



Clawton Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY341640
Inspection date	01 February 2007
Inspector	Michael Collins
Setting Address	Clawton Primary School, Clawton, HOLSWORTHY, Devon, EX22 6QN
Telephone number	01409 271347
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Registered person	Clawton 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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?

Clawton Pre-School has been registered since 2006. It is managed by a committee of parents and interested others. Based in the village of Clawton, close to Holsworthy, the setting operates from a community room in Clawton Primary School and children have access to a large sports hall and an outside play area. The setting is registered to care for a maximum of 20 children and currently has 10 children on roll all of whom receive funding for early education.

The setting is open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 09.30 to 12.00 during school term time only. They employ two members of staff, one of whom holds an appropriate level four early years qualification, and the other is working towards a level two qualification. They also operate a parent helper rota to support the staff. They are members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receive support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff plan and provide a good variety of activities which support and promote children's physical development. The children particularly enjoy using the school playground and have the confidence to request this as an activity even when it is not planned. They like to walk on stilts, run around, and ride on bicycles and other wheeled toys. The children also have access to the school sports hall, where they can participate in organised and group activities such as obstacle courses and games.

Written records of children's requirements and parental wishes are kept by staff, and acted upon. The setting have a very good food and drink policy and are following the guidelines of the Food Standards Agency. However, implementation of the policy is inconsistent and results in the children receiving an imbalance of unhealthy sugary and salty foods at times, and healthy foods such as fresh fruit and vegetables at others. Children are offered milk, water or juice at snack times, and they are able to access drinking water independently, thus ensuring their fluid levels are appropriately maintained throughout the session.

To support children's health the setting has all of the required policies, procedures and documentation in place. The accident record is very good, and shows action plans, where appropriate, to avoid repetition. However, the proposed medication record is flawed and would breach confidentiality, and staff first aid qualifications do not meet current guidance. Children are able to independently wash their hands and have a growing awareness that this helps to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

The use of risk assessments has minimised various hazards and the setting has the majority of safety equipment in place. However, safety and security in the setting is inadequate. Children are able to leave unsupervised and anyone can gain access via unlocked and un-alarmed doors. The record of visitors is not used consistently and is not dated. Whilst the setting has a good emergency evacuation plan and have reviewed and improved it, they have not practised this with the children. Due to the nature of the site, staff deployment during outside play is particularly crucial and the current system does not guarantee full staff communication and consistent supervision of the children. Also children can access hazardous materials in one of the toilets and this is neither safe nor hygienic.

Children have a good amount of space to move around in and are able to choose from a good variety of toys and resources, which are safe and well maintained. Resources are used appropriately and with purpose by staff, to aid and assist children in all areas of development. Through this support and guidance children are beginning to learn about staying safe and remind each other not to run indoors and to be careful when playing outside.

Staff have a good understanding of child protection policies and procedures and the setting has a good child protection policy in line with the local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are happy upon arrival, pleased to participate, and settle very quickly. They make themselves at home and eagerly take part in the varied and stimulating activities, provided for their learning and enjoyment. The managed and sensitive approach of staff ensures new or anxious children are settled skilfully and they are able to join in with their new friends. The setting's approach of supporting parents to attend initial sessions with their children enables children to become accustomed to the environment and staff in a non-threatening and secure manner.

The development of consistent, warm and trusting relationships with the children allows the staff to foster the children's trust and sense of well-being. The consistently good adult-child interactions within the setting, that are chatty and friendly, help to promote the development of early communication skills. This relaxed and friendly atmosphere allows the children to make choices and as a result they are absorbed and very happy in their play.

The children confidently chat with their friends and adults, are able to discuss real and imaginary events. They initiate their own play and develop this to include ideas and subjects they have learned about. Children achieve well because staff plan well and have a good understanding of early years guidance, such as the Foundation Stage curriculum and Birth to three matters, using these to plan activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff provide a good range of appropriate resources, which the children confidently self-select from suitable storage. The children are curious and eager to learn and participate in the stimulating environment provided for them. They make their own decisions about what to do and each has the ability to initiate their own play either individually or together.

All children use mark making to represent their ideas and constant provision of writing materials supports this. They listen patiently and intently to various stories, and are beginning to participate in group discussions confidently. They recall and recount events or activities that interested or stimulated them, and speak with each other and adults about their homes, families and experiences. Through staff's commitment and personal knowledge of individuals, all children are able to take part in activities.

Children's imaginative and creative play is encouraged and supported particularly well by staff. For example, children convert the dressing-up rack into a fire engine, and staff ask what other things they will need, and the children suggest a steering wheel and a hosepipe. Children start their own role-play and are able to play individually or in co-operative groups, whichever they choose. The children are curious and inquisitive, clearly intrigued by the stories they listen to

and asking appropriate questions. They thoroughly enjoy music and movement and are becoming adept at banging drums, shaking rattles and moving in time to the music.

