

Tudor Cross

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY152486
Inspection date	25 April 2007
Inspector	Jill Nugent
Setting Address	Community Centre, 46 Crooked Mile, Waltham Abbey, Essex, EN9 1QD
Telephone number	01992 766444
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Registered person	Tudor Cross 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?

Tudor Cross Pre-School opened in 2000. It operates from one hall of the community centre in Waltham Abbey. Children share access to an outdoor play area. The pre-school is open from 09:15 until 11:45 and from 12:15 until 14:45 every weekday during term time.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 64 children on roll, aged from two to three years old, and of these, 21 are funded for nursery education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who have English as an additional language.

A total of 10 members of staff work with the children. They rotate between the pre-school and its sister provision nearby. Six members of staff, including the manager, hold relevant early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted through appropriate medical procedures. Staff obtain relevant information on children's medical backgrounds and request consent from parents if asked to administer medication. Children with an infectious illness are excluded from pre-school so as to protect others. Children are well taken care of in the event of an accident because all staff are qualified in first aid. However, they have not obtained permission from parents to seek medical advice or treatment if deemed necessary. There is, therefore, a potential risk of delay in children receiving the correct treatment. Accident records are well maintained but are not confidential to each child which means that parents have access to information about other children.

Staff are attentive to matters of hygiene and ensure that children play and eat in a clean environment. They have recently introduced a changing area for children so that nappy changes can be carried out hygienically and efficiently. Children are becoming aware of good hygiene themselves, for example, they take it in turns to wash their hands before snack. Staff have a good understanding of food hygiene. They provide a wide variety of healthy snacks for children. This encourages them to try different foods and learn about healthy eating. For instance, children enjoy crumpets, fruit, cheese and different breads. They are offered a drink of their choice so as to prevent dehydration during the session. Children who suffer from food allergies have their needs met effectively as all staff are aware of their particular diets. Consequently, children are well nourished.

Children enjoy good opportunities for regular physical activity. They have access to outdoor play activities during each session and enjoy the facility to move freely in and out of the hall. They have fun exploring a variety of outdoor resources such as cars and scooters, buggies and balls. They develop self-confidence as they learn to control wheeled vehicles and aim balls. When playing with balls and hoops children are encouraged to extend their physical skills through using them in different ways. Children benefit from being able to exercise in the fresh air regularly. They also enjoy movement sessions indoors or playing with large soft shapes. These activities help them to keep fit and healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. Various pictures and posters are displayed around the hall and a selection of resources is set out for children each day. There is good access to toilets which have been made particularly suitable for young children. Staff promote children's safety by ensuring that all potential risks are minimised. They carry out an annual risk assessment and daily safety checks. Children are secure in the building as the doors and outside gate are kept locked. They are prevented from having access to the kitchen. Visitors to the setting are monitored through a bell entry system. This ensures that children are safe and secure at all times.

There are adequate fire precautions in place in the hall. Children practise an evacuation plan regularly so that they know what to do in case of an emergency. They keep safe on walks in the local area as staff follow a written safety procedure. Children are well supervised during the day and staff take care that children leave safely at the end of each session. Staff have a

good understanding of child protection issues. They ensure that children are only collected by a known adult. If having any concerns, staff have the necessary information to enable them to keep a record and seek advice. Therefore, children are well protected in this area.

Children learn about keeping themselves safe while at pre-school. Staff remind them of the safety rules concerning play equipment such as the indoor slide. Children are reminded not to run or climb on furniture. They have independent access to resources during each session. These are rotated on a daily basis in order to provide variety. All resources and equipment are suitable for children of different ages and are stored in such a way as to be easily accessible to staff. This makes it easier for them to regularly clean toys and equipment and check them for safety. Consequently, children are able to play safely in the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally well settled and happy. They have good relationships with each other and with staff members. Older children often play in pairs or groups, chatting together whilst devising games. They particularly enjoy the home corner and small world toys such as the doll's house and dinosaur collection. They develop self-confidence as they choose resources and talk with adults. They approach members of staff confidently if wishing to take part in an organised activity. Staff interact with children during their play but not always effectively in adult-led activities. For example, children benefit from staff's involvement in their outdoor and imaginary play. However, they are not always encouraged during creative activities to communicate and explore materials in different ways. Staff praise children for their efforts and achievements which helps to boost their self esteem.

