

Ruskin Road Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	139952
Inspection date	11 May 2007
Inspector	Jane Lester
Setting Address	Carshalton Methodist Church, Ruskin Road, Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 3DE
Telephone number	020 8669 3676
E-mail	tracey@dawson18.freemove.co.uk
Registered person	Carshalton Methodist Church Committee
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?

Ruskin Road Pre-School is owned by Carshalton Methodist Church. It opened in 1966 and operates from the second floor of the church hall, accessed via a flight of stairs. A maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time. The Pre-School opens each weekday during term time only from 09.30- 12.30. Lunch club is offered from 12.00 until 13.15. The group have access to an outside area.

There are currently 39 children from two and a half years to under five years on roll. of these, 27 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 11 members of staff including the manager. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards an appropriate qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's understanding and awareness of good health and hygiene is well-promoted through daily routines. Children learn about personal hygiene and how to keep healthy by washing hands at appropriate times during the day and always before eating. They explain that they wash their hands so that they get rid of germs.

Good information regarding children's medical history is gathered on admission forms and daily contact with parents ensures that individual care needs are met. Children are cared for sensitively if they become ill during the session and are protected from infection by a clear policy which details exclusion periods after illness. Staff have a good understanding of how to deal with minor accidents and medication and accident records are maintained effectively.

Snack time is a happy time with key carers sitting with their group and children and adults chatting sociably. Children are well nourished as they help themselves from a variety of familiar and exotic fruit and choose from water or milk, which they pour themselves. In addition they can access water throughout the morning ensuring their dietary requirements are met. Some children bring a packed lunch and enjoy an extended play with their friends. Food is stored hygienically and with good regard for children with allergies.

Children take part in a wide range of daily physical activity designed to support their physical development. They climb up the climbing frame and balance confidently at the top before sliding down; some children hang and swing from the side bars. They develop a good sense of balance on the balancing beam and when dancing to music. They learn to control their bodies as they move in a variety of ways and at differing speeds and develop their hand-eye co-ordination as they throw balls through hoops. In fine weather, they benefit from playing outside where they enjoy riding bikes, driving cars and jumping on the small trampoline.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in premises that are welcoming and child-centred. Staff greet children and parents individually and spend time talking to them as they arrive. Children's work is displayed attractively around the room with each key group having a board to display their own work. Children enjoy looking at the displays, which support the current topic, and proudly point out their own contributions. These are supplemented with colourful posters depicting a variety of countries and cultures and photograph albums which children and parents have free access to and which foster a sense of belonging.

Children are kept very safe in the setting due to thorough regular risk assessments and staff vigilance. Children contribute to the rules which mean they are starting to understand how to keep themselves safe. In addition, visits from the emergency services make children aware of road safety as well as promoting an awareness of stranger danger and fire risks. Regular practice of the evacuation procedure ensures children and staff are familiar with the routine and a smooth evacuation can be effected in the event of an emergency. Good attention is given to security at the pre-school, such as doors being locked and visitors' identification being checked thoroughly, to ensure children's safety is consistently maintained. Furthermore, a missing child

policy details action to be followed in the event of a child being lost at the setting. However, this does not include procedures to be followed should a child be lost outside the setting.

Children's welfare is promoted because staff have a good knowledge of child protection issues and understand what to do if they have concerns about any children. Parents are made aware of the setting's commitment to safeguarding children as this is discussed with them as part of the admission procedure.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled within the pre-school environment and confidently separate from their parents on arrival. Staff are deployed well at this time to ensure they offer extra support and cuddles to those who need it. Children select a shape mat to sit on and eagerly await circle time. During free play each child quickly selects a favourite activity, chats and plays happily with their friends. Most children become engrossed and focus on their chosen activity for a long time. They benefit from a wide range of play materials and planned activities which support and extend their learning and enjoyment. The pre-school room is appropriately organised to provide different areas of learning, which include mathematics, construction, imaginary, creative, reading and writing areas. Children are comfortable with the familiar routine and are given warning before tidy up time. This gives them the opportunity to finish their game before helping staff tidy away the resources. They join in enthusiastically with the second circle time and enjoy the show and tell session that is linked to the current topic. However, this session is a little long for some of the children who start to lose interest and fidget.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children in receipt of nursery education funding are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Planning is very thorough and identifies learning intentions for each area of learning. Activities are adapted for different abilities and evaluated to ensure they are successful in achieving the learning objective whilst offering an appropriate level of challenge. Key carers are very aware of where their key children are in terms of progress towards the early learning goals and regular, detailed observations inform the play plans which are shared with parents each term. However, progress observations are not always shared between staff which means that some opportunities for challenge during whole group sessions and table activities are missed.

Children develop independence in the setting. They put on their own craft aprons, help their friends fasten theirs and automatically wash their hands after messy play. Activities are guided by staff without being over-prescriptive. For example, although staff supply an assortment of materials to make a den, they encourage the children to design and build it to support their imaginative play.

Regular visits to the library foster a love of books and this is extended at story time which is a lively interactive session. Big books are enjoyed by the group and used to involve children as they discuss emotions and imitate expressions. Children select books and turn the pages carefully as they follow the story. Children whose home language is not English are supported well as staff use books to extend their language through skilful questioning and the reinforcing of sounds. Activities during circle time help children link sounds to letters and focused table activities support their writing skills. However, the current practice of following dots to write letters does not challenge some children who are able to write their names unaided.

