

Sholing Community Centre Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	131556
Inspection date	01 May 2007
Inspector	Judith Reed
Setting Address	Butts Road, Southampton, Hampshire, SO19 1BN
Telephone number	023 8039 9979
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Registered person	Sholing Community Centre 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?

Sholing Community Centre Pre-school was established in 1969. It is run by a voluntary committee. The setting operates from two rooms in the Community Centre in Sholing, Southampton and serves the local area. A maximum of 26 children may attend each session. The pre-school opens each week day during term time. Sessions are from 9.15 to 11.45 and from 12.30 to 15.00 each week day, apart from Tuesday, when it is not open in the afternoon.

There are currently 64 children from aged two to under five years on roll. Of these, 46 children receive funding for early education. The pre-school supports children with disabilities and learning difficulties.

The pre-school employs seven 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 relish the healthy snack offered at pre-school. They enjoy toast during most morning sessions and crackers, cheese and fruit during the afternoons. Children attending morning sessions have requested toast, so staff offer this each day. Children spread their own butter onto their toast. They also proficiently pour their own drinks from jugs of water or milk. While children enjoy their snack staff reinforce their knowledge of good health by discussing which foods can help them to be healthy and grow strong. Children share plates for their toast and fruit and may be at risk from cross infection.

Children use a number of bowls of water to wash their hands following using the toilet, using messy equipment, or before having snack. The bowls of water are not changed regularly throughout the session and children are at risk from cross infection. Individual paper towels are available for hand drying. Children who have accidents are treated with kindness by members of staff, who wear gloves to protect themselves and the children. A first aid kit is available and accidents are recorded clearly in the accident book. Staff ensure parents sign to acknowledge each accident. Staff prefer not to administer medication to children. Staff hold written emergency medical permission for each child attending the pre-school.

Children appreciate the regular opportunities for physical play. They climb and crawl over a large caterpillar tunnel which is set up inside the play room, and have frequent opportunities to play outside. Children confidently run around the spacious outside area. They ride on bicycles, tricycles and scooters, as well as sit and ride cars. Children enjoy being pulled around in trucks by one another, or a willing member of staff. They hit small balls with bats and roll hoops along the ground. Children climb up the steps and slide down the small slide. They balance while walking along on plastic stepping stones and proudly show staff their achievements. They also enjoy digging in the sand pit and filling buckets and pots with sand. Children are busy and play with purpose while outside.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enter the pre-school through a waiting area and the kitchen. A member of staff ensures children enter safely. The main play room is a large, spacious hall with a smaller back room available for group times. Toilets are off one side of the play room and there is direct access to the outside play area. Inner and outer doors are kept locked during pre-school sessions to ensure children's security. The outside play area is in front of the community building. The area is well fenced and gates are carefully secured when children are playing outside.

Children relish the wide choice of activities provided in the large hall. The room is divided with low table and chairs as well as carpeted areas. All staff can observe the whole room during play sessions. The environment remains safe as the staff team are aware of safety issues and keep the hall floor as clear as possible of debris. Regular fire evacuation drills are held, although these are not recorded in a fire log or evaluated to improve practice. The children are kept safe at the end of the session as staff are particularly vigilant at this time. Children remain in the back room until they are called to meet their parents and carers in the main hall. A member of staff keeps a careful watch at the main exit to ensure all children are accompanied by an adult.

Children are safe as staff ensure all toys are suitable and safe for their use. Equipment is cleaned as necessary. Children experience helping themselves to equipment from large storage drawers. They choose their own paper and writing equipment, as well as play foods in the home corner.

Children are safeguarded by knowledgeable staff. All staff are aware of child protection procedures and would report issues to the group leader. Staff are aware of their professional responsibilities regarding child protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the pre-school confidently and immediately settle into the activities offered. They are interested in the wide choice of toys and equipment displayed. Children talk about what they are doing. They are happy and enthusiastic. Staff welcome children into the setting. They are encouraged to find their names from the selection available.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress and develop well. Staff offer children a large number of activities during each session according to the weekly planning. Children make their own choices about their activities and are also invited to try new tasks linked to the stepping stones. Staff make notes about all children's achievements throughout the session. Incidental observations are recorded as well as more formal planned activities. The staff team are deployed around the setting and are always aware of their duties according to the plans. Staff move around as they are needed and support one another as well as the children. They talk to the children and join in activities, encouraging the children at all times.

Children are invited to gather in the back room early in the session. They discuss the date, weather and number of children present. They practise counting all the children around the room. Staff give a brief outline of some activities and let children know the colour and letter of the day. Later in the session children are asked to collect items from around the room which are the colour of the day. These are displayed on an interest table. Children have established good relationships with their friends. They play in small groups and take turns with the computer, or tricycles.

Children take frequent opportunities to write at the writing table or at the black board. They choose their own paper and writing implements from storage. Children make every effort to write their names and some copy words written by staff. Children enjoy group story times. They gather on the mat to look at picture books together. Children join in the repetition and counting in stories such as Five Wiggly Babies. They are enthralled when staff tell stories without books. They pass around props and are excited by the story about a local landmark. Children have many opportunities to count. They join in counting all the children present at the beginning of the session. They also confidently count the number of cups of flour and spoonfuls of oil added to the play dough mixture. Children know shapes such as circles, squares and triangles and learn mathematical language such as in front, and behind, during one to one activities.

