



All Saints Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	402123
Inspection date	21 February 2007
Inspector	Jacqueline Oldman
Setting Address	All Saints Church, Springfield Green, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 7HR
Telephone number	0790 4488286
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Registered person	All Saints 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?

All Saints Pre-School is committee run. It opened in 1985 and operates from a suite of rooms in the church hall of All Saints Church, Springfield. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open three mornings and two afternoons a week during school term times. Sessions are organised for all children from 09:30 until 12:00 on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays and from 12:15 until 14:45 on Wednesdays and Fridays, when only children over three years attend. Children have access to a fully enclosed courtyard area.

There are currently 27 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these 16 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local community. The setting supports a small number of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and also supports a small number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs eight members of staff. Of these, three staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. An action plan is in place for three members of staff to commence early years training in September 2007. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP), the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PSLA) and other professionals.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because staff follow well-established health and hygiene procedures. Food preparation areas are routinely cleaned with anti-bacterial cleanser. Children are gaining a sound understanding of how to keep themselves healthy through discussion, daily routines and activities. They are enabled to gain independence in their personal care. They follow good hand washing routines and use liquid soap and fresh running water before locating their personal towel or flannel for hand wiping. This helps to stop the spread of infection. Children know hands carry germs which can make you ill if they are not washed before handling food. They know to ask for drinking water as they wish to stop them dehydrating. Nappy changing is sensitively undertaken with privacy offered to preserve the children's dignity and self-esteem. Staff have attended first aid training to ensure their responses are in line with current recommendations in the event of an accident.

Children benefit from a healthy diet and pictorial place mats encourage discussion regarding food that is good for you. They are offered nutritious snacks such as cucumber and carrot sticks and children grow and eat their own produce. Children choose to drink either water or milk. Good manners are observed as children sit together as a social group developing their interaction skills. Information about children's specific dietary requirements are gathered and displayed to ensure all staff effectively meet children's individual requirements.

Children enthusiastically participate in a range of activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Space is organised in the hall and adjacent room so that children can use a range of movements in age appropriate groups to practice and refine their coordination and control. They carefully crawl under the parachute, roll balls or learn to interact to their experiences by moving the parachute to create a breeze or a thunder storm. Children learn to play cooperatively as they share the wooden see saw. They recognise the changes to their body after energetic exercise when they feel hot. Children can rest or relax on the comfy chair provided in the quiet book area. During dry weather children have good opportunities to develop an active and healthy lifestyle as they use the outdoor area adjacent to the hall to dig, grow and tend flowers and vegetables.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

A well organised arrival and collection procedure protects children from unauthorised persons and prevents them from leaving the premises unsupervised. The system includes the effective use of a visitor's book, vigilance of staff and thoughtful reminders in newsletters to parents.

All visitors to the premises are scrutinised. Children are kept safe through the implementation of satisfactory risk assessments and the positive steps taken to minimise hazards and prevent accidents. Resources are checked and cleaned regularly so they remain in appropriate condition for children to use. Children make good use of the outside area as staff implement the outings procedure and ensure appropriate staff ratios are in place to protect them.

Children are beginning to learn the importance of keeping themselves and others safe. They are given clear messages about the restrictions imposed on them in order to help them understand the rules and discover they are there to protect them from harm. Activities are organised to encourage children to develop their independence as they make choices about their play. Children eagerly tidy away before whole group activities knowing this helps to keep them safe. They are protected in an emergency as they practice the emergency evacuation procedure to help them learn to keep themselves safe.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have a satisfactory understanding of their role and responsibilities in child protection. There are clear written procedures for staff to follow if they have concerns about a child and this includes a procedure to follow regarding allegations made against a member of staff. However, children are not yet fully protected as the policy does not include the telephone contact details of the local police and social services to ensure any concerns can be dealt with promptly.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Most children enter the pre-school confidently and settle quickly to a good range of activities. Children consolidate and practise their learning through play. Activities are set out ready for children to enable them to become independent and responsible within a supportive environment. Most children are very familiar with the routine and display good levels of independence. Parents are encouraged to come in and take time to settle children choosing when to say goodbye or stay. Children choose what they want to play with and their self-esteem is promoted as staff listen to what they have to say, valuing their contributions and responding to meet their needs. Staff support children's learning by sharing their observations and ideas to develop children's thinking. For example, when a member of staff observed a child with goat's milk she initiated a conversation to provoke questions and reveal what children know.

