

# Kennet Valley Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 110710

**Inspection date** 03 May 2007

**Inspector** Sheila Collins

**Setting Address** Holybrook Centre, Carters Rise, Fords Farm, Calcot, Reading, Berkshire,  
RG31 7YT

**Telephone number** 01189428771 or 07884028715

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**Registered person** Kennet Valley 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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Kennet Valley Pre-School opened in 1983. It operates from the Holybrook Centre on the Fords Farm estate in Calcot, near Reading. The pre-school is part of the Kennet Valley Community Association. The pre-school has access to the large hall and a fully enclosed outdoor area. The pre-school serves the local community.

The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Morning sessions are from 09.30 - 12.00 on a Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and on Friday from 9.30 -12.30 to include a lunch club. Afternoon sessions are from 12.45 to 15.15 on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 34 children aged between three and five years on roll, all of whom receive funding for early education. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and also children who speak English as an additional language.

Five staff members are employed to work with the children. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are independent in their self-care skills, knowing that they must wash their hands after messy play, using the toilet and before snacks. Staff give gentle reminders to those who forget. The children learn good hygiene procedures from the staff during every day routines, for example, cleaning the tables before snack.

There are five staff members who hold a current first aid qualification. This benefits the children because any minor incidents such as bumps and falls are dealt with appropriately by competent staff. Staff know children's individual medical and dietary needs. All relevant documentation is in place to support children's well being.

Children are able to access drinks of water at any time, if they wish. The children have healthy snacks such as savoury biscuits, raisins, fruit and pour their own drinks at snack time. The children choose when to have their snack as there is a snack bar system in place. Towards the end of snack time, staff ask the children who haven't had their snack if they would like one, which ensures each child has the opportunity.

Children enjoy a range of physical activities both inside and out of doors, which promotes all round healthy development. The older children benefit from planned physical education sessions weekly.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The children move around freely and safely. They know the rules which are in place for their safety, such as not tipping their chairs onto two legs. Staff are vigilant to ensure all aspects of the children's safety. They undertake daily checks, both inside and out and regular risk assessments to ensure that the children can play freely and safely. The children take part in evacuation drills which are recorded in the diary, not in a specific fire log.

The children benefit from a good wide range of resources, which promote all areas of their development. They self select from items already laid out in the hall and at each session a child selects the toy of the day. The staff are not allowed sand in the hall so overcome this by using items such as bird seed in the sand tray to give the children a similar experience. The overall layout of the playroom with defined areas for different types of play, allows the children freedom to play safely and all areas and activities are well used by the children.

Staff are well deployed in all areas ensuring the children are protected and safe at all times. All staff have a good working knowledge of safeguarding the children, which further ensures the children's welfare. All the required procedures and documents are in place but the written child protection policy lacks precise detail of procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a staff member or volunteer.

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

The provision is good.

Children are secure in their environment. They enter the preschool confidently and greet each other and staff. The children are making friends and have developed good relationships with the staff. The staff set out the room with activities so that the children can have ready access to items when they arrive. Children independently select the toys they wish to use, directing their own play. They settle well to activities and show good concentration skills. Staff plan a variety of activities and encourage the children to participate in the range available. Children receive support from staff in their play. They enjoy interacting with different staff in one to one, small group and large group activities, for example when playing with play foam or making their hats for the May Day celebrations.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of nursery teaching and learning is good. The children are keen to take part in the planned activities. They are developing their independence skills and are able to take responsibility for their own work.

The children initiate conversations confidently and are learning to listen to each other and adults. They talk confidently to visitors to the setting. Conversations in the role play area reflect their knowledge of life, for example children knew that if they didn't both take their mobile phones with them when they left the home corner they wouldn't be able to talk to each other. The children listen to well told stories, join in with repetition and prediction and are keen to read the books for themselves after the story session. They can recall stories they have heard in the past and re-enact these, for example 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears when playing with play foam at a table. They have good opportunities to see their names in print on a daily basis as they self register, use their names at snack time and see these on their work area. They have good opportunities to practice their writing skills for example making lists as they check what other children are doing using the clipboards to record their findings.

The children count confidently for instance when taking part in games and taking part in activities such as on the trampoline. They are encouraged to count the number of people at the snack table to see if there is a space for them. Older children attending the afternoon session have good opportunities to develop their maths skills, for instance they count the number of children at the table and then find the corresponding number of items for use including brown pens and glue sticks. They are using appropriate mathematical language and learn about size, shape and volume through practical activities such as pouring their own drinks at snack time and making hats for the May Day celebrations.

The children know how to operate and to complete simple programmes on the computer. Staff offer support to develop the children's skills and to extend their understanding. They use a variety of items such as telephones, tills and binoculars appropriately. The older children learn to control programmable toys such as the bugs which is a popular activity and is monitored by the use of the timer to allow all the children to have a go. The children's enjoyment of this activity was extended by a staff member who drew some chalk roads for the children to guide the bugs down.

The children learn about the wider community and have visits from the police, paramedics and fire personnel. They take part in a variety of celebrations including Diwali, the Chinese New Year and May Day. The children use all their senses. The older children enjoyed an activity

where they examined closely different fruits and vegetables. They discussed how these grew and whether they came from a hot country or not. They felt the items, sniffed them, drew them and when they were cut in half correctly identified seeds and pips. They used these to make prints with and later during snack were able to taste other samples of the same items.

