



Stretton Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	221870
Inspection date	21 February 2007
Inspector	Clare Elizabeth Pook
Setting Address	Amenity Centre, Main Street, Yaxley, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE7 3LU
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Registered person	Stretton & Fourfields Pre School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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?

Stretton Pre-school is one of three provisions in Yaxley run by the same committee and management team. It opened in 1982 and operates from two main rooms in the Amenity centre run by the parish council. A maximum of 52 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 08.00 to 15.00 term time and occasionally during the school holidays. All children access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 98 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 53 children receive funding for early education. Children attend from a the local area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 19 members of staff. Of these, 13 hold appropriate early years qualifications and 6 are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in light, airy, clean surroundings where they learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care within the daily routines, for example they understand why they should wash their hands before preparing or eating food to stop germs spreading. They independently use tissues to wipe noses and dispose of hygienically in the bin. Children are encouraged to help tidy and clean up wiping tables and sweeping up sand. Clear and effective systems are in place for the recording of accidents and the administration of medication. All staff have current first aid certificates so they are able to respond appropriately to an emergency.

Children are well nourished and their dietary needs are catered for, promoting growth and development. Staff have excellent understanding of healthy eating. Topic work and generally discussions each day reinforce healthy aspects. Snacks offered are varied and nutritious and include foods such as toast and fruit. Special occasions allow for children to try new foods for example Chinese new year and tasting noodles and sweet and sour sauces. Children talk about healthy foods and know that it keeps the body healthy and teeth in good condition.

Children enjoy physical exercise and are developing positive attitudes. They are aware of the importance of physical exercise to stay healthy. Topic work encourages children to think about effects of exercise on the body, for example football sessions include why we need to have a drink, the importance of warming up muscles and why keeping fit is important. Children are regularly offered appropriate and extensive physical challenges in a safe and very well planned environment. They make excellent use of the space indoors by providing large equipment for children to use such as the climbing frame, slide and balancing steps alongside other activities. Children manipulate different consistencies of clay, dough, gloop and other soft materials exploring their textures and helping to develop their muscles. They use a range of utensils to draw and paint such as quills, brushes and pens. Children demonstrate good control when using tools to whisk during cooking, using chop sticks to eat noodles or cut fruit at snack time.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a very safe and secure setting which puts children first and their safety is of utmost priority. The children are kept extremely safe within the setting as the access to the premises is closely monitored and effective systems are in place for managing arrival and departure of children and visitors. Staff are exceptionally vigilant and let everyone know how many children, staff and visitors are present. They inform each other when leaving the room to take children to the toilet and a record of numbers of people present is maintained near the door.

The rooms are organised exceedingly well so that children can safely move around and easily access toys and activities. Robust risk assessments are in place including daily checks inside and out which help to reduce hazards and keep children safe. Toys are well maintained and checked regularly for safety ensuring they remain suitable and safe for the children to play with. Children are learning to keep themselves safe when cutting fruit using sharp knives or talking about wearing helmets when cycling and spontaneously sweep up the sand so they don't slip.

Children are protected because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Children are cared for by adults who are vetted and have relevant experience, excellent knowledge and skills.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy coming to the setting and have a positive attitude to learning. They are content to play on their own or with others. They are keen to take part in activities and concentrate and persevere well. Children are able to make decisions about what they do. They behave well and have a secure awareness of right and wrong. Staff are sensitive to the needs of the younger children and adapt activities well to accommodate their needs. Children show their pleasure when making rocket pictures, they share and take turns fairly when tossing pancakes and work well alongside each other creating models with the bricks.

Staff know children extremely well and use skilful questioning at all times to encourage children to think and extend their learning. Staff have a good understanding of how to accommodate younger children providing them with space and to rest and sleep if needed. Staff are aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and are beginning to successfully implement it in their practice. They have identified this as an area for development. Records on these children are beginning to be effective and include areas for parents to contribute and make their own comments.

Nursery education

Staff have a generally good understanding of the foundation stage. Planning is in the process of being re-developed to centre more on the child. Staff are being encouraged to look at where a child is at on an individual basis and find out about their interests. This information is then used to plan for them on an individual basis. Staff are supported well by an effective leadership and management team who clearly understand how to plan and ensure children make progress towards the early learning goals. Senior staff clearly explain roles for staff at the beginning of sessions and ensure they are aware of the learning intentions. Also management are encouraging staff to think for themselves about the learning intentions of activities and how these link to their key worker children. Learning intention cards are used successfully around the room to support staff and students and ensure they are aware of the purposes of activities. Staff use effective strategies to challenge and extend children. How to adapt activities is included on planning to give staff pointers. Staff use open ended questions well to encourage children to think for themselves, for example 'how do you think you could attach the rocket?'. Staff use their spontaneous skills to follow the children's lead, for example using their interest in musical

instruments to accompany singing. Staff are very good at consolidating recent topic work, for example, when cutting apples during snack time staff reinforce number work by looking at the number of segments cut from the apple which related to previous topic on numbers. Effective use of accommodation and resources are made. Staff have to set up the rooms each day which allows for resources to be put in different positions keeping children's interest.