Children under three are able to participate in all activities. Sometimes they split into smaller groups to enable staff to give appropriate support. The pre-school uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework and has started incorporating it into the planning and assessment systems. Staff verbally share observations of what children can do with their key worker at the end of each session. These are then transferred to the children's records. However, planning does not yet take account of observations of what children can do in order to plan individual children's next steps consistently.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are developing a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Activities are planned to cover all six areas of learning. Planning is organised

around weekly topics and are linked to the stepping stones. The supervisor and deputies contribute ideas to planning and support other staff in their understanding of the revised system to help ensure they are made aware of the aims and objectives. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals given their starting points and capabilities. Although the new planning documents allow staff to differentiate the activities, they have not yet started using this system effectively to provide sufficient support or challenge so that individual children can achieve as much as they can.

Children are offered a broad range of learning experiences as the main hall is divided by equipment and tables into designated areas to allow them to move freely between activities. Good use is made of an adjoining room for reading and sharing books with an adult, their peers or browsing in an inviting and comfortable environment. Children sometimes benefit from opportunities for small group work making good use of the available space.

Children communicate confidently, because adults listen, give children time and respond sensitively, showing a keen interest in what children have to say. Children sit quietly and listen attentively at story time and contribute enthusiastically when invited. They comment about the stories and demonstrate what they know and understand. The children talk freely about their experiences at home and listen to each other as they chat while enjoying eating together at the lunch club for those children soon to make the transition into school. Children's independence skills are developing well as they make choices and take decisions. They are independent in their personal care routines.

Children are motivated and interested in the activities on offer. They are well behaved, assist adults and co-operate with each other. Children are able to express themselves through art, music and imaginative role play. Children are beginning to understand how their actions and behaviour affect others. They are developing personal values and a sense of what is right, what is wrong, and why. When listening to stories they express concern for others.

Children recognise their name as they find their chair on arrival or their place mat for snack or lunch. More able children can write or sound out the letters of their name and some know the initial letter. There are opportunities for children to count and calculate within the daily routine. They count the number of children present and calculate how many candles are needed on a birthday cake. Some children demonstrate an understanding of positional language such as middle and can recognise shapes and patterns. They enjoy opportunities to weigh and measure as they make pancakes and then recall the quantities of the ingredients used.

Children enjoy demonstrating their creative skills with a range of different materials such as paper, paint, glitter, glue and play dough. They are proud of their achievements and enjoy showing staff, visitors and their parents and carers the paintings and drawings they have created. Children enthusiastically participate in singing and use musical instruments, sometimes freely and sometimes to follow patterns.

Children can explore and investigate when making play dough. They observe the changes that happen when it is warm and freshly made and how it becomes smooth and colder with handling. Children show wonder as they look at stones with a magnifying glass or feel a slow worm for the first time. Children have the opportunity to learn about technology as they explore a fire

appliance, experiment with the fire service hoses or have their finger prints taken by a police cadet.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are warmly greeted by name on arrival making them feel welcomed. This helps them to settle quickly. Children develop a sense of belonging as they find their named chair on which to leave their personal belongings. Children's chairs are also used by staff to pass newsletters and other information to parents. Staff encourage an open door policy where parents readily share information so that they can best meet and support children's individual needs and welfare. There is a clear equal opportunities policy that covers all aspects of the staff's care practice. Systems are in place to support children that may have additional needs. The special educational needs coordinator is enthusiastic about her role and has attended training to help her identify and support children appropriately and sensitively.

