



# Doddinghurst Community Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	508826
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 January 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Ann Marie Cozzi
<b>Setting Address</b>	Doddinghurst Village Hall, Church Lane, Doddinghurst, BRENTWOOD, Essex, CM15 0NJ
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<b>Registered person</b>	Doddinghurst Community Pre-school Committee
<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 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?

Doddinghurst Community Pre-School opened in 1962. It operates from the large hall of Doddinghurst village hall. The pre-school offers care to from the children local community.

There are currently 51 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 41 funded three and four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports a small number of children who have special needs.

The group opens four mornings and one full day a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.00 until 13:00 Mondays and Wednesdays, 09:00 until 12:00 on Tuesday and Thursdays and on Fridays 09:00 until 14:50.

Twelve part time staff working with the children. Ten staff have early years qualifications to National Vocational level 2 and 3 and one member of staff is working towards National Vocational level 2. Three staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about the importance of personal hygiene through the daily routines. They wash their hands at appropriate times and receive support in order to participate in regular hygiene routines and maintain good health. Consequently, most children know they need to wash their hands after using the toilet. Children's health and wellbeing is promoted through the effective procedures followed by staff such as nappy changing and the reporting of accidents. All staff are appropriately qualified in emergency first aid enabling them to care for children appropriately in an emergency situation.

The importance of eating healthy foods is promoted through planned topics and offering children nutritious snacks such as bananas, grapes and apples. Advice is available for parents of children attending the lunch club in order that all children have a well balanced diet. The individual needs of children are met well through the records kept and particular dietary needs and preferences are catered for. Meal times are considered to be a sociable time and children are able to eat at their own pace without feeling rushed. There is access to fresh drinking water at all times so children's hydration is consistently replenished.

Children's physical development is encouraged during their time spent at the centre. During fine weather conditions the group operate a free flow system between the indoor and outdoor for part of the session. This means that there are opportunities for children to receive fresh air and engage in vigorous play on a scale larger than can be achieved indoors should they wish. The planned indoor and outdoor activities incorporate opportunities for children to develop their motor skills such as when playing with sand, using the climbing frame and bikes where they can expend their energy as they jump, peddle and climb.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a secure and welcoming environment this is maintained through the systems in place. These include staff vigilance, the door bell entry system and colourful displays of children's work and photographs. Children are well supervised and are always in sight or hearing of the staff team. They are kept safe by the positive steps taken to minimise most hazards, both inside and outside. Children's safety is further protected by ensuring they access toys and equipment that are in good condition. The setting recognise the need to give fire safety appropriate priority and conduct fire drills regularly so that children receive equal chances to develop an effective awareness of how to respond in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Children are beginning to learn about the importance of keeping themselves safe. Safe practice is promoted in order to help children learn about the rules and discover they are there to protect them from harm. Children are encouraged to put toys away after playing with them and some know that 'you could trip over them and hurt yourself'. They are becoming increasingly aware of their boundaries.

The overall welfare of children is safeguarded because most staff have undertaken appropriate training and are well informed about their role and responsibilities in child protection. There are clear systems in place for staff if they have concerns about a child.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff have regard to the 'Birth to three matters' framework to help children make progress across all areas of their development. Although there is a weakness in the amount of time children are expected to engage in large group situations. Children are happy and confident as they participate enthusiastically in a wide range of planned and spontaneous activities that support their individual development. As a result, they are busy enjoying a wide range of activities, such as, outdoor play, art and craft, role play. Malleable resources such as snow and play dough promote their imagination and senses.

Children benefit from the good use of the key worker systems for example, a new child is supported and encouraged to participate throughout the session. Interaction between the children and staff is warm, caring and positive as they move from activity to activity freely playing either by themselves with staff or alongside their peers. On the whole children are able to make decisions about what they would like to do next as the environment and resources are organised well to encourage this. Children's achievements are valued and recognised they receive lots of praise and encouragement. The use of the 'super star' chart further supports children's achievements. As a result children develop positive attitudes to future learning.

During activities children demonstrate their curiosity as learners, sharing ideas and asking questions such as why, when and how. There are plenty of opportunities for children to develop their vocabulary as staff give time for them to develop their thinking and listening skills. Children enjoy reading books and listening to stories which further promotes their language development.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making sound progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Children enjoy an environment where staff are enthusiastic and use a good range of teaching techniques to extend their thinking and learning. Staff have an adequate knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and activities are planned to support children's individual learning needs. This results in children on the whole being well occupied and interested in what is on offer. However, during group time some children can become bored and distracted.

Children's achievements are linked to the stepping stones. There are some systems in place for planning and assessment. However, observations about what children know and can do are not

used to by staff in planning and identifying children's next steps for learning and assessments are not consistently completed. Information about children's educational development within the pre-school is shared with parents and carers through drop in evenings, verbal feedback and open access to key worker files.