Children are able to become involved in activities which support their development and learning. Staff ensure that the planned activities are differentiated to account for the needs of children of different ages and this works effectively for the three-year-olds. However, younger children who attend in the afternoon are not always able to enjoy a wide range of play activities that suit their particular needs. Staff have a copy of the 'Birth to three matters' framework which provides guidance for children under three, although they have not yet begun to use it in their planning for two-year-olds. These children respond to adults who show an interest in them, for example, sharing a story book, exploring paints and dressing up. However, they lack the stimulation of a wide range of activities which allow them to explore or encourage them to communicate, create and imagine.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children show an interest in the available resources on arrival at pre-school, for example, making sounds with musical instruments and preparing meals using play food. They particularly enjoy opportunities to explore paints and sponges on the creative table. Children are developing their use of language through being engaged in conversation by staff, answering questions and developing ideas for play. They are learning to recognise their names and are beginning to enjoy books when listening to stories. They have opportunities to explore mark making using pencils and crayons. However, children have limited opportunities to increase their awareness of letters, and words, in play activities or to mark make in a variety of situations.

Children count confidently at group times and like to join in with number rhymes, learning to use numbers to represent quantities. They participate in the creation of wall displays which

make use of numbers, for example, the story of the 'Three little pigs'. They are learning to compare numbers when measuring themselves for a height chart. When investigating minibeasts, they find out about living things in the local environment, counting spots on ladybirds and legs on spiders. In free choice play, however, children have few opportunities to increase their number skills, or become more aware of mathematical language, for example, when using shapes and patterns.

Children have good opportunities to develop physical skills in indoor and outdoor play using a range of large and small equipment. They are developing manipulative skills through using tools such as scissors and brushes. In creative activities, they use different materials to create models and pictures, for example, colourful 'Elmer' elephants and pebble ladybirds. They are not always able to explore a wide range of materials in self chosen creative activities and thereby develop their own ideas.

Overall, children are making satisfactory progress towards the learning goals in all areas.

Staff plan the educational programme around a selection of topics, making use of the stepping stones of learning to show what children are expected to learn. They make sure that all areas of learning are covered by including a focus activity in each area for every two-week topic. They do not always make good use of topic areas to provide a wide range of stimulating activities through which they can promote children's learning more effectively. This impacts on children's ability to extend their awareness and skills in different situations.

There is some good involvement of staff in children's play activities, encouraging conversation and enhancing play. At story times, children are encouraged to think about aspects of the story through discussion. Staff explain clearly what is on offer each day. However, they do not take opportunities during organised activities to extend children's awareness and learning through useful interaction in each experience. Staff assess children's progress using Foundation Stage profiles. They are introducing a new system which shows children's progress through the early stepping stones more clearly. This will enable staff to make more effective use of the assessment records to guide their planning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel valued and included in the setting. They are given the opportunity to take part in all activities. At the beginning of each session they gather together for registration, along with staff, and this helps them to develop a sense of belonging. Staff have a caring attitude and ensure that children are happy and do not feel left out. They help young children settle in by offering them individual attention and encouraging them to join in play. Children are developing personal independence through learning to do things on their own, for example, washing hands and putting on coats. They are able to make choices during activities and this helps them to learn decision making. They find out about a wider society through using resources which reflect diversity. They learn about different cultures as they talk about foods and countries of the world.