Children play harmoniously and understand the need for responsible behaviour. They listen and respond immediately when it is time to help pick up the toys, prepare for snack time or sit for registration and group time. Staff give plenty of meaningful praise to boost the children's confidence. They enhance their self-esteem by encouraging children to bring their parents into the main play room for them to show and present their art work to them for collection.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They form warm and caring relationships with both their friends and staff and learn to respect the needs of others. They are confident to talk to visitors. Children learn about diversity as they play with puzzles or look at books with positive images. Festivals such as Chinese New Year are celebrated with the children. Children are encouraged to take part in special appeals such as 'Harvest for the Hungry' to help them understand the importance of their own contribution to society. They learn to appreciate environmental issues as they take care of plants and feed the wild birds. Children benefit from strong links with the local community. Volunteers come in to share stories and books with the children.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the involvement of parents in projects and topics, which contribute to their enjoyment and learning. For example, children and parents take part in treasure hunts and bring their discoveries to share at pre-school. The supervisor and key workers are always available for discussion. Effective systems are in place to ensure all parents are kept informed of how their child is progressing in their development and learning. Regular newsletters are sent out to parents informing them of future events, topic work and how they can support their child. For example, with costumes, art and craft resources or being a parent helper. Parents join the management committee and take part in regular fundraising, such as the planned Easter coffee morning and egg hunt. Parents make very complementary comments about the pre-school and the staff team. They appreciate the care and attention shown to the children and are impressed by their attention to detail.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are protected because staff and volunteers have been vetted and cleared through the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). The pre-school has an action plan drawn up to ensure that at least half of the staff will hold a level 2 qualification at the earliest time. Children benefit as two deputies have recently gained a level 3 qualification to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills. An effective student induction programme supports children's welfare and safety.

All the essential records needed to meet regulations and the National Standards are in place. Policies and procedures are implemented in practice to promote positive outcomes for children; however, some need minor updates. There is an operational plan which is re-examined regularly and available to parents and carers to help them understand how the setting runs.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The supervisor is strongly supported by the management committee and the stable staff team. Rotas ensure they are all made fully aware of their roles and responsibilities and children benefit from staff working well as team. Staff are supported by regular meetings and training which assists in developing their confidence, knowledge and understanding of childcare issues. They understand the importance of attending training courses linked to their on-going professional development and demonstrate a commitment to improvement. The supervisor constantly searches for ways in which to improve. She has put a great deal of thought into reviewing the policies and procedures and revising the written planning in order to provide a curriculum that helps children make good all round progress. She has reviewed and revised the way in which some sessions are organised and recognises that further revisions are required to planning in order that outcomes for individual children's learning are consistently maximised.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended the pre-school develop staff's awareness of effective ways to manage children's behaviour and ensure the child protection statement includes the procedure to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. Both recommendations have been met and as a result children's welfare and safety has improved.

Funded Education

At the last inspection for nursery education there were two key issues. The provider was asked to: extend the overall planning so that staff are clear about the aims for activities and how the activities meet children's learning needs as identified through the assessment records; give greater consideration as to how the organisation of time, space and resources can more effectively accommodate different children's age and level of understanding, and how older children's learning experiences can be extended. The planning and organisation of activities has been reviewed and revised. Planning of activities, time, space and resources takes account of children's developmental records and are linked directly to the stepping stones. Activities

are organised to make best use of the available space with some sessions organised for funded children only. The supervisor and deputies support other staff to ensure they are made aware of the aims of the activities to improve outcomes for children.

A further recommendation is made following this inspection to develop planning to ensure differentiation is linked to observations of what individual children can do to in order to effectively plan their next steps in learning and maximise outcomes for all children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 the written child protection statement includes contact names and telephone numbers for the local police and social services department
- use observations of what children can do to plan their next steps in play, learning and development.

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 planning to ensure differentiation is linked to observations of what individual children can do in order to effectively plan their next steps in learning and maximise outcomes for all children.

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