



Alverstoke Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109780
Inspection date	19 March 2007
Inspector	Michelle Ann Parham
Setting Address	Bury House, Bury Road, Gosport, Hampshire, PO12 3PX
Telephone number	023 92526247
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Registered person	Alverstoke 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?

Alverstoke Preschool is a community group managed by a committee. The preschool first opened in 1965. It operates from two rooms in a community building in Gosport in Hampshire. The preschool serves the local community and is registered to provide care for 52 children aged from two to five years. It is the settings normal practice to accept children from two years nine months, due to the facilities available. There are currently 81 children on roll, this includes 58 funded children. The setting supports children who have additional needs, including children whose first language is not English. The preschool operates Monday to Friday, during school term times only. Sessions are from 09:15 to 11:45 and 13:15 to 15:45. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There is a large team of 14 who are employed to work directly with the children, 13 of which have early year's qualifications to NVQ level II or III. The setting receives support from the Early Education and Childcare Partnership and has completed Accreditation through the Preschool Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about healthy eating through general discussion and topics such as growth. They are nourished as they enjoy healthy snacks such as breadsticks, bread and cheese spread and occasional fresh fruit. Children also enjoy regular food tasting in relation to celebrations, cultures and events which contribute to them learning about the wider world. They can have fresh drinking water throughout the session however this is not currently accessible independently and therefore children may not readily ask a practitioner for a drink. As a result this practice does not fully promote good health and may have an impact on energy levels and concentration. Documentation is in place to ensure practitioners are aware of children's individual dietary requirements and name cards are used for snack time indicating preferences and requirements.

Personal information is discussed with parents to ensure health and medical needs are identified, addressed and recorded. Children with individual health requirements have these effectively met because practitioners ensure they are well informed and are happy to undertake additional training where necessary. Children are not fully protected from illness and cross infection due to current hand washing routines which occur within the room. However practitioners do have satisfactory procedures in place to ensure a suitably clean environment such as using anti-bacterial fluids to clean table tops and spillages and termly cleaning of play resources. Disposable gloves are used for when dealing with accidents and children are protected from the spread of infection as parents are asked to exclude those who are unwell which prevents children and practitioners being exposed to unnecessary risks to their health. A well maintained first aid box is accessible and children receive immediate first aid treatment in the event of an accident as currently all practitioners are first aid qualified, therefore accident and ill health are dealt with efficiently.

Children develop a positive attitude to physical exercise and enjoy outside play for approximately twenty to thirty minutes each session. They have access to a safe, fully enclosed area which has soft tarmac and benefit from using varied equipment such as large climbing frames, balancing beams and saucers, balls, tricycles and scooters. Children make good use of the outside play resources and enjoy negotiating their way around the cones on the wheeled toys showing a good sense of space and gaining increasing control over their movements. They are developing balancing skills as they make their way along the beams or have fun wobbling in the saucers. Practitioners boost children's interest in gross motor play by providing a variety of equipment. Fine motor skills, hand eye coordination and emergent writing skills are also promoted as children enjoy using the chunky chinks on the large blackboard which is situated in the outside play area or practice throwing and catching balls. Consequently children benefit as they develop and gain confidence in their physical skills and enjoy regular fresh air and exercise. There are also lots of resources and activities provided within the setting such as small world play, construction, art and craft and puzzles that further contribute to children's fine motor skills and their handling of tools.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe environment where practitioners have identified and minimised all risks and hazards. Security within the setting is satisfactory. Practitioners have some limitations to what systems can be put in place to prevent unauthorised adults entering the preschool rooms in the community building, however high ratios and good deployment of practitioners ensure children are supervised at all times. Practitioners also have an effective procedure in place in regard to who is collecting children as these arrangements are agreed with parents. Regular checks are observed on the premises before children access the areas and a formal risk assessment is undertaken on an annual basis. Fire drills are practised once a term and logged for performance. Trips off site do not occur often, however when they do ratios are reduced for safety and practitioners discuss road safety with the children. Children also gain an increased understanding of hazards and safety through general discussion about medicines and chemicals and through topics covered in the curriculum such as people who help us. Electrical equipment is checked annually through the community association and resources and preschool equipment is maintained and checked as used. This ensures toys do not present a hazard and contributes to children's safety. Accidents are logged and the health and safety representative reviews records to ensure risk assessment and reviews the safety of areas for children.