Children have access to a wide range of tools and materials. They develop good hand eye co-ordination and small muscle control while writing at the chalk board or moulding the play dough. Children carefully create small models of snowmen with eyes, mouths and different sized balls of dough for their bodies. They use paint brushes to spread glue on boxes and create

models of cars from the own imagination. They discover that mixing yellow and red paints makes orange while doing pictures with paint. Children join in singing activities and have built a good repertoire of action songs and rhymes. Favourites include Two Little Dickie Birds, Five Little Monkeys and Frère Jacques. The imaginative play area is changed regularly and children have the opportunity to play in a boat or play cars. They are excited by the extensive beach area when that is available, as well as the large number of dressing up clothes options.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is good. They take turns to use computer. They crowd around to watch the screen. Children move the mouse confidently and laugh when the creature on the screen mows the grass as they click. They also use press button equipment such as tape players. Children grow grass in "heads" made from damp saw dust. They learn that the "heads" need to be watered regularly for the grass to grow. Children observe caterpillars turning into chrysalis, and then into butterflies, during a planned activity. They spot spiders in the hedge or around the building and learn how they can be a benefit in the environment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. The staff provide good information for parents through the notice board, newsletters and individual feedback. Parents and carers are given a copy of the prospectus when children start at pre-school, this includes the policies and procedures. Parents are made aware of the procedure for making complaints and a complaints record is available when required. Parents and carers are asked to complete an information form about their children, to guide the staff in the starting points for their nursery education. They are made aware of the record of achievement and that they can see it at any time. Parents state that they are very happy with the care and education provided by the pre-school and they appreciate the work of the whole staff team. They are aware of their own child's key worker and particularly appreciate the way behaviour is managed in the setting and that festivals, including Christmas and Easter, are celebrated. Parents feel their children make good progress and make friends while they attend the pre-school.

Children generally behave well and understand what is expected. They learn the routine of the setting and understand about taking turns. Children trust staff to be fair and know that they will have a turn with equipment such as the computer, or attaching the date to the calendar. Staff remain calm and ask children to treat equipment properly so that it doesn't break. Children join in packing away equipment in storage boxes and taking it to the storeroom door. They are kind to one another and quickly apologise after they knock into each other. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are treated as individuals. Staff know children well and build good relationships with them. Children learn about diversity through using equipment which reflects other cultures as well as disabilities. Children from around the world are reflected in both books and jigsaw puzzles. They play with dolls of both genders and from other cultures. Children join in celebrations of a range of festivals including Chinese New Year, when they eat with chop sticks and join in a dragon dance.

All children are valued and respected. Staff know and understand their individual needs. Staff work closely with advisors from the local authority and support children with disabilities and learning difficulties. They prepare individual education plans to support children's learning. Children make progress and develop while attending the pre-school. Staff work with therapists,

who provide suggestions for activities, to enable children to make progress with speech and language delay.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good. The leader of the pre-school acknowledges the strength of the staff team. They work efficiently together and support one another well. Ongoing training is valued and is discussed during the regular appraisal process. Regular staff meetings are held and the whole staff team take part in planning the education programme. All staff are key workers and keep the individual records of achievement for the children. The leader does not oversee the records of achievement to ensure they are up to date at all times. However, staff know the children very well and ensure that planning is linked to their stages of development. Planned activities are not always formally evaluated to ensure development and improvement. Staff have regular meetings with other settings in the neighbourhood. They liaise with advisors from the local authority and value suggestions for improving and developing their provision of nursery education.

Children are registered in and out of the premises. Staff ensure the register is accurate at all times and that staff and visitors are also marked in and out of the premises. The pre-school is well organised and children are happy and settled. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The staff are encouraged to take available training courses and keep up to date. Thorough recruitment procedures are in place. New staff are thoroughly checked to ensure children are safeguarded.

Children's records are stored confidentially. Their personal information is kept in a locked store room with the educational records of achievement. A full range of policies and procedures are available to parents and staff, on the notice board, at all times.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the pre-school was asked to ensure the times of arrival and departure of children and staff are recorded in the register, ensure all accidents recorded have been countersigned by parents, make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they need to make a complaint to Ofsted, and request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. These have all been completed.

The pre-school was also asked to keep a written record, signed by parents, of medication given to children. This has not been done as no medication has been administered to children since the last inspection.

At the last education inspection the pre-school was asked to improve opportunities for children to link sounds and letters and enjoy books and writing resources. Also to provide further opportunities for children to extend their mathematical language and extend what they already know and for parents to contribute to children's learning and be informed about the stepping stones of the six areas of learning.

Children link sounds and letters when they recognise their names on entry to pre-school. They take incidental opportunities to look at books and to write at the writing table. Mathematical

language is extended through games and one to one activities. Parents are informed about the six areas of learning through the prospectus and are told about the stepping stones through the planning which is displayed for their information.

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

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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):

- enable children to follow healthy routines by providing suitable hygienic hand washing facilities and individual plates for their snacks
- keep a fire drill log and evaluate evacuation to improve practice

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):

- oversee records of achievement to ensure they are up to date
- develop evaluation of activities to improve future planning

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