

Feniscowles Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	301689
Inspection date	20 March 2007
Inspector	Christine Fraser Turner

Setting Address	Feniscowles Methodist Church, Preston Old Road, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB2 5ER
Telephone number	01254 728 943
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Registered person	Feniscowles 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Feniscowles Pre-School has been registered since 1967. It operates from the Methodist Church in Feniscowles, Blackburn. There are some amenities nearby and a small car park is available.

The pre-school is registered to care for 25 children. There are currently 39 children on roll, of whom nine children are aged two. There are 30 children who are in receipt of funded nursery education. The group is managed by a voluntary committee.

Children have the use of a large hall and a room adjacent to the hall, which is used for quieter activities. There is a small outdoor area with raised flower beds.

The pre-school operates each morning and is revising the opening times in April 2007. The new opening times are from 09.00 to 12.00. It also opens Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons from 12.45 until 15.45. There are five staff employed, including the supervisor, who all have a recognised qualification in childcare and education. The group have input from the local authority and access training and development opportunities.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are protected from infection and are well taken care of if they are ill or have an accident because staff follow appropriate policies and procedures. Children are beginning to learn about simple good hygiene routines. They have regular visits from the dental hygienist who informs them on how to take good care of their teeth. They know that fruit is good for their teeth and biscuits and sweets are not. However, children do not consistently wash their hands before eating snacks, for example, when they have visitors, which gives them inconsistent messages about the importance of hand washing before eating food.

Children are well nourished. Staff provide healthy snacks and take part in the 'Smiling For Life' initiative, promoting good dental health for children. They enjoy fresh fruit, for example, grapes, apples and bananas. Children are able to choose the fruit they want. They also have other healthy, savoury snacks on other days, such as cheese and crackers. Children receive a drink of milk with their snack and have good access to additional drinks throughout the session through the provision of a jug of water and cups placed in the room. Their health and dietary needs are met because staff work well with parents to gather appropriate information. Children are able to rest in the book area on a large soft mat or sit on chairs and look at books.

Children take part in daily physical activity indoors. They often have the climbing frame and slide available and sometimes have wheeled toys or large soft cushions laid out. Children take part in ring games and action songs on a regular basis and are able to find their own space. They have daily opportunities to develop fine motor skills as they paint, draw or use tools with play dough. Challenges for children when they use large equipment are limited as it is often set out in the same way.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure, mainly safe indoor environment. The radiators in the room are not working effectively, causing some to be very hot whilst others remain just warm. Children's safety and comfort are compromised as there is no system in place to ensure the temperature of the room is suitable for children and the risk assessment for the radiators is not consistently followed. The outdoor area is not used at the moment due to a risk assessment from staff judging the area to be unsafe for children. Children undertake regular fire drills but the current fire record lacks detail, for example, who was present or when the drill took place and how long it took to evacuate the building.

Children use mainly suitable and safe equipment. Staff check for safety and remove any broken items, however, staff do not check the equipment in the home corner, leading to duplication of some items and the shortage of others. Children benefit from many items of new furniture including tables, chairs and a new unit which encourages children to select items for themselves.

Children are kept safe on outings to the local school because staff have undertaken a risk assessment; however, this is not yet written down. Children learn about road safety through visits from the road safety team. One child recognised a zebra crossing in a story and said 'you need to look out for cars'. Children are learning to keep themselves safe as they are reminded

to walk when visiting the bathroom and encouraged to pick items up from the floor so children don't trip. Children also learn about how to keep safe at bonfire time.

Children are safeguarded because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put procedures into practice when necessary. However, the current child protection procedure does not include the action to be taken if there is an allegation against a member of staff or a volunteer and this is a requirement in regulations.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Most children settle easily on arrival at pre-school and staff are on hand to offer support to any child that is new or unsettled. Children make positive relationships with each other and with staff, for example, children seek support from a member of staff to help complete a jigsaw puzzle. Children are involved in a broad range of planned activities and are able to make their own choices for play through ongoing provision. Children's access to sand and water play is limited because of organisational restrictions. Children are interested in what they do and enjoy free painting on the easel, making collage pictures and playing in the home corner. Although children under three years attend the pre-school, staff do not plan for their needs in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and instead use the Foundation Stage when planning activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children benefit from staff's sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They benefit from a mainly well planned environment to promote children's learning through ongoing provision. Plans cover all areas of learning but contain limited information on how the plans will be implemented. Staff discuss the plans before the start of the session. There is no systematic approach from staff to assess children's progress and they often rely on their knowledge of each child to plan the next steps for learning. Children have good opportunities to practise skills and are allowed time to complete the activity of their choice. Discussions with staff show they understand the different levels of challenge within most activities and use this knowledge when working with individual children.