Children are protected because practitioners have sound knowledge and understanding of child protection. They have awareness of the different types of abuse and possible signs and symptoms that may indicate a child were at risk. They are aware of their role and responsibility to protect children in their care and of the agency to contact should they suspect a child was at risk. Existing injuries and incidents are documented which promotes the welfare and safeguarding of children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Practitioners are developing their knowledge and understanding of the Birth to Three Matters framework. Posters are displayed for reference and parents information and practitioners are becoming familiar with the components. Younger children attending the setting benefit from the reduced ratios and are given ample time to visit and settle at their own pace. Children are confident in their relationships with the practitioners, they know the routine and settle quickly and easily on arrival as they happily leave their parents and take a seat for registration. They have some opportunity to self-select resources, however, the majority of activities are planned and set out by practitioners which does not fully enable children to initiate their own choice of play, developing independence and responsibility. Children do however enjoy working independently or in small groups as they co-operate and help each other when packing away activities and negotiating how to carry equipment. Practitioners talk to children about family and home life increasing children's sense of belonging and helping form secure and trusting relationships. Children are cared for by a team of qualified practitioners who have an understanding of their individual needs and overall plan of stimulating and worthwhile activities.

The setting operates a key worker system which ensures practitioners have full knowledge of children's abilities and individual needs and are suitably supported during their attendance.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Practitioners interact well with children as they work with them at tables or on the carpeted areas. They support children effectively and move around activities when required to provide structure and focussed discussion with children using effective questioning to promote independent thinking. Practitioners have good knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage and early learning goals and provide a balanced curriculum. Planning is undertaken as a team which ensures all are clear of learning objectives, aims and outcomes. Practitioners use children's individual records of achievement to plan for their next steps in learning, therefore meeting their individual needs. Staff deployment is good, providing support for children and activities are well resourced and provide interest and sufficient challenge for children of varying abilities. Stepping Stones are identified on planning to ensure clear objectives are met and the sessions are evaluated for success and improvement. The group work closely with parents and other professionals such as Portage and Speech Therapists to ensure children's individual needs are met. Children are offered a range of interesting activities for each session and a good selection of resources are in place to support their learning in an environment where they are encouraged to enjoy and achieve.

The children have a chalk board secured to the wall in the outside play area which provides a permanent mark making area; they are also able to use paints, pencils and crayons within the setting which promotes writing skills. The book corner, particularly in the Rogers room is unappealing and holds little interest for the children. However children do access the books and take them to other areas in the room and are encouraged to borrow books from the group to foster an enjoyment of reading for pleasure. Children have resources and activities such as the letter of the week that promote recognition as well as reading and linking sounds to letters. Children's spoken language is developing well as they confidently talk to practitioners and peers about family members. They are happy to interact within role play or at group time and their levels of concentration are good as they persevere with activities or listen to stories and to others speaking in circle time.

Children gain increasing knowledge and mathematical ability as they have good opportunities to recognise shape, colour and numbers. They enjoy counting how many are present each day at register time and begin to recognise numerals as they cover the number of the week. Simple addition and subtraction during practical activities and free play help children compare and calculate. Practitioners plan activities introducing language to describe position, size, quantity and shape and children now have increased opportunity to problem solve and work things out for themselves.

Children have good opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world. They explore their senses as they play with natural materials such as sand and water and show curiosity about living things as they observe the stick insects or see how the tadpoles develop. Children enjoy constructing for a purpose as they make a garage for the Lego cars or make a pasta necklace. They have interactive resources available such as telephones, a computer and cameras which help the children become familiar with everyday technology and gain an

understanding of how things work. Children are aware of the routine of the day and are familiar with when it is tidy up or home time. They are inquisitive and confident to ask questions such as why a practitioner has to get her glasses to read a story or what the inspector is doing with the laptop. They benefit from worthwhile and interesting activities and displays such as tadpoles, stick insects, bird's nests, plants and shells and stones that they can investigate and explore with magnifying glasses.

Children enjoy exploring their imagination as they dress up in costumes or play in the home corner sorting out the dinner service, food and pots and pans. They join in confidently to action songs and rhyme such as Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star and Head Shoulders Knees and Toes. Practitioners extend the activity to be more challenging and fun by introducing tone and also asking the children to undertake the actions silently. Children have good opportunity to work with various media and materials and express their creativity as they paint at the easel, mould with the play dough or make a collage. Plenty of art work is displayed around the setting which evidences how children's work is valued and how they are able to express their self freely through art and craft.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing a strong sense of themselves as practitioners provide an environment where they are welcomed and encouraged to participate in all activities. They enjoy their time in the setting, gaining confidence and self esteem because practitioners use praise and encouragement for effort and achievement. All children demonstrate a good sense of belonging as they respond to familiar adults and settle well into the daily routine. Parents are made welcome into the provision and given ample time to settle their children which has a positive impact on how children feel secure and relaxed when they leave. Good procedures are in place to ensure children's individual needs are identified and therefore met as comprehensive registration forms are used and home visits offered. Children with additional needs are well supported as practitioners actively seek out and work with other professionals such as Portage, Speech Therapists and translation services to ensure best practice for families and children. They are also willing to undertake additional training to enhance their knowledge and understanding of specific conditions and use of equipment where required. Consequently inclusion is well promoted at the setting. Children benefit from practitioners good awareness and understanding of equal opportunities. General discussion, topics of celebrations and festivals and resources that reflect diversity are in place and undertaken. This helps the children become aware of a wider society, thus developing self-esteem and respect for others. Parents are also welcomed for their contributions and practitioners and children have enjoyed them visiting the setting to talk about their specific faith and celebrations such as Hanukah and Divali.

