

Fleet Methodist Church Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	507806
Inspection date	09 May 2007
Inspector	Amanda May
Setting Address	Reading Road South, Fleet, Hampshire, GU52 7TF
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Registered person	Fleet Methodist Church 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?

Fleet Methodist Church Pre-School opened in 1974. It operates from the Methodist Church in Fleet. The group serves the needs of families in the area and the intake reflects the local community.

The group is registered for 24 children aged between two and under five years, although children are usually aged two years nine months before being offered a place. There are currently 64 children on roll. This includes 45 funded three and four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are children currently attending that have special educational needs and there are also children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term time. Sessions are from 09.00 to 11.30 and 12.30 to 15.00. With a lunch club running every day except Wednesday from 11.30 to 12.30. This is available for all children. Wednesday sessions are from 09.00 to 11.30 only. Monday and Thursday afternoon sessions cater for the rising fives.

One full-time and five part-time staff work with the children. Five members of staff hold early years qualifications. 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 good.

Children benefit from a good range of physical activities which include playing outside on bikes and trikes as well as enjoying indoor play on slides and trampolines. Children enjoy singing action songs daily before play, and are visibly keen to do this. Accident and medication records are maintained appropriately. Records are shared with parents immediately who sign to acknowledge the entry. If a child at pre-school bumps their head, staff give parents a head injury awareness form to ensure they know to look out for any signs or symptoms of a more serious injury. As a result children's health and care are optimised at all times.

Effective procedures are in place to protect children from illness and infection. Parents are advised of any contagious illnesses such as chicken pox which may be going around the pre-school. Parents are reminded to be vigilant and keep their ill children at home to ensure other children's health is protected. Children independently wash their hands after messy activities such as gluing and painting, in a low level bowl. However, as children share a towel to dry their hands, their health is not consistently protected. Improved hand-washing routines and facilities are in place for children to wash their hands before snack time. A member of staff supports children when necessary whilst consistently talking with them about washing their hands properly, whilst making bubbles with the soap.

Children enjoy a healthy snack which is brought in from home. The pre-school encourages parents to supply fruit for their children, and the pre-school provide children with a drink of milk or water. Children develop social skills as they sit together around the table, and talk about what they have brought in to eat today.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe environment both indoors and out. All members of staff are aware of their responsibilities during a fire drill, and each have a full understanding of the procedures which are in place to keep children safe. Fire drills are practised regularly, however as they are not currently timed and evaluated, children's safety is not reviewed and improved. Children learn about keeping themselves safe during their play as staff consistently take time to talk to children about risks and dangers. Children enjoy listening to a story, and point out the toadstools in the picture. Members of staff grasp this opportunity to talk to children about why it is important not to pick toadstools and mushrooms they see growing as they might be poisonous. Children also benefit from topics including talking about stranger danger, visits from the local police and fire service. Children's safety is also maximised through the pre-school having a record of who, other than parents, has been given signed permission to pick up the children. This ensures children are only released to adults which the pre-school has previously been advised about, maintaining their safety.

Children are well protected as a result of the staff's secure understanding of the issues surrounding safeguarding children. One member of staff is responsible for child protection

issues, and staff all know that if they are concerned about a child's welfare, they should speak to her or the supervisor. An incident book is in place, and staff record existing injuries effectively. This ensures children's well-being is monitored and protected accordingly.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive at the setting and are greeted by name from each member of staff. Children happily sit on the carpet after finding their friends, and say goodbye confidently to their parents. Staff support children well who are upset, and children as a result are reassured and calmed quickly with lots of cuddles and conversation. Children are independent in their play. They are able to self-select activities and resources as well as enjoy the activities which staff have planned for them. Many varied resources are in place, and children are stimulated well in their play. Children benefit strongly from many outings and visits from outdoor agencies such as the police, a children's petting farm and visits to the local vet. Children benefit from these experiences immensely and enjoy looking at a teddy bear's bandaged arm on an x-ray machine. Staff support children consistently, and as a result of having a well-informed understanding of the children in their care, individual children's needs are met appropriately. Children enjoy warm and close relationships within the setting with adults as well as with other children. They seek out adults to join in their play, and adults extend children's learning effectively through high quality questioning, and challenging children to try new things and develop new skills.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are sufficiently challenged in their learning, and persevere with activities until they achieve. Children benefit from a varied and well-structured curriculum, which members of staff all contribute to. As a result, children's learning is continuously evolving with the different ideas and skills from all members of staff. Good support techniques are in place for children to ensure they are extended fully in their understanding. Children show an interest in the countries on the map whilst learning about Brazil. This is extended through staff introducing them to a globe so children can have a better understanding about where each country is situated across the world. Children enjoy trying to find Britain, whilst looking at the distance between the two countries.

Children's abilities and struggles are monitored effectively by staff through observations. Each child's key-worker takes responsibility for discussing these with parents, and ensuring children are adequately challenged and supported. However, observations are not currently linked effectively to future planning to ensure their knowledge is constantly improved and increased. Activities are well planned and resourced and subsequently, children enjoy a variety of valuable resources and toys. Children have an advanced knowledge and understanding of the world. They gain good understanding of technology as they skilfully control the mouse when playing on the computer, and listen to their own voices singing which have been recorded on a Dictaphone.

Children have a good understanding of phonics and numbers, and can generally recognise letters and numbers immediately. Children have access to a cosy, well-designed book corner where they sit and look at books with their friends surrounded by soft toys. Members of staff support children effectively in all activities, and encourage them to think through ideas and experiences at show and tell time. Children bring in a birds nest and a fir cone, and confidently stand at the front and explain to their friends what they have found. Children listen carefully, and are eager to ask questions. Children's understanding of communication, language and

literacy is also encouraged through the use of Mr Snuggles diary, an aid used by the pre-school to encourage children to take Mr Snuggles, a cuddly tiger, home for the weekend and write a diary with their parents about the many things they did together. Children enjoy sharing this with their friends when they return to pre-school, whilst fostering self-esteem and confidence.

