

# Oxted Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122725
<b>Inspection date</b>	22 June 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	June Fielden
<b>Setting Address</b>	United Reformed Church Hall, Bluehouse Lane, Oxted, Surrey, RH8 0AA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01883 730 406
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Oxted Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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?

Oxted Pre-School is run by a committee. It opened in 1974, and operates from the United Reformed Church hall which is located in Oxted, Surrey. There are two rooms for children to use. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time, and it is open each weekday morning from 09.15 to 12.15 during school term time.

There are currently 36 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these 27 receive funding for early education. Children come from the local catchment area. The pre-school supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs eight members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment. All accidents are recorded, and parents are informed. Staff hold appropriate first aid certificates, to safeguard children's wellbeing. The medication administered to children is also recorded, although several entries are made on the same page. As a result, confidentiality is not maintained when this is shown to parents. Suitable hygiene routines include the use of liquid soap and hot air hand dryers in the toilets. Children each have their own named cup to drink from, to prevent cross-contamination. However, there is the risk of children spreading infection to each other at snack time, as they wash their hands in the same bowl of water before they eat.

Staff are all aware of children's allergies and dietary requirements. Children are offered healthy snacks of fruit and vegetables, and pour their own drinks of milk or water. Jugs of water are always available to children, to ensure they are not thirsty. There are appropriate arrangements in place for children who are tired and need a rest, as bean bags are available in the book corners.

Children exercise their bodies and keep fit during the two activity sessions they participate in during the morning. They run around and bounce freely to music, showing an awareness of the space around them, as they play games organised by staff. Children use a climbing frame to slide and crawl on, and hoops and balls to practise their throwing and catching skills. They use pushing and pulling movements to strengthen their muscles, as they ride around on the small wheeled vehicles.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Space is suitably organised to allow children to engage in a variety of different activities. They move freely between the two areas used by the pre-school, choosing what they wish to play with. Colourful posters and wallboard displays make the setting attractive to parents and children. Equipment such as tables, chairs and bookcases are of an appropriate size for children, and the toys available cover all areas of the curriculum.

Children regularly practise fire drills, to ensure their safety in the event of an emergency. There is a secure system for the arrival and departure of children, to make sure they are unable to leave the setting unsupervised. Staff make children aware of how to keep themselves safe, and advise them not to carry anything that is heavy when they are assisting in tidying up. However, there are currently some hazards that impact on children's wellbeing, such as scooters being left in the hallway, a missing socket cover, and toys on the mats around the climbing frame. Although the pre-school have written details of what will happen in the event of a child not being collected, they do not have a lost child procedure. This is a breach of regulations, as there is a risk that staff will not all be aware of the appropriate action to take if a child goes missing, which affects their safety.

Staff all attend training in child protection in order to safeguard children's welfare. If they have any worries about children in their care, they will inform the managers, who will record their concerns. The managers will inform the appropriate authority when necessary.

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

The provision is good.

Younger children are offered the choice of a wide range of activities to develop their imagination. They complete the same tasks as the older children, but at their own level, as staff have different expectations for them. Staff frequently talk to younger children while they complete activities, allowing them to express their opinions. As a result, they are confident when visitors are present, engaging them in conversation. Staff support younger children in a variety of ways. For example, they spend time explaining to them how to use the equipment correctly, and are there to offer them a cuddle when they are tired at the end of the session. Staff raise children's self-esteem by allowing them to choose where they want their piece of work to be placed on the wallboard display. Younger children benefit from watching the older ones complete activities, as they learn from their example.

## **NURSERY EDUCATION**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Nursery education is ongoing throughout the morning, and children learn through free play, focused activities and small group work. Staff listen to what children say and respond to them in a friendly manner. They make good use of their questioning skills to find out what children know, and to extend their conversation. Effective planning is in place. Long term planning covers all aspects of the six areas of learning. It shows the themes, festivals and different aspects of the areas of learning for each half term. The weekly plans give the activities to be organised for each part of the morning, and the member of staff responsible for these tasks. There are separate plans for focused activities which include differentiation. Staff regularly make observations of children, which are used as evidence to assist them in completing children's profiles. Some dated photographs and samples of children's work are also kept in their files. Children's records of achievement show that most children make good progress in the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Children settle quickly when they arrive at the pre-school, as activities are set up for them to use, and staff are ready to offer assistance, if needed. They freely choose the activities they wish to be involved in, and often play with each other, sharing the resources available at the tables. Staff encourage all children to participate in circle time, and share their ideas with the group. Children show an interest in what they are doing, persisting with many activities for extended periods of time. Staff talk to children about their families. They look at photographs of the children as babies, to enable them to see how they have changed over time. Children become familiar with their local environment when they are taken on outings, such as visiting a local shop.

Staff use everyday activities to develop children's number skills. For example, they ask them to count the plastic keys they have placed on a key ring, or the cotton reels they have threaded, to develop their hand-eye coordination. Numbers and shapes are shown on posters all around the setting, to make children familiar with what they look like. Children start to use simple calculations at circle time, looking at the difference between the number of boys and girls that are present. They experiment freely with the small tools and equipment at the tables, and manipulate malleable materials such as play dough, by patting, stroking and squeezing.