Children are confident in their design making skills, constructing models from junk and using wooden blocks to construct some complicated designs. The children have opportunities to be creative everyday. They confidently paint and draw at the easel taking responsibility for own work. They use a range of different materials for example paint, Play foam and birdseed in the sand tray. Some children had not seen play foam before and had great fun exploring its properties. The children take part in some adult led activities, for example making their May day hats, but were able to choose the decorations themselves. They looked at their creations in the mirror which staff placed by the craft table.

The children use a range of toys and resources to develop their physical skills. They use a small outside area where they balance on the beams, play skittles and practise throwing into basket ball net. Indoors they use items such as the trampoline, enjoying bouncing to music. They use items such as glue sticks, brushes and pens with confidence and dexterity.

Most of the staff have good knowledge of the way children learn, using open ended questions to check the children's understanding. Planning is discussed at staff meetings and staff work together to provide further opportunities to consolidate the children's learning. They identify individual children's needs in informal discussions at their regular staff meetings and work together to meet all the children's needs very effectively. Staff who have undergone training, demonstrate a good knowledge of the early learning goals.

All staff undertake observations on the children. Children are observed in their play both in individual activities and group activities. Notes are made which are used to update the profiles for each child and to help with future planning. Planning is minimal and the documents do not refer to the early learning goals although it is obvious from the delivery of the curriculum that these are covered well.

Staff praise and encourage the children in their efforts and achievements so boosting their self-esteem and confidence. Staff ensure that they are on level with the children either by sitting at the tables or on the floor so that they can join in with work and play and hold conversations with the children. Parents are encouraged to be involved with their child's learning. Older children take home a note with their work saying what they have done and giving suggestions as how their parents can follow this up with their child.

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

The provision is good.

The children's individual needs are known by the staff and staff work with parents to ensure that each child's individual needs are met. Children with learning difficulties and those who have English as additional language are integrated well into the group by both staff and children. All children receive good support from staff and there are strategies in place to assist with this, for example a visual timetable and the use of timers for turn taking. A basic daily routine is in place which ensures that children feel secure. The staff warn children if there are any differences; for example, the older children on the afternoon session were told that they would not be changing for PE as usual in order to allow enough time for parachute games.

The children are becoming aware of the wider society. They learn about different people within the community and enjoy visits from members of the Police, Paramedics and Fire services. They see positive images of other lifestyles in books, topics and projects are able to use a variety of resources which promote equality and diversity; for example, in the home corner, a range of dolls, cooking utensils and food. They also take part in a variety of celebrations including May Day, Diwali and the Chinese New Year.

The children are becoming aware of being responsible for and caring for others. Each child has the opportunity to look after the preschool's toy dog during a session and children can take him on holiday. They also share and take turns, for example in games and playing with the foam. They co operate when playing in the home corner and negotiate when using pieces of equipment such as the binoculars and stilts.

The children generally behave well. They are encouraged to respect others. The staff allow the children to negotiate with one another and support them if necessary. The children respond well to the staff and are pleased when they receive praise and encouragement for their efforts and achievements, which builds on their self-esteem and confidence.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents receive an introductory leaflet when they make first enquiries and then a comprehensive prospectus, in which there is excellent information about the preschool and the six areas of learning. However the actual words Foundation Stage Curriculum and early learning goals are not used. The parents receive regular newsletters and have information posted on the notice board to keep them up to date with what is happening within the preschool. Copies of the policies and procedures are available for parents to read. They have daily opportunities to discuss their child's progress with staff and opportunities to help within the preschool sessions which enable them to see what happens within the setting. At this time they can see their child's written records. These are also sent home each term and the parents have the opportunity to make comments in these profiles.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The children benefit from a well-organised environment where they are supported by staff who work very well as a team. The play room is laid out well with the different areas defined and is made welcoming for the children. The staff are well deployed and position themselves to see what is going on around them, not just the area they are working in. They interact well with the children and are well motivated and enthusiastic. They have a good awareness of their roles and responsibilities and are able to step in for each other with minimum disruption should the need arise. There are good procedures in place for the recruitment and checking of staff, which safeguards the children.

The certificate of registration is displayed for parents to see ensuring that they are aware of the conditions of registration. Information such as the insurance details is also displayed but this is not up to date. There are comprehensive policies in place. However, the written policy for child protection is limited as it does not contain the procedure to be followed if an allegation is made against a staff member. The complaints policy has not been reviewed to take into account the requirements of the 2005 revisions, for example a complaints log. Adequate records

of the children's attendance are kept, however the times that all children actually attend are not recorded on the register. Children who arrive late or leave early have the times recorded.

The leadership and management is good. The supervisors work well together and have defined their responsibilities within the group, utilising each others strengths and skills as well as those of the staff. The staff are aware of the strengths and weaker areas of the provision and use the self evaluation form as a basis to work from implementing any changes they make. The setting is committed to improving the quality of care and education for all children through professional development. The strengths and weaknesses of the provision including the provision for nursery education are effectively monitored and evaluated through regular staff meetings, parent's comments and constructive feedback from early year's workers.

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

At the last care inspection, two recommendations were made. These were to ensure that the registers are maintained to accurately show when children arrive and leave the setting and to further develop procedures to include protecting staff from allegations of abuse.

The pre-school has made some progress in implementing these recommendations. The system for registration includes the actual times when children arrive late or leave early, which ensures that there is an accurate record of which children are on the premises at all times. The child protection policy still does not contain the procedures to be followed in the event of allegations being made against staff members, so this information is not readily available for parents.

At the last education inspection, there were no recommendations made.

### **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 good.

### **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):

- review the child protection policy to include the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer

- review the policies, procedures and other documentation to ensure that they are up to date and reflect the current requirements, in particular the complaints policy and log.

### **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):

- review the planning in place to ensure that it reflects the early learning goals

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)