



Cranborne Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	144281
Inspection date	18 January 2007
Inspector	Pamela Woodhouse
Setting Address	Cecil Memorial Hall, Cranborne, Dorset, BH21 5QB
Telephone number	01725 517439
E-mail	
Registered person	CRANBORNE 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 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?

Cranborne Pre-School operates from the Memorial Hall and has been established in the village for over 20 years. The setting is located in the heart of Cranborne in Dorset. A maximum of 26 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open each week day during term time except Wednesday from 08:50 until 11:50.

There are currently 26 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 22 receive funding for early education. The setting serves the village of Cranborne, and the surrounding communities.

It is organised by an elected committee and employs six members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate qualifications and two are working towards a qualification.

The Pre-School receives support and seeks advice from Dorset Sure Start and is visited regularly by the Early Years consultant.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Appropriate steps are taken to ensure that children's good health is actively promoted. Staff maintain good hygiene procedures to ensure that any risk of the spread of infection is reduced. For example, all staff who handle food have appropriate training to do so and there are regular cleaning routines to ensure that the premises and resources are suitable for the children to use. Staff encourage children to learn about managing their personal hygiene through their own good practices and by including children in the daily routines such as helping to clean and prepare tables for snack. This gives children a sense of responsibility and practical experiences. Children are clear about why certain actions are necessary, for example, they know that they put their hand over their mouth when they cough, and that by washing their hands before handling food prevents germs from spreading. However, the communal bowl used for washing hands in the playroom compromises these good practices.

Children are developing their taste for healthy eating. They have nutritious snacks mid-session which consist of a variety of seasonal fruit and toast; in addition they shop for fresh ingredients to prepare and eat simple meals. For example, their own vegetable soup. Cooking activities include discussions about the ingredients the children are using and the effects these have on the development of their bodies. Consequently these activities contribute to fostering children's understanding of the importance of healthy eating. Children have free access to drinks of water throughout the session which they use responsibly, for example, they help themselves when they are thirsty and invite their peers to join them thereby making an informal social time.

Children have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise through activities which promote a healthy lifestyle. They play outside on a range of equipment which helps to develop their physical skills, for example, they can throw and catch balls and skilfully avoid obstacles when riding their wheeled toys. Indoors they regularly exercise to music or by playing action games.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where they are well supervised by observant staff. There are good procedures in place to ensure their ongoing safety and all staff are very clear about their roles and responsibilities. There is a daily assessment of the premises and equipment as well as more detailed annual assessments. Children learn about keeping themselves safe and are encouraged to take responsibility for their own safety and that of others. This includes practising fire drills, however, the attendance register is not completed as soon as the children arrive which means that staff rely on the children's name cards. These are easily removed by the children and may not reflect the actual number present. Children take turns to undertake a simple assessment of certain aspects of safety each day. They have a risk assessment chart and tick the picture when, for example, they have checked that the

kitchen and garden gates are secure and that the stair gate is in position. This promotes children's observational skills and their understanding of safety.

Children use a wide range of equipment and play resources which are clean, safe and suitable, for example, they use low level tables and chairs which enables them to play and work comfortably. Children are able to access their toys from low storage shelves and toy boxes which are clearly labelled with pictures to identify the contents. This helps to promote their independence.

Children's welfare is promoted due to the suitable procedures which are in place to protect them from harm. Staff undertake child protection awareness training and the detailed policy is shared with parents so that they are made aware of the settings responsibility towards the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the setting happily, warmly greeting their peers and staff, with whom they have developed a friendly relationship. They quickly involve themselves in their chosen activities and concentrate for sustained periods of time, absorbing themselves in their play. Activities are well planned and take into account the individual learning needs of each child; these are supported by a wide range of good quality resources to capture children's interest. Children are appropriately challenged, for example, the Birth to three matters framework has been introduced for the under three-year-olds to support their progress. Their independence is promoted very well because staff encourage them to use their own ideas and to make suggestions about how something might work in a better way. For example, making sand pictures and models to the children's own design and satisfaction. They enjoy taking responsibility for helping to put their toys away and do this with enthusiasm and a sense of purpose as they assist their peers by telling and showing them where particular items are stored.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff demonstrate that they have a good understanding of the Foundation stage curriculum and plan stimulating activities to ensure that children receive a well-rounded education. The children's learning environment is well presented and activity plans show that they have access to a broad range of experiences to progress them through each area of learning. However, the timing of the activities sometimes means that children do not have the opportunity to carry on with the focused activity during the latter half of the session. Staff plan for children's individual learning needs, making good use of observation and assessment records to record their progress and plan for the next steps in their learning.

Children show high levels of interest and concentration in their activities. They play for sustained periods of time on their own and with their peers, receiving appropriate but not intrusive support of staff. This further promotes their already well established independence and allows the children to be in control of their own decisions about how they want a particular activity to proceed to suit them. For example, children use tubes and boxes to create their own activity,

investigating how quickly cars travel down the tube and make garages for their vehicles out of the boxes. Children show high levels of confidence, they cooperate well with both adults and their peers and show interest and concern for others. For example, more able children help those with less skills to use the computer programme, patiently telling them where to put the cursor to move the programme on.