Counting children at registration offers opportunities for mathematical development and some children count confidently to 14. Staff encourage their calculating skills as they ask them to think what 'one more' would be and to calculate whether there are more boys than girls. Children spontaneously practice their counting as they line up coloured pencils and count them accurately. They find the correct number to represent the date on the daily calendar and compare quantities as they pour and measure water.

Children are helped to develop a sense of time through discussion. Children can say what day it is and what day it was yesterday. They discuss events that have taken place and planned events. Children help staff print out photographs of a trip that they have been on. Although the setting has computer equipment and programmable toys, they are not used regularly to help children extend and develop their information and communication technology skills. At the science table, children investigate with magnifying glasses. One child giggles as he puts both glasses to his eyes like spectacles and looks round the room. He gains the attention of the staff who giggle with him.

Children demonstrate good fine motor control as they carefully peel small stickers off a sheet and arrange them in an intricate pattern around a pot. They use scissors skilfully and show good pencil control as they colour in pictures in a variety of colours. They take part in a range of physical activities although some sessions do not have sufficient equipment available for children to make the most out of their exercise time.

A wide selection of creative activities offer opportunities for children to explore and freely express themselves through their senses. At the painting table, children choose thick or thin brushes, ready mixed or palette paint; one child experiments with painting with water while another swirls green paint round the page before painting his hand and rubbing it over the paper. Another uses a spreader to take glue out of a pot and uses her hand to catch it as it drips. She completes her project then enjoys the sensation of sticky glue on her hands before going to wash it off. Children experiment with sounds as they sing loudly and quietly, quickly and slowly during singing time.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy positive relationships with the staff and with each other. They are valued and respected as individuals and their self-esteem and confidence is developed well by staff through lots of praise and encouragement. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are cared for very well, as are children for whom English is not their home language. The setting liaises effectively with parents and external agencies to ensure good support is consistently provided. Children respond well to the familiar daily routine and to pictorial timetables. Spoken language is routinely reinforced with 'sign-along' to assist communication and ensure all children are included.

Children behave well and respond positively to the boundaries set. Staff work closely with parents to overcome behaviour issues and use positive strategies to manage these. A wide variety of resources and activities develop children's understanding of diversity. Children and their families take part in various fund raising activities which encourage children to care for others as well as leading to an understanding of other countries and ways of living. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Information is shared by means of newsletters, notices, e-mails and daily verbal communication. When necessary, the setting uses translation services to ensure all parents can access written and verbal information. An open door policy enables parents to discuss any concerns as they arise. The setting values parent's contributions and acts on parental feedback to improve the provision offered. Parents receive written progress reports and attend regular meetings with the key carer to ensure they can discuss their child's progress and development. Ideas for extending learning at home are shared on newsletters so that parents can fully support and participate in topics.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and enjoy their time at the setting. Recruitment and induction procedures are effective in ensuring that children are cared for by appropriate adults. Staff are deployed well during the session. This ensures children are settled and confident and all receive good support. Space and resources are organised effectively to enable children to make independent choices about their play. Children's records are stored confidentially and documentation required for the safe management of the setting is regularly reviewed to ensure it reflects the good practice of the pre-school. All policies and procedures are in place, however, the child protection policy and the complaints procedure do not reflect the good practice of the setting and some information is out of date.

Leadership and Management is good. The setting benefits from the strong leadership which ensures the provision is continually monitored and evaluated. The manager leads by example and her enthusiasm is reflected in her staff's commitment to training and personal development which equips them with up-to-date skills and knowledge. Planning sheets and rotas clearly define staff responsibilities and ensure learning opportunities for children are maximised through well planned and resourced activities. Effective communication in staff meetings, appraisals and inset training sessions ensures children's individual needs are well supported. Staff work well together as a team and this supports a well-organised, happy and caring environment for children. The setting meets the needs of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the setting was asked to keep a record of the daily hours of attendance of staff and children; to make sure that hot water did not present as a hazard to young children and to provide evidence of current public liability insurance. Registers for adults and children are kept on a daily basis and accurately reflect the daily hours of attendance. Children are closely supervised when washing hands and a thermostat has been fitted to ensure the water does not run too hot. A certificate of public liability is now displayed on the wall.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting was asked to ensure children could independently access a wide range of materials with which to explore and construct three dimensional forms. In addition, they were asked to provide opportunities for children to begin to use language to compare numbers and to develop their understanding of addition and subtraction. Children now enjoy constructing and decorating models from an assortment of resources which are readily accessible to them. Children design and fit together farm fences and buildings and use blocks or other construction materials to freely explore three dimensional forms. Positive steps have been taken to develop mathematical understanding. Children can now explore mathematical equipment as part of their free choice time and activities such as car surveys or charts showing colour of eyes give them regular opportunities to count and

compare numbers. Staff extend this by questions which develop children's early addition and subtraction skills.

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 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 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 daily routine and the organisation of physical resources to ensure children's play and learning opportunities are maximised (also applies to nursery education)
- review and update the child protection policy and complaints procedure.

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):

- provide regular activities for children to use a variety of resources to develop their skills in information and communication technology
- develop ways of sharing information gathered from children's observations.

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