

Good Shepherd Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	110538
Inspection date	28 June 2007
Inspector	Anne Gunston
Setting Address	Good Shepherd Church Hall, Bramble Close, Holbury, Southampton, Hampshire, SO45 2JP
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Registered person	Good Shepherd 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?

The Good Shepherd Pre-School opened in the 1970's. It operates from a church hall in Holbury, Southampton and it serves the local area.

There are currently 25 children from two to four years on the roll. This includes 20 children who are in receipt of government funding for nursery education. The pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The group opens five days a week during school term time only. Children attend for a variety of sessions which are from 09:15 until 11:45 each day. On Wednesday, Thursday and Friday children may stay for a lunch club until 12:45.

There are five staff employed to work with the children. Over half of these have early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification level 2 or 3. The pre-school receives support from the local authority Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning appropriate hygiene habits when in the pre-school. They need few reminders from staff to wash hands at the correct times, although may only do this in a bowl of water which is changed periodically throughout the session. Children are becoming independent and learning to care for themselves. Staff have positioned tissues within reach, which children use freely. Children have a growing awareness of their own needs, and choose staff who are familiar to them to assist with personal care. For example, children choose which member of staff will change their nappy and staff facilitate this. Staff ensure that all children have their privacy respected at this time. They use a separate room if children require a change of clothes, and ensure that other staff do not allow them to be interrupted at this time.

Children enjoy healthy snacks which have been freshly prepared, and enjoy their meals sitting at clean tables. They learn the importance of a healthy diet and are encouraged to prepare their own sandwiches, with marmite or jam as fillings. Fruit is served each day. Records are kept of children's health and dietary needs; staff encourage children to choose what they wish to drink each day but monitor that this complies with their individual requirements. Children's health is protected correctly if accidents occur. There are sufficient staff in post who hold first aid qualifications, and a well-stocked first aid box is maintained. Staff complete a weekly check on the contents, and replenish these if necessary.

Children are able to be active and develop their physical skills while at the pre-school. They enjoy using large equipment such as the trampette and slide. Children are learning how to gain control of their bodies as they experiment wiggling and twisting with hoops, or rolling forwards and backwards over space hoppers in the garden. Children benefit from fresh air as they play in the church garden, or take part in walks in the local community whenever possible.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to learn how to keep themselves safe. Staff generally use reminders to prompt children to use their 'walking feet not running feet' when at pre-school. Children take part in activities which promote safety when outdoors, such as, the road safety topic. They quickly recognise the importance of 'listening with our ears' to check for vehicles before crossing a road. The staff team always keep the premises secure to ensure children are safe. Visitors are consistently challenged for their identity, and there are sound systems in place to monitor that children are collected by appropriate adults. Staff complete visual checks of all resources and areas available to children each day, to make sure they are in a good condition.

Children are able to move safely and independently around the pre-school. Staff prepare the hall in advance of children's arrival, and display a broad range of colourful, up-to-date resources to encourage free choice. Children are able to ask for additional materials to support their play; these are willingly provided by staff, which maintains children's interest.

Child protection policies and procedures are in place, which indicate the pre-school's commitment to keeping children safe from harm. Some staff have attended relevant training. However, key staff are not confident in implementing the child protection policy to enable them to respond promptly if concerned about a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are keen to attend pre-school and quickly become involved in the varied activities provided by staff. Children form positive relationships with each other and adults; many children have favourites among the staff team. These key staff show good knowledge of children's individual needs. Children are generally secure and happy to part from their parents or carers. Good support is given to children who find this difficult; they are reassured with an affectionate hug and distracted to activities which interest them. Staff are beginning to make use of the Birth to three matters framework to ensure that the activities they plan are appropriate for younger children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a basic knowledge of the Foundation Stage of learning and are developing their planning systems. Currently all staff work together to formulate plans, linked to a central theme and the early learning goals, for a term at a time. More detailed plans for the week are then created, which are flexible. The resulting activities, using vibrant new resources, are of interest to the children. The staff's teaching skills are increasing, some are very able to question children in a probing manner to encourage them to extend their thinking. As a result, children make satisfactory progress in their learning.

Children are becoming independent and show developing skills in caring for themselves. They enjoy conversations with their friends, some are very confident and state their views clearly to staff. They ask for additional resources to support their play. For example, when the role play area is set up as a school, children decide they want to clean the building and are provided with damp sponges by staff. Children show some interest in looking at books, and time is included for this in the daily routine. Children concentrate well on this activity in small groups, and particularly when staff join in the experience. Children are always keen to share their thoughts and interests, and are listened to by staff individually. However, when activities are planned for the group as a whole, children have little opportunity to express themselves or listen to stories without interruption.

Children are learning to recognise simple words, staff have labelled resources and areas of the hall, such as the 'wash hands' area. The use of Velcro name labels is beneficial as children learn to recognise their own name for self-registration, although staff do not use these to full effect. Children often collect them and bring them to staff when they have completed a piece of art work; some staff do not prompt children to write their name for themselves. Children are learning to recognise the size and shape of objects. They take part in games to match and pair items. When staff organise cutting and sticking activities at the art and craft table, children are prompted to think about the quantity and size of paper as it is cut into smaller pieces. Children join in number songs and rhymes, and enjoy counting down their fingers, "one, two, three" to the beginning of songs such as Wheels on the Bus.

