



## Harrietsham Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY340143
<b>Inspection date</b>	06 February 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Cilla Rachel Mullane
<b>Setting Address</b>	Harrietsham CP School, West Street Harrietsham, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 1JZ
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<b>Registered person</b>	Harrietsham 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 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?

Harrietsham Pre-School has been open for over 20 years. It has now moved to a new site within the primary school in Harrietsham, and re-opened in 2006. Children play in one room, and have access to toilets, and the school playground. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. Children come from a wide catchment area.

The pre-school is open each weekday during term-times from 09.00 to 12.00 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, and until 13.20 on Tuesdays and Fridays, when there is a lunch club. There are currently 28 children aged from two to under five years on roll, 20 of whom are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and has experience working with children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs five staff. Four of the staff, including the supervisors, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted when they are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times, and children are able to access tissues and know that they need to dispose of them in the bin. There is a sensible routine for maintaining toys and equipment, with toys washed immediately if children have put them in their mouths, otherwise toys are disinfected half-termly, and a washing machine is available for fabrics. Therefore children are protected from cross infection.

Children bring their own snacks, and lunch when they attend the lunch club, so staff can be sure that they are fed in accordance with parents' wishes. Children's food is generally healthy and nutritious, as staff discuss the importance of providing fresh fruit and vegetables when the child starts at pre-school. Children have their own drinks accessible on the side, and in addition they pour their own drinks at the snack bar during the session. At this time, staff sit with the children and talk about their snack-time book, which reinforces messages about hand washing and healthy eating.

Children's small motor skills are promoted daily by the provision of activities such as cutting with scissors and sticking. Many of the children are cutting competently, as they have plenty of opportunities to practise using scissors. When children play outside on the school playground, they are developing spatial awareness when they run and ride bikes, and learn about teamwork and develop coordination from activities such as balancing a ball on the parachute. There are plans to further challenge children physically with the purchase of more large toys and equipment.

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

The provision is good.

The environment is well planned to promote children's independence and learning. Children have easy access to a good range of toys and equipment, and readily self-select resources such as craft materials and role play props. This means that children can create their own play experiences and learn at their own speeds. The pre-school has recently moved to these premises, and have yet to develop the outside area so that children can experience 'free-flow' to outside to access a variety of play and learning opportunities.

Children are kept safe at times of arrivals and departures, as parents enter in small groups, and a collection book is kept so staff know who is expected. Evacuation procedures have been well thought through, so children would be kept safe if there was a fire. For example, the register and other necessary information are kept in a box near the door, so staff can quickly find important information in case of emergency. The use of an extensive daily checklist ensures that staff protect children by noticing and eliminating any hazards in all areas of the pre-school.

Children are being helped to learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, a child was asked to remember how to carry scissors, and he immediately held them safely. Safety records, for example, the accident record, are reviewed regularly to check for recurring patterns, and sensible action is taken. For example, when several children fell over whilst running, activities were planned to promote coordination and spatial awareness.

Staff regularly update child protection training, and keep a useful folder with information to hand, so they have the knowledge to act in children's best interests if they have concerns. They work appropriately with parents, recording accidents which happen in the children's homes, further protecting children.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled within the pre-school: as they arrive, they are enthusiastic and keen to select from the activities on offer. The promotion of children's independence is a strength within the pre-school: they have been shown where to find all the resources by staff, and, for example, confidently select bottles of paint and carefully squeeze it into small pots. They are beginning to look after themselves when it is time to go home: they attempt to change their shoes and put on their coats. Staff show an interest in each child as an individual, and are free with praise and appreciation of their achievements, so children feel valued, and that their contributions are worthwhile. For example, a child did lots of 'writing' on small pieces of paper, and she smiled as staff appreciated this and showed her parent. They have time to persevere and complete activities, as staff give warning of 'tidy up time' and pack unfinished creations into bags to be finished at another time. Staff respond well to children's interests: if a child expresses an interest in something, staff note this in a book, and incorporate into future planning of activities. For example, a child showed an interest in dinosaurs, so these were brought out for play. This practice enhances children's learning and pleasure.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a very good understanding of how children learn, and are enabling children to become independent thinkers and learners. The environment is arranged so that children can make choices and decisions, but care is taken not to overwhelm children with choice. Children can freely access resources, such as craft materials, so they can initiate and develop their own play. As a result, they can work at their own speed, and practise and consolidate skills. For example, a child concentrated for a long time on painting a car, exploring different tools and textures, flicking glue to make patterns, investigating the effect of folding the paper on wet paint to make ripples, sliding hands through wet paint like 'wipers on a bus', and eventually adding shiny paper. Free-flow to the outdoor environment is yet to be developed.

Staff are adept at responding to children's interests, recognizing that children learn best this way. For example, a child lined up some chairs to make a train, and staff joined in the role play. Staff are skilled at supporting children's play, and interacting with them. Children are encouraged to think and reason, because staff ask challenging questions. Staff have clear ideas about the learning intention of activities, for example, the member of staff deployed in the 'ticket office'

described children using their imaginations, learning that writing has meaning, using technology (telephones and calculator), and counting.

As a result of good teaching, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children are becoming independent: they respond positively to being given responsibilities such as clearing up, when they are given a sticker with a picture of the area they have been asked to tidy. They develop positive relationships with staff, and are making friends: staff encourage them to find friends to join them at snack time. They are beginning to recognize the effect of their actions on others, because staff explain this and discuss feelings. Children are confident speakers, and readily approach staff for conversation. Staff provide plenty of opportunities for mark making, so children are practising pre-writing skills. For example, they write on tickets in the role play 'ticket office', they make marks in paint in a tray, and they are invited to write their names on work or represent writing with squiggles. Children are learning to enjoy books: a child read to another in the house, they are realizing that words have meaning, and are caring appropriately for books.

