

# Coxheath Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 127128  
**Inspection date** 07 June 2007  
**Inspector** Susan Jennifer Scott

**Setting Address** Stockett Lane, Coxheath, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 4PT

**Telephone number** 01622 745662

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**Registered person** Coxheath 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](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?

Coxheath pre-school has been registered since 1991. It is a committee run group. It is closely linked to a local rising fives group which most of the older children attend in the year before they leave for school.

The pre-school operates from the village hall, in the village of Coxheath, near Maidstone. The group have access to the main hall, entrance hall, kitchen and toilets. The group also have use of the playing field adjacent to the hall. Parking is available at the hall.

The pre-school is open five mornings a week, from 09:15 until 11:45, with a lunchtime session until 13:00 on Tuesdays. The setting is open term time only and serves the local community.

There are currently 52 children on role. Of these 41 children are funded to receive nursery education. No children currently attend with special educational needs although some children have English as an additional language.

Nine staff are employed to work directly with the children, of these five are qualified in early years. Seven staff are on duty each session.

The group have support from the local authority and the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy the social opportunities offered by the milk bar and contribute items of healthy food such as fruit which is shared amongst the group. This provides good opportunities for children to engage in conversations about their homes and personal experiences. Their dietary needs are respected by staff who ensure they give food and drinks agreed by parents. Children can have access to water in bottles or suitable containers which they bring from home; this ensures they do not become thirsty or dehydrated.

Children experience appropriate hygiene practice. Some routines protect children's health and provide protection from infection. For example, staff use gloves, individual wipes and clean disposable changing mats as well as providing anti-bacterial handwash for the children. However, the facilities available for children to wash their hands when they use the toilet make it difficult for them to do so independently.

Children's health is safeguarded by staff who have first aid training and are able to administer treatment in the event of an accident. Staff record written consent and use appropriate records for the administration of medication which provides further safeguards for children.

Children move confidently and in a variety of ways. They are enthusiastic when using the large play equipment such as the parachute, climbing frame and slide. They are not provided with frequent access to fresh air and vigorous physical play opportunities in the outdoor environment, although they use this occasionally.

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

The provision is good.

Children arrive happily and settle well. They enjoy their play in a warm and welcoming environment with attractive displays of their work showing that staff value children's contributions. Staff meet and greet each child and parent, extending their confidence. Children are unable to leave the premises without a suitable adult as security of the premises is very good.

Children benefit from playing in a spacious and pleasant environment. This allows them to move around and play safely. They have easy and safe access to a range of toys and resources which are carefully selected to ensure they are suitable for children. They are able to move around and play flexibly, using the small tables and chairs, allowing them freedom to sit and play comfortably in small groups of their choosing.

Regular and thorough risk assessments, indoors and outdoors, ensure children's safety. Children and staff have a good understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of a fire because these are regularly practised. Staff are effectively deployed to ensure the safety of the children and are vigilant at all times, they supervise the children effectively and ensure they are aware of how to move around safely, encouraging them to tidy away toys.

Staff have an clear understanding of child protection procedures and know what action to take if they have concerns about a child in their care. This enables them to safeguard the welfare of children and to implement the written policy.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children who attend the setting are confident and secure. They develop good levels of self esteem and have a warm and relaxed relationship with the staff. Children access a large amount of play space inside, although outside the opportunities to use the facilities for learning and play are accessed occasionally.

The children benefit from staff knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework which is used to record development. For example, staff observe children's play to assess their understanding of numbers and colours. However, it is not used to plan and measure the developmental stages of the children. This results in younger children experiencing planned activities that may not fully promote their individual needs.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The staff have an appropriate understanding of children's development although there is no system in place to identify and plan for the next steps to enable efficient progress through the stepping stones of the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. Children do respond positively to the learning experiences organised because most activities are child initiated and well supported by staff.

Funded children experience a balanced programme of activities that offers planned and spontaneous opportunities to build upon their skills and understanding. Children are encouraged to behave well as the staff provide positive acknowledgement by recognising their abilities and promoting independence.

Suitable provision is made to enable communication skills and mathematical understanding to be nurtured. Children are enthusiastic when using their skills to name work and write on cards, although opportunities to develop their early reading skills are not frequent. They enjoy participating in games using numerals and counting skills though they lack consistent opportunities to calculate and solve problems.

