enter the setting with confidence and enthusiasm. They choose from a varied range of activities; staff are currently expanding these to provide children with greater choice. The Birth to three matters framework has not yet been implemented, so children of all ages are currently not being planned for.

#### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Some staff have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage and are successfully able to promote children's learning. However this is inconsistent between staff as others do not always interact with children appropriately, offering them sufficient challenge or interaction. However most staff do offer children support in their play. They offer them encouragement, talking to them, and engaging them. Many staff encourage children to think for themselves, asking them open ended question and promoting their learning opportunities through their play. Staff are currently in the process of developing planning to include more detail but current plans do ensure coverage of all areas of learning. Staff have recently implemented an observation system, keeping track of children's progress; however these now need to clearly feed in to the plans to ensure planning is in line with children's needs and interests. The range of activities and resources set out for children is satisfactory, however some areas are limited in providing children with a learning rich environment, such as the book corner and mark making areas.

Children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. They are developing good levels of confidence and independence, as staff encourage children's contributions and invite them to stand at the front at circle time and sing if they wish. Children play at activities of their choice for extended periods of time, for example they enjoy describing the tea party they are having in the home corner. Children are developing their mathematical skills as they are encouraged to count, for example the number of children present at circle time. They are able to represent the number of children with the fingers on their hands. Children are developing a good understanding of one more and one less through singing songs such as 'six green bottles' and 'ten in a bed'. Staff use props to help children understand how many are left as one is

taken away. Children are able to play with a variety of mathematical resources and staff are hoping to develop a maths area to promote this.

Children are developing communication skills as they chat at snack time and during their play with staff. They thoroughly enjoy singing a variety of nursery rhymes and develop their listening skills as they become absorbed at story time. They delight as they have stories read to them and are encouraged to participate, for example as they discuss 'The Gruffalo'. Staff read these with enthusiasm and enjoyment. Children access the book corner at times; however this is not presented in an inviting and welcoming way to encourage its use. Children recognise their names as they self register. Children have some opportunities to mark make such as painting and crayons set out for them, however they do not really make use of the area set out with writing materials and paper. Mark making opportunities are also not available in other areas, such as the home corner.

Children develop a satisfactory awareness of knowledge and understanding of the world. They explore sand with glitter in it and enjoy the water play. Other activities are also planned for exploration opportunities. They are able to construct with resources such as duplo, bricks and popoids. Children enjoy toys to promote an interest in ICT such as 'leap pads', and a kettle, microwave and coffee machine they play with in the home corner. A lap top computer has recently been purchased, although this is not currently available to children every day. Children develop a sense of time and talk about their home lives and families, for example a recent activity was discussing babies that were born in several of the children's families. However limited time is currently planned to ensure children have the opportunity to share their news with the group. Children enjoy some planned activities to develop their awareness of cultures and our wider society.

Children enjoy creative activities such as painting and sticking and staff encourage child led art work. However the mark making area is not freely used by children to promote their creativity and mark making skills. Children thoroughly enjoy imaginative play in a mostly well resourced area although this could be expanded to ensure they have a wide range of resources at all times to support their play. They enjoy exploring music and sounds as they play with a wide variety of musical instruments and thoroughly enjoy joining in with nursery rhymes.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally supported well as they play, and staff recognise them as individuals, encouraging them to feel settled and valued at pre-school. Children show good levels of confidence and independence, which staff promote. Children are beginning to develop an awareness of our wider society through a few planned activities, for example Chinese New Year, Diwali and Christian celebrations. They play with resources promoting diversity, such as books, dolls and dressing up clothes, but few visual images are available currently. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. A nominated Special Educational Needs Coordinator is in place, which helps ensure that children with special educational needs are supported and have their needs met.