Children's behaviour is generally good. They benefit from positive role models provided by practitioners and respond to adult intervention. Gentle reminders to share or take turns or play nicely allow them to gain an increased understanding of right and wrong. Practitioners use positive techniques such as merit stickers, badges, certificates, discussion, distraction, praise and encouragement and occasional time out. Persona dolls are also used to develop negotiating skills, promote good behaviour and problem solve with the children. All techniques are

appropriate for the understanding of the child and any issues of concern are discussed with parents to ensure a consistent approach. Children learn acceptable behaviour because practitioners deal with incidents in a calm manner. They crouch down to the level of the child and encourage them to change their behaviour such as not to run or push, giving clear explanations of why. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the key worker system in place and in-depth termly newsletters in which the manager includes a section on one of the six areas of learning of the Foundation Stage. Parents are welcomed into the setting at anytime to stay with their child, be a parent helper or join the committee. Termly reports are available on request and regular verbal updates on children's progress are ongoing. Parents are fully informed about the setting because the provider supplies them with a comprehensive prospectus which outlines the ethos and policies of the group, the Foundation Stage of children's learning and the Birth to Three Matters framework. Each room has a poster on the main door informing parents of the number of the week, letter of the week, what theme the children are covering and activities that will be happening. This ensures parents are included in their child's learning and can also contribute to their continued learning at home. There are large notices displayed for parent's information and required certificates are displayed in the manager's office. The complaints log is in a format for parents to view on request and parents interviewed are very happy with the service they and their children receive.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management are good. The supervisor of the setting has a good understanding of the national standards and oversees the provision effectively. Regular self evaluation as a team looks at how the setting can move forward to build on existing practice, continually evolve and ensure outcomes for children are met. A high percentage of practitioners are qualified and happy to attend further training to enhance their knowledge and understanding. Practitioners work well as a team and meet regularly to discuss working practice and for in-service training. They have clear direction and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Effective systems are in place to monitor performance as annual appraisals are undertaken and contribute to development of work practice and identifying training needs. Practitioners have good knowledge of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage to help children make progress in their learning and are becoming familiar with the Birth to Three Matters framework which helps to ensure younger children are effectively supported.

Robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure the safety of children within the facility as all practitioners are fully vetted before they are able to work unsupervised with children. New practitioners complete an induction period, however there is currently no formal documentation of this to ensure all policies, working practices and procedures are fully covered and understood. The setting maintains all the required documentation to promote the children's health, safety and learning, with a satisfactory procedure in place in regard to security and hand washing routines. The setting operates ratios above the required national standard which contributes to children being well supported and supervised. The deployment of practitioners has a positive impact on the relationships they build with the children and the organisation of the session.

As a result children are happy and interested which has a positive impact on their learning and development. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was required to ensure the complaints procedure includes details of Ofsted and how to contact them and the contact details of all visitors are recorded. The complaints procedure now includes Ofsted contact details however this now needs further updating to include the change of office from Woking to Bristol. All required visitors details are now collated. These improvements now have a positive impact on partnership with parents and organisation.

At the last education inspection the setting was required to investigate ways to encourage the children to independently use the book corners and provide more planned activities for the children to develop their understanding of problem solving. The book corner in the Williams room is set out to be inviting for children's use with useful storage, chairs and a separate table displayed with books. Improvement is still required as the book corner in the Rogers room has minimal use. The area is not inviting, attractive, comfortable or particularly clean, however children do enjoy looking at the books and will often collect them from this area and take them to another part of the room or a practitioner to look at together. Children now have plenty of structured and natural play opportunities to problem solve and work things out for themselves such as discovering percentages when cutting their bread into two pieces, grouping a selection of small world farm animals together and working out the total or figuring out how to complete the wooden train track or shape puzzles. Consequently this has a positive impact on children's learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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 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):

- improve health and hygiene by reviewing hand washing routines and children's independent access to fresh water throughout the session
- further develop induction of new practitioners by, for example, introducing an induction checklist to ensure all working practices, policies and procedures are covered and understood.

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 extend children's independent use of the book corner in the Rogers room by, for example, making the area more attractive and inviting to use

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