Children are confident and concentrate well on activities. They are encouraged by staff to put on their own coats. However, children's independence is not promoted at snack time as drinks are already poured. Children listen well at story time and enjoy joining in with songs. Some children are beginning to write their own name. Children enjoy books and use the book area independently. However, children are not always sufficiently challenged when doing the weather board as staff give children the correct word without allowing them time to choose the correct word themselves.

Children learn to count through the daily routine as they count the number of children attending each day. They talk about patterns, for example, in characters' costumes in the story. Children learn to calculate how many sausages are left as they sing the rhyme about '10 Fat Sausages'.

Children have planned, first-hand experiences to see living things, for example, a visit from hedgehogs. They learn about the world around them through visits from the road safety unit and visits to the local school. They use the computer and use other items of technology in the home corner appropriately, for example, the oven.

Children explore colour, texture and shape as they enjoy free painting, choosing their own collage materials and making models from play dough. Children take part in regular musical activities with staff and sometimes with people who visit the pre-school to bring additional musical experiences to the children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by staff who work appropriately with parents to meet individual children's needs and ensure that they are fully included in the life of the setting. Children are valued and staff plan time for them to share information at news time. Children are able to choose their own activities during ongoing provision from a selection provided by staff. This has been further improved because staff leave one table clear to encourage children to make independent choices.

Children learn to respond well to appropriate expectations of their behaviour, for example, following instructions to put their hand up before talking. They behave well and are able to work together harmoniously as they learn about taking turns such as when they play dominoes or wait for their turn on the slide.

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

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are well informed about their child's day through discussion and regular parents' meetings. Parents receive a booklet on the pre-school but it contains limited information on the Foundation Stage. Parents are encouraged to use to pre-school library with their child. However, they are not given any other information on how to continue their child's learning at home. Plans on what children are doing are displayed in the entrance hall and contain brief information on what children are intended to learn.

Parents and carers speak highly of the staff and the pre-school. They state children enjoy attending and that children have improved since starting pre-school in some areas, such as social development and gained more knowledge, for example, drawing, painting, singing, counting and knowing their colours. They feel staff are experienced and feel able to discuss any concerns with them. Parents were consulted via a questionnaire on the viability of an Easter fair as an alternative fundraising idea. Newsletters are sent out each half term updating parents on current issues, for example, changes to opening hours.

There is a complaints procedure in place. However, staff are not aware of the changes in regulations which came into force in October 2005. Therefore, they have not updated their procedures and method of recording complaints accordingly. The provider has failed to meet regulations.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by adults who are vetted and have relevant experience, knowledge and understanding of child development. Adults are generally committed to continual improvement, for example, they introduced healthy snacks for children after attending a course on the dental health initiative 'Smiling For Life'. However, staff have limited knowledge on 'Birth to three matters'.

Overall the adult-child ratio positively supports children's care, learning, and play. However, staff deployment during the inspection showed one member of staff was with the whole group of children at news time and whilst doing action songs. The organisation of the daily routine includes time for free choice activities and adult led activities. The time allowed in the daily routine for the adult led activity means children are sitting for a long time before they can start free choice activities.

Most policies and procedures work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievement, and ability to make a positive contribution. Record keeping systems are mainly used well to meet children's needs.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The pre-school has a clear statement of their intentions to offer a happy, caring, learning environment for children. Staff are encouraged to attend training courses by looking at course lists and deciding if anyone would benefit from training. Staff often share key points of training attended with other members of the group. Staff meetings are held to discuss current issues, however, there were no records available of meetings held. The supervisor and staff identify personal and social development as an area of strength in the Foundation Stage. They identify an area for improvement as the outdoor play area. The planning and children's records do not contain sufficient information to give a clear picture of children's progress and there is no system in place to show all areas are covered sufficiently in planning to monitor the quality of the provision for nursery education.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Care Inspection

At the last care inspection staff agreed to make the heating appliances safe. Although thermostatic valves have been fitted to the radiators this remains an outstanding issue at this inspection.

Education Inspection

At the last education inspection the provider agreed to use children's progress records to inform future planning of activities and to develop resources for information technology and creative dance.

Children now benefit from staff discussing individual children's development and using this knowledge to provide additional opportunities to improve their skills. They now have access to a computer to enable them to develop skills using the mouse. Children also benefit from regular visits from an organisation that provides new musical experiences to the children which has increased staff confidence to try new ideas, for example, using a tape recorder so children can dance and play statues.

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.

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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 good hygiene procedures for hand washing are always followed
- review the current risk assessments to ensure the radiators do not present a hazard to children whilst maintaining a suitable temperature in the main hall
- update the current child protection policy to include the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or a volunteer
- increase staff awareness of the changes in regulations for complaints; keep a record of complaints relating to the National Standards and any action taken
- increase staff knowledge of 'Birth to three matters' framework and use the information to inform planning of activities for children under three years.

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):

- continue to develop children's records to show children's progress towards the early learning goals
- ensure that parents receive more detailed information on the Foundation Stage
- devise a clear system to ensure that all areas of learning are covered and use the system to plan for any gaps.

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