Children particularly enjoy free flow sessions and most are able to sustain concentration and interest in a range of activities during this time. However, during group sessions some become bored and disruptive. Children's self-esteem and confidence increase as they share stories from home and proudly show peers their art work. They form good relationships with each other and members of staff, as they work co-operatively at tidy up time carrying play mats. Children are able to negotiate taking turns and lining up when washing their hands for snack

Children are developing greater independence for example, they know where to put their belongings such as coats and lunch boxes. Equipment and resources stored at low level enables children to be self-sufficient in their learning. Children are developing their understanding of letters and the printed word independently as they enjoy the comfortable book area. They join in large group story time, using the pictures in the book as clues to the story line and predicting what happens next. Children have some opportunities for mark making and writing for a purpose in role play and during some activities. Low level posters and letters of the week encourages children to begin to link sounds to letters which contributes to skills for later learning. Most children count confidently and experience sorting, sequencing and the use of mathematical language through practical activities such as when playing with dough and comparing the sizes of their dolls eyes. Staff extend conversations well and the children go on to successfully discuss and describe size, shapes and patterns they have made. Children are further supported by staff in problem solving for example as they count to calculate dates during circle time. Children have appropriate opportunities to investigate and explore a range of materials using their senses both indoors and outdoors. They confidently use the computer, calculators and telephones as they find out what happens when they press a button. This enables children to develop their information communication technology skills and understanding.

Children have good opportunities to experiment and explore refine their skills in using different art resources as they eagerly glue or handle play dough to communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings. Children receive regular chances for songs and rhymes and most children enjoy joining in with the actions as they sing "Ten Fat Sausages". They have access to a good range of musical instruments and sometimes listen to different types of music such as classical. Children mimic their observations of the world they live in, for example whilst in the role play area, they enjoy shopping 'like mummy'. Children strengthen their fine motor skills as they pour sand into different sized containers. They handle tools such as paint brushes and gluing implements with developing control. Most children have a good awareness of the space around them as they move with ease around obstacles and when manoeuvring their hobby horse.

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

The provision is good.

Children are on the whole confident and independent. They are able to make informed choices such as selecting resources and activities for themselves, as the free play part of the session is carefully planned to promote this. Their needs and circumstances are well known to the staff,

as a result children receive good individual care. The warm and encouraging language used by staff promotes children's participation in all activities. Children have an awareness of the wider community through planned topics and the use of resources. This contributes to them developing positive images of others and assists in creating a welcoming environment.

Strategies to support children with special educational needs are effective. The systems are evolving to ensure children are always fully included, able to participate and feel a sense of belonging. The ethos of the setting emphasises the importance of ensuring inclusion and consequently, all children's needs are met in a variety of ways.

In the main, children are well behaved. The appropriate use of praise and encouragement and the 'super star' chart acknowledges their achievements, boosts confidence which in turn enhances self esteem. Children receive support from staff at times of conflict with their peers and some are learning to manage their own behaviour. Children form positive attitudes when they are offered explanations which are in line with their level of understanding. This in turn, helps them to distinguish the boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children benefit from a close working partnership between their parents and staff which contributes towards their well-being, development and progress. Information from parents regarding their child provides a good starting point in understanding where each child is at in regard to their development. Parents receive useful information about the setting and the successful implementation of the key worker system ensures information is continually exchanged and shared. Children's developmental records are always available for parents to view upon request outside of the programmed drop in evenings.

Partnership with parents and carers of children receiving nursery education is satisfactory. Parents benefit from twice yearly drop in evenings, access to their children's developmental records and the colourful displays which show the six areas of learning and the curriculum planning. This helps parents to gain an understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. However, there is a weakness in the consistency of sharing children's individual learning priorities with parents.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

All regulatory policies and procedures are in place and updated as required. However, the current system for recording the arrival and departure times of children and staff are not kept to ensure children are safely accounted for at all times and that a record of all adults in contact with children is maintained. Appropriate vetting systems are in place to ensure that children are protected. There is a clear operational plan in place which is shared with parents and carers.

Children are cared for by experienced and qualified staff who are deployed effectively to ensure their welfare and development. All staff working with children are using the Foundation Stage curriculum and reference is made to the 'Birth to three matters' framework when planning for the needs of younger children. The majority of staff hold relevant early years qualifications. Staff induction procedures are in place and monitoring systems, such as appraisals and regular

staff meetings support staff. Policies and procedures are implemented in practice to promote positive outcomes for children.

The leadership and management of funded children is satisfactory. There is a strong commitment to improvement throughout the team which is instigated by the manager. Staff are supported by regular meetings and training such as record keeping and observation. This promotes their confidence, knowledge and understanding. The manager works along side staff which assists her in monitoring the implementation of the Foundation Stage curriculum in the setting. The manager works closely with other professional organisations and the local authority to develop the quality of nursery education. Overall, children's needs are met

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

At the last care inspection a recommendation was raised to improve the range of resources that promote equality of opportunity. The pre-school have increased activities and resources which in turn promotes equality and anti-discriminatory practice. The pre-school were asked to review and update policies and procedures this has been undertaken and is ongoing. This promotes the safe management of the provision. The pre-school were also asked to review the organisation of snack time. This has been addressed and as a result, promotes children's sense of belonging and social skills.

At the last nursery education inspection a recommendation was raised to revise the organisation of space and time to enable children to move between inside and outside. The pre-school now operate a free flow system between the indoors and outside weather permitting. This enables children to independently initiate their own style of learning according to their needs. The pre-school were also asked to improve the organisation of large group times, this is ongoing and has been identified as a recommendation at this inspection.

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

Since 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 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 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):

- improve systems to ensure that hazards to children on the premises, both inside and outside, are minimised this refers to preventing access to the stage area and low level shrubs
- further develop the current registration system to include the time of arrival and departure of children and staff

### **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):

- further improve the use of observations to inform planning; this also applies to care
- increase opportunities for children to engage in free flow play in order to extend independent learning; this also applies to care
- develop opportunities in communication language and literacy with particular regards to mark making
- develop the current key worker system to ensure that children's records of assessment are consistently shared with parents and careers, in order that they work in partnership to plan children's next steps in learning

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