

# Orchard Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 109719

**Inspection date** 05 June 2007

**Inspector** Clare Moore

**Setting Address** St Andrews Church Hall, Beaulieu Road ,Dibden Purlieu, Southampton,  
Hampshire, SO45 4PT

**Telephone number** 023 80844960 after 4pm

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**Registered person** Orchard 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 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?

Orchard Pre-school opened in 1985. It operates in the St Andrew's Centre, mainly using the pre-school room and occasionally two smaller rooms or the hall. The pre-school shares access to the kitchen, toilets and also an enclosed garden. The pre-school is a community group managed by a voluntary committee of parents. Children attend from the local area. A maximum of 22 children may attend the setting at any one time. Sessions are from 09:00 to 11:30 and from 12:30 to 15:00 on five days a week during term time. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently 80 children on roll. Of these 70 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities and welcomes children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six staff and a volunteer who works with the children and all hold appropriate early years qualifications. There is a member of staff who is working towards an additional qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children's awareness of the importance of keeping healthy is raised through interesting topics about health such as the benefits of good personal hygiene and looking after their teeth. They are not exposed to infection because there is a clear sickness policy and children who are unwell do not attend. A high standard of hygiene and cleanliness in the setting further helps to promote good health. All the practitioners are qualified in first aid, all accidents are recorded and most of the records are confidential.

Children are well nourished as they are provided with a variety of light snacks of, for example a cracker with cheese, fruit, carrots or cubes of cheese. The snacks are based on healthy eating principles. Children are protected from foods that may be harmful due to allergies as staff have developed a rigorous system to make sure that items such as nuts are not used in the setting. Children are free to help themselves to water whenever they wish and are offered further drinks of milk, water or diluted fruit juice at snack times.

Children keep fit and active through a varied programme of activities. In the garden they enjoy fresh air and relish ball games when they kick, throw, catch and use a netball or football goal. They use apparatus such as the slide, rockers and balance beams. They develop and consolidate further physical skills as they pedal and steer tricycles and push buggies with dolls in role play. They take part in exercises and jogging during a topic when they find out about the benefits of keeping fit.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a bright and stimulating environment where their work is displayed to help them feel welcome and valued.

Children's safety is given a high profile at all times. The setting is very secure as doors are locked during sessions. Continuous safety monitoring is carried out both in the setting and outside backed up with daily, weekly, termly and yearly written risk assessments. In addition there are risk assessments for activities that may present hazards such as woodwork. Children find out about keeping themselves safe through discussion, for example walking rather than running indoors and using equipment such as chairs safely. They explore road safety through topics and also a visit from the lollipop lady. They regularly practise an evacuation procedure. This is initiated with the fire alarm without warning which ensures they are very well prepared to evacuate the premises in the event of an emergency.

Children are safeguarded on outings. Before they are taken the venue is risk assessed. There are clear, documented procedures and contact details, a first aid kit and mobile phones are carried by staff. This means that in the event of an accident children's well-being is optimised.

The setting gives a high priority to Child Protection and has clear procedures and policies in place which staff understand well. Staff are well informed about what to do if they have any concerns about the welfare of a child in their care. Parents are informed through the policies. This ensures that children's needs are met very well.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a high level of independence as many resources are stored where they are readily accessible. Drawers containing, for example art and craft, animals and mosaics are labelled with pictures while other drawers are labelled with words which gives children choice.

Children are happy and relaxed as there are excellent systems in place for settling in newcomers and staff greet every child warmly as they arrive for sessions. Children have trusting relationships with each other and with the staff.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of the teaching and learning is good. Children make very good progress in all the areas of learning as staff plan an exciting programme of activities that challenge and stimulate the children. Older children have a separate session each week when they are given more difficult tasks to further challenge them and help prepare them for school. Practitioners make use of spontaneous opportunities to question and involve children, for example during role play and circle time. This encourages children's use of language and recollection of events. Practitioners praise the children for their efforts which encourages them and helps them to take pride in their achievements. The staff make frequent written observations and take photographs of children which are then transferred to the children's individual records. They then use this information to plan the next steps of learning. The outdoor environment is used imaginatively. It is equipped with a variety of resources to maximise learning opportunities.

Children are strongly motivated to learn and enthusiastically involve themselves in activities as soon as they arrive. They develop a sense of the community they live in through visits from familiar people such as the local lollipop lady and show pride in their work, for example a look of triumph and exclamation that 'it is finished' when completing a puzzle.

Children are becoming fluent in language as they take turns in conversation and develop listening skills during whole group discussions and at snack times. They develop their vocabulary as they learn new words in topics such as 'space shuttle' and 'camper van'. They link letters to sounds when they are given clues using the sound of the beginning of the month to help them guess the name of the month, and also when using picture books and name cards. They enjoy books and stories. They are totally absorbed as they listen to and take part in the group story eagerly responding when asked a question. They start to read using name cards supported with pictures and many are able to write their names on their work.

Children show interest in measuring as they make crowns and try them for size by wrapping them around their heads before they stick the ends together. They explore number in a game of hiding straws in the sand and also through frequent opportunities to count. They demonstrate their enthusiasm by asking to count backwards after counting up how many children are present. They enjoy taking part in counting songs and rhymes. They consider weight as they compare how heavy things are. For example they weigh ingredients for cooking and compare which is the heaviest when they fill bags with cotton wool and sand. They explore shape as they build with blocks, make mosaic patterns and colour in shapes on work sheets.