Children are cared for by staff who focus on positives and regularly praise children, reinforcing what the children are doing well and thanking them for helping. Few behavioural issues arise because children are settled and happy and staff are quick to resolve any arising issues or disputes that do occur. They handle these sensitively and swiftly, and use effective diversion techniques. Children delight as they receive a sticker for helping to tidy away or other achievements. Staff promote good manners at snack time and remind children about the importance of saying 'please' and 'thank you'. These aspects help children feel secure and valued at the pre-school, and encourages them to begin to develop an understanding of right from wrong.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are encouraged to be involved either by helping, settling their children or being part of the committee. Parents value the pre-school and the developments that have been made in recent months. Parents are provided with information such as newsletters, prospectus and a simple parent's information board. Minimal information is currently shared regarding the Foundation Stage of education and no formal systems are in place to discuss children's progress. However staff have plans in place and intend to establish parent's evenings. Parents can informally liaise with staff whenever they wish, and staff inform parents of their children's keyworker. Consequently, satisfactory systems are in place to enable staff to work in partnership with parents.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The pre-school is organised to a satisfactory standard. Having undergone a recent period of change with staff and committee, the supervisor is attempting to improve the organisation and running of the pre-school and has worked hard to make initial required changes. This is enabling them to offer satisfactory outcomes for children. Many areas do however require addressing; several paperwork aspects require implementing or updating and a full set of staff details are not currently in place. Current systems in place for the recruitment, vetting and induction of new staff are basic and require some development to ensure robust procedures are in place.

Staff run a generally organised session and maintain ratios, and supervise children well. Currently however some attention is needed to ensure all areas of the pre school are well organised and presented to create a learning rich environment. Four out of the six staff are currently qualified and the committee intend to start training in childcare to support them in their work. All staff have had relevant CRB checks completed, and the supervisor is aware of the importance of never leaving children unsupervised with persons who have not been checked. These aspects help ensure children are kept safe and cared for appropriately.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The majority of staff work well as a team and are committed to developing the provision. The supervisor has endeavoured to make positive changes and improvements in the short period of time she has been working at the setting and this is reflected in the care and education of the children. Examples include working with the Early year's team, starting to evaluate the provision and working with the committee to assess changes and improvements needed. No formal systems are in place yet, although the manager intends to develop annual appraisals and regular supervision meetings for all staff. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last education inspection in July 2004, the group were asked to improve three areas of nursery education. Staff now adopt a positive approach to managing children's behaviour, with clear explanations, positive feedback and encouragement. This ensures any behavioural issues do not impact on children's learning. Children have opportunities to develop mathematical concepts as they count heads at circle time, learn 'how many left' when singing six green bottles and can access mathematical resources to encourage this aspect. Staff now spend time interacting with the children and are well deployed. However the level of interaction and challenge between all staff is varied so further work remains in this area to ensure staff are consistent.

At the last care inspection in May 2004 staff were set several recommendations. Correct ratios are now being maintained and staff deploy themselves well. The room organisation continues to require further development. A variety of activities are now being offered to all children, and staff understand the need to provide challenging activities, as appropriate for the more able children. Staff have not attended training in equal opportunities, however, some resources are in place to promote this aspect and staff treat children as individuals and with equal concern. Information for parents regarding the Foundation Stage is still minimal and some work remains to be done in this area. Consequently this area remains as a recommendation following this inspection. The supervisor who is also the nominated person for child protection issues has a sound understanding of child protection issues. This helps ensure children are appropriately safeguarded.

### **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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- improve systems for hand washing and promoting healthy eating for children bringing packed lunches
- develop and improve the environment to display a welcoming range of images, posters and children's artwork
- develop and implement sound systems for the recruitment, vetting and induction of new staff
- develop, review and expand documentation, to ensure it is up to date, sufficiently detailed and in line with the National Standards

### **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 and build on the environment to provide a rich variety of resources to promote children's learning at all times
- ensure all staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and promote children's learning through all activities
- develop and improve systems for planning, observation and assessment
- develop and build on systems to work in partnership with parents relating to children's education
- develop and implement systems to effectively identify the strengths and weaknesses of both the staff and the setting

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