Staff extend children's mathematical vocabulary and skills through the use of planned activities. The children use these skills with purpose in their play by counting objects such as the safety barriers used by the 'fire-fighters' in their role-play, and by speaking of 'big and small' objects. However, staff do not take opportunities to extend the concept of calculation into everyday activities such as snack time.

Staff have a good understanding of the practical uses of the Foundation Stage curriculum and the stepping-stones. They conduct baseline assessments of the children's starting points with parents and use their written observation and assessments to assist in planning for the children's next step. However, whilst staff may have a good understanding of the children they care for, plans do not clearly show how activities will be extended for the more/less able child.

There is a good balance of free-play and carefully structured activities and this enables children to be confident, independent learners, who develop very good concentration skills. They learn to recognise their names and are developing an understanding of letter sounds, through gentle reminders and the use of phonetics.

Children learn about and experience the wider and natural world through planned projects and activities. They enjoy outside play, and the collecting of natural items such as leaves to examine with magnifying glasses. They experience a range of technology equipment such as tape recorders, telephones, and tills, and develop a good sense of time, as they talk with staff and each other about events in their lives, and the daily routine. Children use a good range of small and large equipment such as bikes, trikes, stilts, scissors, pencils and brushes, and develop very good control of their large and small physical movements.

The staff are also particularly skilled at promoting children's learning through effective questioning, reflection and discussion. They plan and prepare a good variety of activities, which offers a good range of outdoor and indoor experiences, and covers all areas of learning. This ensures that children are making good progress along the stepping stones.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff warmly welcome both parents and children to the setting. They ensure that individual need, parental wishes, and family background, are taken into consideration and acted upon. Staff actively support children to integrate, make friends, and feel at home in the setting. Parents of prospective children are encouraged to attend sessions with their child and stay to help them settle. In addition, the manager attends the parent and toddler group which operates from the setting also, so that parents and children alike are able to get to know her, thus easing the transition to pre-school. This combined approach and the staff's kind and gentle demeanour makes sure children settle with ease and growing confidence.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children learn to share and take turns, as staff gently remind them to think of others, and to remember their own

emotions and feelings. The staff team set reasonable and consistent boundaries that children are aware of. They are developing warm and mutually respectful relationships with the children, which increases children's understanding of right and wrong as they respond positively to calm reminders to care for their friends, the environment and resources. The children also have further opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through planned and appropriate activities. They learn to respect differences, as they celebrate a range of festivals and discuss other cultures and climates. As a result of the clear boundaries set by staff, and because they are treated as individuals and with respect, the children's behaviour is excellent.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are encouraged to become involved in their children's care and education from the very beginning and supported by staff to continue. They are also encouraged to participate in the management of the setting by joining or supporting the management committee. They are asked to complete a baseline assessment of their children which is used to influence planning, and as reference point for the staff's good observation and assessment records. These records are open to parents and, along with regular face to face discussions, these ensure they are aware of their children's progress and development. Regular newsletters are issued by both the management committee and the manager. These contain further information about planned activities, suggestions as to how parents could work with the children at home, and management and community news. However, whilst the information provided to parents regarding the Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory, it is minimal. A parent helper rota is in place and they are encouraged to participate in this. The very close involvement of the parents in the setting and their good communication with staff benefits the children immensely.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The quality of leadership and management is good. Staff are made aware of their roles and responsibilities through good induction procedures. They work very well as a team and are committed to the promotion of children's health, enjoyment and achievement. The manager is aware of the setting's strengths and weaknesses and provides a monthly report for the committee detailing these. The good teamwork of the staff enhances children's care and learning, allowing them to get to know the children individually and respond to their needs appropriately.

It is a clean and child-friendly environment and space is used effectively to meet the needs of the children. However, as previously mentioned, the organisation and implementation of safety issues, and the deployment of staff whilst outside, is somewhat lacking. Documentation in the setting is inconsistent, again as previously mentioned, some are very good and some are un-suitable. Although, all of the required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being, is in place, kept securely, and is mainly well-maintained.

Along with the management committee, the staff team, who are highly motivated and committed, contribute to the day to day running of the setting and its continued improvement and development. They hold regular meetings, and work together to monitor and improve the

service they are providing. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- assess the risks to children in relation to outside play and adequate staff deployment and take action to minimise these
- ensure access to the premises is secure and the visitors book is completed correctly and dated and that children cannot leave unsupervised
- ensure children cannot access hazardous materials in the toilets
- ensure the existing evacuation plan is practised on a regular basis with the children

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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):

- ensure plans show next steps for individual children and how activities may be extended for the more or less able child

- ensure that opportunities to explore mathematics and calculation are included in every day activities such as snack time

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