Children experience some interesting activities in the community as well as planned opportunities to explore a range of cultures by celebrating different festivals, such as Diwali. They enjoy sound opportunities to investigate and explore cultural similarities and differences through conversations and practical activities, especially when using the milk bar.

Children enjoy painting, dressing up and cooking in the kitchen, building their knowledge of real life situations. The staff plan for the acquisition of physical skills during regular indoor and occasional outdoor play. For example, children extend their physical skills through using the parachute to create waves and bounce a ball across these and they regularly use pens and paintbrushes. Regular topics and current practice enables all children to build upon their understanding of healthy routines and keeping safe by learning about their bodies.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing an understanding of society and differing ways of life through celebrating some multi-cultural festivals. They have suitable opportunities to experience activities in their local community on a regular basis. The children access some attractive resources reflecting diversity, however, there are no dual language resources available reflecting the identity of the local community.

Children are encouraged to feel secure and to trust the staff as there are procedures in place to ensure their individual needs and preferences are catered for. For example, staff are aware of the need to provide individual support for children with speech or language difficulties.

Children's understanding of right and wrong is promoted through the use of consistent boundaries which enable them to learn desirable behaviour, developing their confidence to learn to take turns and share. They assist staff in tidying up, understand the rules within the setting and are learning to respect each other and different lifestyles. This ensures good relationships and harmony. The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are given information on the activities provided in newsletters and the prospectus provides some information on the curriculum and funding. They are welcome to contribute to the management committee and there is good support for the parent rota. Children benefit from parental contributions to their development through the use of an interest table and the informal parent consultations when staff share information on their progress. However, these systems are not formally planned so that children's progress can be fully supported at home. The parents and children benefit from regular verbal feedback and all children have a record of transfer which is completed when they leave. The inspection reports, framework for children under three and the curriculum for those over three years are available to parents to inform them of the programme followed.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children share good relationships with staff who have been vetted for their suitability to work with young children. The registered provider remains suitably qualified to work with young children and the majority of staff have appropriate qualifications.

Children benefit from the combined knowledge in the staff team as staff have undertaken a variety of training, and use their skills to ensure that children make progress and build upon their understanding. For example, training on Birth to three matters and the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage enable staff to plan and deliver a suitable variety of activities. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Children's welfare and individual needs are supported by the maintenance of appropriate records to safeguard the care of each child. Records are kept confidentially maintaining the children's privacy and safety; for example, an attendance record for staff and visitors is used.

Children are protected from harm because staff have an understanding of the policies and procedures that the group uses in emergency situations, such as the procedure for a lost child or how to respond to allegations.

## Nursery Education:

Leadership and Management is satisfactory. Children benefit from a stable staff team and a management committee who share common aims. Staff work closely together to ensure the organised delivery of the programme and this enables them to be clear about their roles and responsibilities. Children experience appropriate support and guidance as staff use the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage to plan and provide a programme. However, the more demanding and challenging activities are offered at another setting attended by the older children. This means that some learning opportunities are inconsistent and do not maximise the challenges available to the children.

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

At last care inspection there were three recommendations. Staff now ensure children's arrival and departure times are accurately recorded which promotes their safety. The range of activities and resources promoting children's awareness of equal opportunities has been developed and extended; for example, children play using dolls of varying skin colours. The organisation and planning of sessions enables children's individual needs to be met most of the time although not consistently and an element of this recommendation continues at this inspection.

At the last nursery education inspection there were recommendations to assess and implement changes to the structure to ensure continuity, availability of activities for self selection, challenges for more able children, opportunities for role play situations and opportunities for children to independently label their own work. These have been mostly addressed through improving the role play activities and resources, and supporting children's interest in mark making. Children make selections from supplies of toy resources and equipment that is rotated regularly.

Staff have developed the planning, evaluate activities and review the provision they make for children to ensure the planned activities are appropriate and interest the children. However, they have not developed a system that allows plans to be informed by the assessments and evaluations yet and this recommendation continues.

### **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 can be seen on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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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):

- ensure that the assessment and planning for children under three years is based on an appropriate framework such as the Birth to three matters

### **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):

- identifying next steps for each child, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities and use this information to support planning
- develop consistent opportunities to enable children to extend and challenge their skills and understanding, particularly in literacy and mathematical development

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