Children have a secure understanding of some mathematical terms such as floating and sinking which they learn about during a water activity. Staff encourage children to think about the terms during their play, and offer a great deal of encouragement and praise when they think about new ideas and concepts. Children also learn about volume as they play with different size containers in the sand and water trays. This demonstrates their high levels of achievement and the staff's consistently good support and understanding of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are confident, relaxed and at home at the setting, and make active choices and take decisions as they initiate and extend their own play and learning. Children become aware of the wider society as they take trips out into the local community and make use of amenities such as the library for story time, and enjoy train rides to local towns and villages. Children develop self esteem and respect for others as they learn about different cultures from around the world during topic work. Children listen closely to a child's grandfather who comes in to talk to the children about what it is like to live in Brazil. Children share festivals which increase their understanding of different cultures and traditions, whilst having fun making new things and appreciating new experiences.

A very high standard of support is in place for children who have English as an additional language. Children benefit from staff using visual aids such as a play-clock on the wall to communicate to children when it is time to play, have a snack or tidy up. These aids also support children with learning difficulties and disabilities as they learn to sign with all the other children, so they can communicate with their friends and adults effectively. Children embrace their friends differences, and all join in in signing a welcome message to their friends at the start of each session. As children's differences are celebrated and respected to such a high extent, children achieve highly as a result. Therefore, children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Behaviour in the setting is generally good. A good selection of resources are in place to encourage good behaviour, whilst allowing children to understand the differences between right and wrong. Children show pride in special responsibilities which they are given such as book monitor or register collector. Children wear stickers for the session with pride which highlight their responsibilities effectively. Children are very keen to do their job well, and are excited to be chosen for these special jobs. Children learn to take turns during their play on the computer with an egg timer. Children independently turn over the timer when they decide to play on the computer so that their friends can see how long they have left until it's their turn to have a go.

Parents are kept well informed of their child's day through opportunity to speak to staff and key-workers at the end of each session. One member of staff greets children and parents at the door as they arrive, giving parents an opportunity to pass on any messages or ask any questions about upcoming trips or the day's activities. Parents are very happy with the care provided for their children, and find staff friendly and approachable. The quality of the

partnership with parents and carers in respect of nursery education is good. Parents are kept informed about what children are learning about through newsletters, notice boards and through the parents committee which they are all invited to attend. Staff encourage parents to take an active role in their child's learning through visiting to the pre-school to help out, or to share their skills with the children. Children therefore benefit from learning French and having Drama workshops organised by parents with these specialist skills. Parents learn about the curriculum for the Foundation Stage and the Birth to three matters framework through welcome folders, displays and through topic plans. Parents also benefit from being invited to meetings once a term to discuss how well children are progressing in their learning and to share children's record of achievement files, which include children's work and observations of children playing. Although the pre-school actively find out about children's developmental abilities before they start at the setting, early educational starting points are not currently discussed, therefore staff are unable to ensure children are challenged and supported effectively.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

As a result of good organisation within the setting, children's individual needs are consistently met. Staff are deployed well within the setting and are aware of how best to support children in their care, learning and play. Children have regular opportunities to join in play with adult-led activities such as making pan-pipes during craft, as well as having a chance to lead their own play, alone or in small groups. Children's safety and well-being is protected through secure procedures for recruiting staff. The supervisor demonstrates a thorough knowledge of how to ensure staff suitability, both before they are recruited, as well as continuous support and assessment during their work. Staff benefit from appraisals and being allocated a mentor when they start to ensure they have support and guidance available from a qualified and experienced member of staff. To ensure the setting continuously provides a high standard of service to parents and the children in its care, staff are encouraged to access relevant training and workshops. The pre-school also ensures that staff knowledge and skills are respected and shared through in-house training, where they cascade down knowledge to the rest of the team. This ensures consistency and is of a high level of benefit to the children in their care.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Planning is carried out by all members of staff who discuss ideas and learning goals at regular team meetings. As a result, activities are varied and well-planned. The supervisor of the setting ensures plans are of a high standard and explain the learning objectives for each activity. This ensures children are continuously learning and challenged in their play. Observations of children are done regularly and each child has a play plan devised by their key-worker in which their skills and struggles are recorded. However, there is currently no system in place to ensure that all staff members are aware of children's individual needs and key learning goals, to ensure they are consistently supported in their struggles. Staff are supported effectively within the setting, and the supervisor ensures the consistent level of teaching through monitoring new members of staff well in their practice. All staff feel valued and as a result, enjoy the responsibility for ensuring activities and topics are interesting and stimulating for the children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the provider was recommended to ensure that Ofsted are informed promptly of relevant changes to the committee and that DC2's and Criminal Records Bureau checks are obtained, and also to review and update documentation.

All documentation has been reviewed and updated in accordance with the pre-school learning alliance. Policies and procedures are secure and informative. These are shared with parents, and copies circulate around the staff for them to update their knowledge regularly about the service they provide. Good procedures are in place to ensure that Ofsted are kept informed of any changes within the committee and to ensure criminal records checks are obtained for all committee members as well as staff.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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 improved methods are in place for hand-washing after craft activities to reduce the risk of the spread of illness and infection,
- time and evaluate fire drills in order to ensure children's safety is consistently improved and reviewed.

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):

- devise methods in which to find out what children starting the setting can already do in respect of their learning to ensure they are then consistently supported and challenged effectively at pre-school,
- develop planning to include children's next individual steps so all staff are immediately aware of learning intentions for each child.

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