Children's behaviour is good and they play harmoniously together. They are aware of their boundaries because staff remind them of the pre-school rules on a regular basis. Staff are consistent in their management of behaviour and help children to negotiate turn-taking and sharing. Children respond positively to requests and instructions. For example, they are particularly helpful at tidy-up time and know to move quickly and quietly to the carpet

afterwards. Consequently, they are learning to distinguish between right and wrong and behave responsibly. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support as staff observe them closely and liaise with parents if they have any concerns. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The pre-school works closely with parents and carers. The prospectus contains useful information about the procedures and guidance for parents on settling children in and maintaining an interest in what they do at pre-school. This helps children to develop self confidence and independence. Regular newsletters keep parents informed about any changes at pre-school and forthcoming events. However, parents are not provided with clear and up-to-date information regarding the raising of any concerns or complaints. If they are unaware of the correct way to do this, children's continuity of care may be affected.

The partnership with parents of nursery funded children is satisfactory. The prospectus includes information about the Foundation Stage of learning and an outline of the six learning areas. The plans for each topic are displayed on the notice board so that parents can find out about the activities planned for that theme. Printed notices around the hall also provide information about each activity area, alongside photographs, so that parents can read about the various learning experiences. In this way, they are encouraged to be involved in children's learning. Staff are available at any time to talk with parents in order to keep them informed about their children's progress. Overall, children benefit from the close partnership between the pre-school and their parents.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The pre-school's policies and procedures work adequately in practice to promote the outcomes for children. All the necessary policies are in place and available to parents. Several policies have been updated since the new manager took over responsibility for the provision. Information about children is kept in a secure place so that it remains confidential. Emergency contact details for children are easily accessible in case of an evacuation of the building. The documentation contributes to keeping children safe, healthy and happy. Overall, children's needs are met.

The pre-school has good employment and induction procedures in place. Staff retain a copy of the policies so that they are aware of their responsibilities. They are appraised regularly in order to monitor their job satisfaction and encourage professional development. They are committed to the continual improvement of the provision and since the previous inspection have attended training in several areas, these include behaviour management, speech and language and equal opportunities. Children benefit from their acquired knowledge and skills.

Staff ensure that adult to child ratios are maintained correctly at all times and have a high regard for the well being of all children. They rotate jobs within the pre-school so that each member is able to cover for another effectively. They work to a daily routine which helps children to feel secure and provides opportunities for free choice play and adult-led group activities. However, staff do not always make good use of the available space by providing a wide variety of resources which are easily visible and accessible to children. This restricts staff's ability to involve children in purposeful play and impacts on children's enjoying and achieving.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The manager involves all staff in the planning of activities and ensures that they take part in assessing children's

progress. They meet regularly to evaluate the planning and discuss future plans. However, staff are not always encouraged to develop topics in order to enthuse children through the provision of exciting learning opportunities. The manager is working closely with an early years teacher in order to monitor the effectiveness of the provision as a whole and determine areas for improvement.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous care inspection, the pre-school was asked to develop the procedures for supporting children with special educational needs and to ensure the attendance registers show the hours of attendance. These procedures have now been developed and provide a sound framework for supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff maintain the attendance records appropriately, entering times of attendance if they differ from sessional times.

At the previous nursery education inspection, the pre-school was asked to formalise strategies for supporting children with English as an additional language and to develop the planning and assessment systems in order to show clearly children's progress and next steps in learning. Staff have obtained more resources for supporting children with English as an additional language and are able now to offer better support. The planning and assessment systems have been developed and the new manager is working to develop these further to ensure that they provide a good framework for the educational programme.

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

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):

- request written permission from parents for seeking emergency advice or treatment
- ensure that accidents to children are recorded in a confidential manner
- improve the outcomes for children under three by using an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework

- update the information for parents regarding the complaints procedure.

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):

- extend the opportunities available to children to participate in a wide range of stimulating activities and learning experiences
- ensure staff take opportunities to promote children's learning through effective resourcing and purposeful interaction in planned activities.

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