Children are able to be creative in their art and design, and during imaginative play. They create their own designs using coloured card, foil and glitter; these resources are organised to promote children's choice. Children spend good periods of time developing their own art work and are supported by staff, who pose questions about the texture and appearance of the materials. However, staff are sometimes drawn away from supporting these worthwhile activities. They need to monitor children's safe use of the larger pieces of equipment, arranged in the centre

of the hall each day. Children gravitate towards these resources, provided to promote their physical development. In addition, they enjoy planned opportunities, such as, the parachute game, where they learn control of their bodies. Children develop increasing control of small equipment; they are supported well by staff in using tools, such as, scissors and glue sticks. Children are familiar with the use of tools in the role play area, they pretend to 'mend' the house with drills, pliers and saws. Children are becoming confident in threading beads to create necklaces. Children take part in activities to raise their awareness of their local community. They walk to the local school, visit nearby shops and collect natural materials during walks in a forest. However, staff have omitted to plan activities to increase children's knowledge of other cultures in recent months.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the friendly relationships which exist between their parents and the staff team. Children generally settle well because of the flexible arrangements which exist. Parents and children can make frequent visits in advance of the child's formal date of entry into pre-school. Daily communication takes place between parents and staff, who have sound knowledge of each child's individual characteristics, preferences and home circumstances. There are effective arrangements in place to meet the needs of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A designated member of staff has responsibility for this role, and works closely with other professionals, such as speech therapists or Portage workers for the benefit of the children. Children generally behave well; staff reward good behaviour with praise, their attention or a sticker to celebrate children's achievement. Children are encouraged to take responsibility; they may be asked to help staff pack away resources, as a method of encouraging positive behaviour. Simple phrases are used by the majority of staff, to reinforce acceptable standards of behaviour during children's time at pre-school. Although staff have not included activities to raise children's awareness of other cultures into their planning, children have equal access to all resources, including those reflecting diversity. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents provide the pre-school with initial information when their child first attends, and are happy to approach their child's key worker with any concerns. They are encouraged to discuss their child's progress at any time, and to send in items related to the topic. The pre-school notice board provides information on policies and procedures. Displays of photographs of show children taking part in activities, and indicate which area of learning this relates to.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

There are suitable arrangements in place for recruitment and employment of staff to work with children. A good ratio of staff is maintained, which ensures children are kept safe and generally receive support in their learning. All relevant policies and procedures are in place, and records relating to the care of the children are shared with parents appropriately. Staff make sure the premises are clean and prepared in advance of children's arrival. They organise a welcoming environment. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The consistent team of staff show commitment to improving the provision of nursery education for children in their care. All show willingness

to attend training relevant to their role, although no system is yet in place to identify their training needs or monitor their performance. All staff take part in recording observations of what children achieve throughout the session. These are passed to key workers, who record progress towards the relevant learning goal, and plan informally for the next steps.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspections of both care and nursery education were judged as inadequate. The pre-school was set actions to improve. In respect of the quality of care, the pre-school was expected to ensure that sufficient resources and activities are offered on a daily basis to challenge and interest all children. Staff have increased toy provision and display an attractive selection of play materials each day. They have begun to make changes to the storage of resources to provide children with more independent choice. Staff are reviewing the organisation of the pre-school and becoming familiar with changes they have made. It was also expected that they devise a system to deploy staff around the pre-school to ensure that children receive support in their learning opportunities, and consistent guidance so they know what is expected of them, particularly to keep themselves safe. Staff are vigilant in monitoring the use of equipment, and remind children about the risks involved in activities, such as, running instead of walking indoors to keep them safe. The majority of staff are involved directly with children's play, or preparing the ambitious programme of activities.

With regard to the quality of nursery education, the pre-school was asked to devise and implement a system to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the provision. The records of children's progress required improvement to ensure they accurately reflected children's abilities. Improvements were needed in staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, to enable them to better assess children's progress, identify the next steps for learning, and ensure that children receive sufficient challenge in all areas of learning. All staff meet regularly with the early years advisory teacher and have jointly planned a comprehensive programme of improvements. It is their intention to complete this programme within the year. These meetings are minuted, which ensure that it is possible to monitor when targets are achieved. Staff have completed in-house training with the advisory teacher and in the longer term it is intended that unqualified staff achieve a relevant child care qualification. Staff's knowledge is increasing steadily. Most key staff are completing regular assessments of children's progress; these records clearly indicate what children have learned. The staff's collective approach to planning activities means that all have sufficient knowledge of what each child can be expected to achieve. This is not yet reflected in written plans.

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.

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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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure children take part in regular activities to promote their understanding of diverse cultures and religions
- improve all staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures

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):

- introduce and maintain a system to monitor staff's performance, identify and support training needs
- ensure changes to organisation of environment, daily routine and grouping of children are progressed as planned, and continue to review effectiveness of these changes
- ensure assessment records are completed regularly for all children, that they clearly identify progress towards the early learning goals and are used to inform planning for the next steps.

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