Mathematical development is well promoted: children count well and recognize numbers, for example, when entering numbers into a calculator. They are starting to understand the concept of volume, for example, a child spent some time tipping tiddlywinks from a plate into a jug, and back again. Children's creativity is well promoted: staff support the role play activities, for example, selling tickets in the ticket office and discussing destinations on the telephone, so children are frequently enjoying using their imaginations and making up stories. Children are learning about their community and the world around them when they look at places on the globe, and chat about their homes. However, outings into the local community are infrequent. They are gaining an insight into the use of technology by having regular access to resources such as keyboards and calculators, and are using these in their role play.

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

The provision is good.

Staff respond to children as individuals, with good knowledge of their interests and abilities. Play opportunities are provided with the intended next steps of individual children in mind, and staff respond to children's interests. All children have equal access to all toys and equipment, for example, thought is given to making sure boys and girls are involved in play activities equally: girls were actively encouraged to participate in a game with cars. Children learn about the wider community from resources such as books depicting other cultures. However, children are not regularly taken on outings into the local community.

Staff have undertaken appropriate training to enable them to work successfully with children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Secure procedures are in place to monitor and review children with special needs. Staff work closely with parents in the children's best interests. One-to-one support is offered at appropriate times, for example for children who find tidying up stressful.

Children are learning to control their own behaviour, as staff consistently encourage them to discuss their feelings, and the effect of their actions on the feeling of others. Children are helped to deal with their emotions, and understand right and wrong, as staff help them to talk through incidents and quarrels with their peers. Staff's good knowledge of children's backgrounds and special needs enables them to be aware of reasons for poor behaviour, and avoid situations which are stressful for individual children. For example, staff offer one-to-one support to children who find clearing up and going home stressful. Staff model respectful and polite behaviour, and children respond to their example. For example, a child spontaneously apologized to another. Overall, children are learning what is acceptable and are becoming aware of their own and other's feelings.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents are kept informed about their children's achievements and progress, because staff chat with them on a daily basis, and contact books provide a good source of further information about activities and successes. Furthermore, parents have appointments for interviews with their children's keyworker to look at developmental records, talk about how children learn, and discuss their progress in each area of development towards the early learning goals. There is an emphasis on conveying positive information: the letter inviting parents for a consultation states it is to discuss 'your child's strengths and interests'. As a result, parents gain a good insight into the curriculum. However, they are not given detailed written information about the early learning goals and the Foundation Stage. Parents are encouraged to contribute to children's initial assessment, and are consulted about changes to their care and education in the pre-school. For example, staff intend to introduce a 'play hour', when parents can play with their children and gain a better understanding into how children learn through play.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The setting is well-organized to meet the needs of children and their carers. Staff deployment is a strength: staff know where they are supposed to be, and as a result of children initiating a lot of their own activities, they spend the minimum time maintaining the resources. Good use is made of time: the majority of the session is organised so that children initiate their own activities, with excellent staff support when required. Adult-directed activities are planned near the end of the morning, so children receive a good balance. Children are warned in advance of 'tidy up time' to enable them to complete their creations and play activities.

All required documentation needed for the smooth running of the pre-school is kept efficiently. For example, the record of attendance accurately reflects the children and adults on the premises at any one time, and the registration certificate is displayed for parents, in line with requirements. The majority of records are kept confidential, and are locked up at night. However, the record of accidents which the children have at home, and the incident record are noted two to a page, so other parents can read them. There are very thorough staff files, with job descriptions, personal information including medical details and next of kin, training plans, appraisals and qualification certificates.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The parents committee are clear of their role, for example recruitment of staff, and delegate appropriately to the supervisor. Very positive use being made of self evaluation forms and reflective practice. The supervisor and staff use their detailed notes of what the pre-school currently achieves to identify areas for improvement. For example, effective partnership with parents already includes consultations and informal chats, and home visits are planned to improve the service. Staff have good and realistic plans for the future. For example, they intend to start 'play hours', where parents can come and play with their children and learn more about how children learn through play, the Foundation Stage curriculum, and the Birth to three matters framework.

Planning of the curriculum is effective. Staff use their frequent observations of what the children can do to identify their intended next steps. These are discussed at planning meetings, and 'skills-based' activities are then planned to promote these next steps. Staff carry around lists of all the keyworkers' children's next steps, so that they can ensure that 'targeted' children benefit from the play opportunities. Therefore, children's individual needs are met. Effective systems are in place for monitoring the success of the educational programme offered. For example, a plan of the adult directed activities shows that all areas of learning are covered, and children's developmental records are regularly checked to assess their progress. In addition, a record is kept and checked of which children participate in the available play opportunities, further ensuring that all children receive a balanced programme.

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

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

At the last inspection the provider agreed to ensure that the record of attendance included all required information on children and staff's arrival and departure times. Children are safe in event of fire, because the register is kept up to date. It was also agreed to ensure that accidents are recorded appropriately. Children are protected because the accident book contains a thorough record including all required details. At the last nursery education inspection two key issues were identified to enhance the delivery of the educational provision. These issues have been addressed, and the quality of teaching and learning is good.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since registration 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 all records are confidential
- develop the use of the outside play area, and develop the range of resources which challenge children's physical skills.

#### 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):

- provide parents with more detailed written information about the educational programme: the Foundation Stage and the early learning goals.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)