Children can freely access paper, pencils and pens to practice their mark making skills. They are introduced to a different letter of the alphabet each week, and complete activity sheets to assist them in forming the letter correctly. Staff are aware of children's abilities, and offer individual support when necessary. For example, one child was given a pencil grip to assist

them in holding the pencil correctly. Children listen carefully to books which staff share with them, and develop their interest in stories as they answer questions about them. Staff extend their role play skills by retelling stories, while children act out the part of different characters. Children thoroughly enjoy this activity, putting emphasis in their voices and laughing while speaking their parts.

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

The provision is good.

Children are all treated equally by staff. They obtain information about children's individual requirements when they start attending the setting, to ensure they are aware of any comforters or special toys they require. The pre-school's settling in procedures allow parents to stay with new children for as long as they feel necessary. Effective resources are available to promote children's understanding of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. Children celebrate festivals from a broad range of cultures, including Diwali and Chinese New Year. When supporting children with learning difficulties and disabilities, staff keep a dialogue going with other professionals involved in their care. They adapt their planning to meet the individual requirements of these children.

Staff praise children for their achievements, raising their self-esteem. For example, one member of staff told a child that the tower of bricks they had just built was 'brilliant'. Staff step in quickly to resolve disputes between children, before they turn into arguments. They encourage children to take turns, and explain to them why they should not behave inappropriately. As a result, children are generally friendly towards each other. They invite other children to join in their play, and volunteer to put away some of the equipment for staff. The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership with parents is good. There is an appropriate complaints procedure in place, to ensure parents are aware of how any concerns they may wish to raise will be handled. Parents are kept well informed about the setting. There are two notice boards for them, which provide all the necessary information, such as how to contact Ofsted and child protection agencies. There is also an explanation of the role of a key worker, and parents know the member of staff to contact if they wish to talk about their child. Details of the topic and the letter of the week children are studying are also given. The wallboard displays are changed regularly to enable parents to see examples of the work their children are currently producing, which is linked to their theme for the term. Parents are given the opportunity to make an appointment to see their child's key worker, and to view their records. They are aware that they may request to see their child's profile at anytime. Staff encourage parental involvement in children's education, and invite them to accompany the group on visits. They also assist during sessions, and if they have skills in a particular area, they are invited to share these with the children. For example, one parent holds music sessions with the group. Parents believe that communication between themselves and staff is good. They understand that they can approach staff at the beginning or end of a session if there is anything they need to discuss.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by suitably qualified staff. Their safety is assured when visitors are present, as they are required to ring the bell to gain admittance to the setting, and are asked to sign the visitors book. An appropriate recruitment and induction process is in place, and the

joint managers ensure that new staff are made familiar with the policies, and how the setting operates. Contingency arrangements are in place to provide satisfactory cover for absent staff. Children's records are stored securely, to maintain confidentiality. Their attendance at the setting is suitably recorded, and a separate book is provided for parents to enter details of anyone else who is to collect their child. A copy of the pre-schools policies is always available for parents inside the setting, although they are not currently reviewed regularly, and do not include all the necessary procedures.

The leadership and management are good. The joint managers are responsible for the day to day running of the setting, and organising staff. Committee members deal with payroll, finances and communication, providing a link between staff and parents. Information is cascaded to staff at regular staff meetings, which are held every half term. All staff participate in the planning at these meetings, and most of them have had training in the Foundation Stage curriculum. As a result of the effective planning and teaching, children achieve well. The previous half terms planning is evaluated, and general issues concerning the organisation of the setting are discussed, to enable all staff to be involved. Staff are frequently sent on courses to keep their knowledge up to date, and they can discuss training at staff meetings. However, a formal appraisal system is not currently in place. Consequently, staff are not provided with a regular opportunity to talk about their achievements and weaknesses, and to consider how the pre-school can benefit from their personal development. Staff get the chance to experience all aspects of the work, as their duties are rotated. They cooperate well as a team, and need little direction from the managers during pre-school sessions. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

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

The last care inspection recommended that children have access to an expanded range of toys and resources that reflect positive images of disability, and that an appropriate method is in place for the recording and analysis of regular risk assessments. It further recommended that the pre-school review safety procedures to ensure children's safety in their gross motor activities and in negotiating the hallway between the two activity rooms.

The pre-school have purchased new resources to raise children's understanding of disability. They now complete a full annual risk assessment, and check the premises on a daily basis, to ensure they are safe for children to use. Full risk assessments are analysed, and any issues are now addressed. If they relate to the building or equipment provided by the church, then the matter is raised with the church committee. Safety procedures relating to children's physical activities have been reviewed. Staff make sure that children all travel in the same direction around the room when using the small wheeled vehicles, and remind them not to run in the hallway. However, a recommendation has been raised in this report to ensure that minor hazards are removed, to maintain the safety of children when using the hallway and engaging in physical activities.

### **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):

- ensure appropriate hand washing routines are in place
- ensure that confidentiality is maintained when the medication record is completed
- ensure that the hallway and the room that children use for physical activities are free from hazards
- develop a procedure for a lost child, and ensure that all policies are regularly 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):

- develop a system for staff appraisals.

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)