Children are confident speakers who chat happily to their peers and staff. They listen attentively to stories and enjoy acting it out themselves, for example Handas surprise. Children are learning letter sounds through topic work and are able to recognise and sound out most letters of the alphabet as well as write them. For example 'a' for ants on apple, Africa. Extensive posters, labelling and notices around the room helps children to understand that print carries meaning as well as being able to find resources easily. Children use numbers well in every day situations and many count well some past 10. They shout out the numbers when playing hop scotch and practise copying and writing them in the sand. Simple calculation is explored through singing songs such as 'three men flying saucer', or finding 'one more plate'.

Children show a keen interest in new activities and how things work. Children are competent on the computer and at operating the simple equipment such as telephones, v-tech toys or bee bop independently. Several opportunities are provided for children to examine objects and living things to find out more about them at the 'hands on' tables. This promotes children's investigative skills and natural curiosity. Children use their imagination to express their ideas through creating their own pictures and models. Children freely access resources to support their designs and add to their creations, for example making rockets ships. Children experiment with colour mixing and are proud to share that green and red make brown. Various media play is extended and made more interesting by the addition of glitter to dough, and the use of a variety of objects in the sand and bark.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff give clear instructions so that children understand what is expected of them and offer praise and encouragement to reward their efforts. This boosts their self-esteem and ensures that all children feel valued and included. Children enjoy a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. They display high levels of engagement and enthusiasm which indicates that they are motivated. Staff take time to listen to children and value what they say. They provide them with 'leave work cards' so that children can return to their work after snack or lunch. Children's work is attractively displayed where possible or collated in files to share with parents.

Children are well behaved. Staff demonstrate a consistent approach to challenging behaviour. They are calm and professional in their approach to behaviour. Explanations are at the level the children understand. Clear boundaries are set and children are learning about right and wrong. They know not to run indoors and share with each other taking turns to play games. Children learn about the world around them and respecting other peoples beliefs and cultures through using a range of multi-cultural resources and being involved in activities planned festivals and different countries in the world. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children who attend with learning difficulties are valued and respected. Staff work closely with parents to ensure that the best support and care for their child is provided. Situations are handled sensitively and professionally. Additional help in the form of one to one workers is provided. Information is gathered from other professionals from their visits to the group and shared so that children feel secure and are fully included.

Partnership with parents and carers is good and contributes to the progress and well-being of children. Parents speak highly of the setting. Parents are fully informed about the Foundation Stage at open evenings and are kept updated regularly through newsletters. A table with a variety of information, photographs and planning is located in the foyer for parents to access. Parents are able to speak to staff on a daily basis to exchange information and more formal meetings are held on request or at parent's evenings. Staff find out about children individual needs and abilities when they start and when they begin to receive funding. Parents are encouraged to write comments on the end of reports issued each term, these are constructive and help staff plan for the future of children.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are happy and settled, enjoy activities and achieve well because staff create an environment where they have appropriate space and resources to do so. Adults working with children show care and concern for their welfare to give them a sense of well-being and regular staff know them well. They have good levels of support to help them feel welcome, comfortable and at ease in the setting because the person in charge has a clear vision of how children thrive and uses her skills, knowledge and experience to lead by example. Robust procedures are in place for ensuring staff are suitable to work with children. Staff are suitably qualified and continue to develop personal and professional skills through training.

Experienced staff show high regard for children's health, well-being and enjoyment. They maintain and use appropriate forms of record keeping and refer to policies and procedures in order to promote children's care and learning. Information gathered from parents is made known to staff to ensure that their wishes are followed. This level of attention contributes to the continuity of children's care so that they feel secure. The rooms are set out attractively and are extremely well organised so that children and staff can move around safely and easily access resources.

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding.

Staff work closely and effectively as a team, are well trained and have good knowledge and understanding of how children learn. They are an enthusiastic and dedicated staff team who are aware of their roles and responsibilities and share good practices. Staff are carefully monitored and appraisals are in place. Staff are motivated and keen to improve the care and education for all children. They have a clear vision and use their self evaluation forms as a working document to develop practice. They have clearly identified areas for development, staff training needs and offer excellent support to the staff. Relationships with the committee are good and regular meetings are held to exchange information so they are fully aware of what is going on.

Overall, the provision meets the range of children's needs who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. The setting was asked to consider developing their systems for recruiting staff. This has successfully been done. Robust systems are now in place ensuring that appropriate checks are carried out and the induction process is effective. They were also asked to update their complaints policy. This is now comprehensive and in place including a log to be used detailing the complaint and outcome if a complaint is made.

There were no key issues from the last inspection only a point for consideration relating to developing children's assessment files to include the next steps. This has been addressed and is used effectively. These are included in each child's file. Parents are able to see this with the reports issued each term and make their own comments.

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

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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):

- develop planning systems for the under threes that is in line with 'Birth to three matters' framework

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 staff knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage by continuing to involve them in the new planning system

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