Children have a good command of language and are confident speakers, initiating discussion and conversation throughout the session. They enjoy stories and listen intently, repeating familiar phrases and eagerly anticipate what might happen next. The imaginatively presented and well resourced writing area encourages children to develop their writing skills and informal opportunities also arise. For example, spontaneously copying children's names from their name cards to further their self initiated activity. Children count confidently in everyday situations such as during circle time when they count how many children are present and in their activities. For example, counting the number of insects on the computer programme. Children are beginning to use positional language during their play such as 'in front and behind' as well as language for size such as 'long and short'. They are developing simple mathematical concepts such as adding one more and taking away.

Children have good opportunities to explore the wider world through a range of well planned and resourced activities. They are currently investigating aspects of Africa which includes discussion and practical activities about home life and diet, animal habitat, terrain and music. This has given them a good insight into a very different culture to their own. Children also learn about their local environment through regular walks and from visitors such as the ambulance and fire service. They are beginning to learn about the natural world during their walks, hunting for leaves and insects and investigating the characteristics of these with magnifying glasses. Children use simple everyday technology with confidence. They can operate simple computer programmes and have good mouse control. They enjoy playing with remote control vehicles and programmable toys such as cash registers and telephones, operating these with ease.

Children use various materials to construct three-dimensional models and tools such as scissors, rollers and cutters in their creative play to develop their designs and hand-eye coordination skills. They are encouraged to create their own art and craft work, freely accessing materials, paints and different modelling materials such as clay and dough. Children have a good repertoire of songs which they are able to sing from memory and enjoy moving to music or with the parachute. They make and play musical instruments and enjoy the input of specialists who include the children in music workshops which are planned around cultural themes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are made to feel secure by friendly staff who have a warm relationship with them. They benefit from having a key worker who is responsible for ensuring that activities are pitched at an appropriate level for their individual pace and stage of learning. Staff have a clear understanding of equal opportunity issues and make sure that children have equal access to the facilities offered at the setting. They are introduced to cultural diversity through activities and stories.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs are met. They work and play well together, recognising the need to share and take turns. They have a 'can do' attitude which is encouraged by staff and thoroughly enjoy helping with simple tasks such as wiping the tables in readiness for their snack and helping their peers with an activity. Children are very well behaved. Staff are very good role models and children learn by this good example, they are polite and mindful of others, treating their peers with kindness and respect. For example, inviting another child to join them when sitting down to have an impromptu drink of water. Children help to create the golden rules, which are consistently applied. They also take responsibility for ensuring that their peers observe these by reminding each other, for example, about taking their turn.

There are currently no children attending with special educational needs, however, there are two trained special educational needs coordinators. They are familiar with the processes to ensure that children's needs are met well. For example, they liaise with parents, speech therapists and the health visitor for information and practical advice to enable them to provide care and education which is appropriate to the children's specific needs.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents receive good quality information to ensure that they have an in-depth overview of the settings aims and objectives. This includes a full copy of the policies and procedures and details of the curriculum. Parents are encouraged to become involved and share their skills, for example, they are invited to put themselves up for election to the committee or can attend meetings as an observer. Their views are actively sought through an annual survey and their responses acted upon to improve the quality of the setting. Strong links are forged between home and the pre-school, with parents being encouraged to help their children, for example, by reinforcing colours and sounds. They enthusiastically ensure that the 'clever cat' soft toy which children take home in turns, has exciting adventures which they can retell to their peers when it is returned to the setting. Parents are introduced to their children's key worker during the children's introduction to the setting and are encouraged to liaise with them about any aspect of their care and education. They are kept well informed about their children's progress through an informal exchange of information at the beginning and end of each session and also more formally each term to discuss this in greater depth.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's welfare is safeguarded due to the effective recruitment and selection procedures to ensure that applicants are suitable to work with children. They benefit from a caring, qualified and interested staff team who are keen to improve and update their knowledge of good childcare practices. Staff regularly attend training and seminars to assist them in this and show strong commitment to their role. They work extremely well together, sharing roles and responsibilities so that everyone has the opportunity to play a full part in the successful organisation of the setting. They have good adult: child ratios and non contact time with the children is time-tabled to enable them to observe and write up their progress notes. This means that they can give the children their full attention when they are on duty.

The premises are very well presented and children and parents are warmly greeted at the door by staff. Daily routines are organised well and run very smoothly. Children have a lengthy period where they are able to make their own choices from within a structured framework. They do

this with maturity and because the activities are so interesting there is no aimless wandering which means that they are positively engaged. The structure of the second half of the session, however, means that children are unable to re-visit some of the earlier activities.

The leadership and management is good. The committee offer good support to the staff to enable them to do their work well, for example, they encourage and fund training, giving staff time off to undertake this where appropriate. The whole team are dedicated to continually improving the provision. They do this through regular evaluation of their policies and procedures, children's activities and their day-to-day routines.

The provider meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to review some policies and procedures and ensure detailed information is made available to staff and parents. The provider has addressed this by reviewing all policies during the annual general meeting and updating these where appropriate. For example, the complaints policy includes information about recent changes to legislation and the child protection and uncollected children policies have been updated to ensure that these accurately reflect practice. Parents are given information about the settings policies in their welcome pack and a full copy is permanently on display. This means that they are kept informed about the organisation of the provision.

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):

- ensure that the attendance register is completed at the beginning of the session

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):

- consider the organisation of time so that children are able to take full advantage of the many activities available to them. This also applies to care.

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