Children are mesmerised as they take part in exciting experiments. For example under close supervision they fill film canisters with water and steradent to make rockets with the lids. They put food colourings in water with celery sticks and carnations and observe the dramatic change in colour over time. They develop designing and making skills using re-cycled materials such

as cardboard boxes, tubes, plastic and paper to make models, for example sail boats. They then blow air through a straw and observe the boats as the sails fill and propel them across the water. They explore concepts such as sinking and floating starting with resources the staff set out such as corks, sponges and marbles, then with their interest excited they move on to whatever else they can find. Children explore technology as they use a lap top computer and operate shredders in the role play 'office'. They develop a sense of time in the topic 'All about me' as they think back to when they were babies and how they have changed, and also as they discuss changing seasons in the group.

Children benefit from a range of opportunities to refine and develop motor skills using equipment, tools and materials. For example they use scissors skilfully as they cut a frill in the crowns they make. They learn how to hold crayons and pens well to draw, colour and make marks, and they use rolling pins and cutters to manipulate and shape the play dough. They use staplers in the mock office and they use pegs when they put the dolls clothes on the line to dry. They are learning about changes in their bodies during exercise and recognise that their hearts beat faster after physical activity.

Children have excellent opportunities to develop their imagination and creativity. They frequently use puppets to re-enact well-loved stories and create scenes supported with skilful staff intervention. They use whatever is available to set off role play. For example they use the outdoor well equipped home area to prepare and serve imaginary snacks and drinks, to care for dolls and to organise themselves and the staff to take on individual roles. They explore music dressing up as pop stars, using props and performing. They use a variety of musical percussion instruments and also sometimes a keyboard and instruments staff bring in such as a violin and a flute. They are captivated when enjoying singing and taking part in actions that go with the songs. This helps them to develop a sense of rhythm and to enhance their listening skills.

Children explore colour through a variety of media. They explore coloured play dough seeing what happens as black and white come together, they mix coloured paints such as blue and yellow to make green. They apply paint in different and innovative ways. For example they paint using train wheels, they blow paint with straws and they paint with their feet.

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

The provision is outstanding.

All children are fully included as practitioners find out as much as they can about their needs through information from parents, talking and listening to the children and documented observations. This helps them to tailor the care to children's individual needs. Children develop a positive attitude to difference as areas such as different family styles and living accommodation are discussed and shared in topics. Children find out about different cultures through, for example, a visit from adults who show them vibrant traditional Indian clothes, dressing up, tasting Indian and Chinese foods and smelling spices.

Children's behaviour is exemplary because staff are very skilled and sensitive in behaviour management. They have a calm, positive and consistent approach, and as they have keen observational skills they pick up on situations without delay which helps them to support the children. Children develop an understanding of taking turns as they use the slide, play games and take part in circle time sharing their contributions that they bring from home. This is further enhanced by the use of a giant egg timer which the children often use themselves to support turn taking and avoid disputes.

Children are encouraged to help each other through taking turns to be 'helper'. They serve each other at snack time, call out names of other children at hand-wash time before snacks, and place the numerals for the date on the weather board. Older children who know where things are often eagerly support new ones by holding hands, showing them to the toilets or helping them to find resources. At snack time children recite a short grace in thanks for the world we live in and the food we eat which helps them to develop a positive outlook. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children take responsibility by happily helping to tidy away at tidy up time to the accompaniment of music.

Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are very well supported. Practitioners are knowledgeable, well trained and work together with outside professionals and parents to help children to learn and develop. Individual help is provided where it is needed. All the practitioners are trained in the use of sign language and this is used extensively to optimise support to children with special needs.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are involved through the parent run committee and also through a parent rota if they wish. They are invited to stay as long as they feel the need to settle children in and staff work very closely with parents to ensure that the care is consistent. Parents are well informed about the setting through the prospectus, regular newsletters and an excellent notice board display. This gives information about the Foundation Stage of learning, topics, planning and activities as well as a photo board of the staff team. There is also a clear procedure displayed to follow in the case of complaint. Parents are given their children's records to read and invited to make their own contributions. They have opportunities to share and discuss them with practitioners whenever they wish.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide. Practitioners are highly motivated and work very well together as a team. They are all qualified and regularly attend training courses to develop and update their skills. A rigorous vetting system ensures they are suitable to work with the children. The officers on the committee have had appropriate checks carried out. Space is organised very well so that children can easily access the activities and independently use many of the resources. Students and parents on the staff rota are given clear guidance through the policies and discussion about their roles and responsibilities.

Documentation is efficiently managed and well organised. Registers are accurate and the signing in book shows when children arrive or leave if they are early or late. Policies are reviewed and updated annually or when there are changes.

The leadership and management are good. Staff are enthusiastic, highly motivated and they all work together to evaluate and plan the curriculum. They are a strong and consistent team most of whom have been with the setting for many years. They meet each term to evaluate and consider future developments, capitalise on individual strengths and also liaise after sessions on a day to day basis. New skills learnt from attending training courses are shared so that all staff benefit. Staff work in partnership with local schools and other early years settings to help to ensure a smooth transfer for children when they move on.

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

At the last inspection the setting was asked to request Criminal Record Bureau checks for committee members, to gain parent permissions to seek emergency medical advice or treatment and to review the policies. The Criminal Record Bureau checks are now maintained, permissions from parents are in place and policies are regularly reviewed and updated. This helps to ensure children are well cared for.

### **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):

- develop the use of the accident records to ensure all records are confidential

#### **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):

- continue to develop the education provision through planning, monitoring and evaluation.

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)