



Trinity Road Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	402239
Inspection date	06 July 2005
Inspector	Gillian Jefferson
Setting Address	Holy Trinity Church Hall, Trinity Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 6HS
Telephone number	01245 353430
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Registered person	Judith Barbara Hancock
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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Trinity Road Pre-school is privately run. It opened in 1967 and operates from rooms within the church hall buildings. It is situated in the centre of Chelmsford. A maximum of 25 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open from 09.30 to 12.00 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, for 38 weeks of the year. All

children share access to a secure temporarily enclosed outdoor play area, weather permitting.

There are currently 24 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. Of these 16 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs four staff. Three of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school receives support from a mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PSLA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn basic hygiene routines and are aware of the need to clean their hands before eating and after toileting and messy play. The group has enhanced the hand-washing procedures during the inspection to further reduce the risk of spread of infection, by encouraging children to wash their hands in running water.

Good policies and procedures are in place, such as the sick child policy. Staff record all accidents and ensure parents or carers sign to confirm they have been told about them. Two staff have first aid training to support them in meeting the children's needs after accidents. In addition parents and carers provide information about the children's health and dietary requirements to support the group in keeping the children healthy. However, not all staff are confident in accessing this information to implement it effectively.

Children are now able to access water freely during the sessions. They are able to choose when to have their snack towards the end of each session. Some staff encourage children to pour their own drinks to develop their confidence and skills, but this is not consistent across the staff team. The children have access to fruit and vegetables during planned tasting activities and occasionally at snack time. The staff team's planning indicates how these activities may be used to promote the children's awareness of healthy eating.

All children, are encouraged and able to be physically active during each session. They are able to use a range of equipment and tools inside and outdoors (weather permitting), to broaden their skills and experience. The children readily set their own challenges, such as finding different and more complex ways to use the climbing-frame and slide. The children's regular involvement in physical play encourages them to be active and adopt a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children receive care in rooms that are generally safe, with fire safety equipment readily available. However, the minimising of risk to children from potential hazards is not sufficient, because of the staff team's ineffective implementation of policies and use of risk assessments. Parents, carers and visitors to the group are too heavily relied upon to ensure the setting remains secure, by prompting staff to lock the door behind them. Also, the staff team do not adapt their risk assessments to respond to changes within the setting, such as the heater guards being unsecured as a result of the hall committee redecorating the premises and therefore posing an increased risk to the children.

Children are able to freely select and use, safe and clean equipment, from the selection made available by staff. They can access a range of child height and adult height furniture, as well as comfy areas to play and relax. Staff use posters and one display board to provide some stimulation opportunities for the children and these along with the usual layout of the equipment in the hall, make the setting reasonably welcoming for the children.

Children are not satisfactorily protected. Although a clear child protection policy is in place, helpers and staff are not fully aware of it, or able to sufficiently implement it to ensure children protected when the provider is not present. This means that unvetted people are able to have unsupervised access to the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

Although the group's planning records and photographs of activities demonstrate the provision of a wide and dynamic range of activities in the past, the children are currently often merely occupied rather than being stimulated, questioned and challenged.

The two-year-olds are easily overwhelmed by changes in the layout of the setting. They are often given little direct interaction by staff to reassure them or encourage and support their speech and social skills. When they are feeling timid and unsure about what to do and whether to join in and try activities, staff rarely support them. Their lack of confidence and insecurity in the setting means they choose to interact with unfamiliar visitors to the group who pay them attention, rather than the familiar staff members who give them little direct interaction.

The provider is aware of the best practice model demonstrated within the 'Birth to three matters' framework and has drawn up assessment documentation to use to record the development of those under three years of age. This however, has not yet been shared with the other staff, who also appear to lack knowledge in how they can interact with children to help them settle and promote their development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Children are making poor

progress towards the early learning goals, as a result of the lack of sufficient challenge and interaction from staff. Although historic evidence demonstrates that a wide variety of opportunities, such as growing potatoes and woodwork, have been provided in the past to stimulate progression and learning for children, there is little evidence of this happening at the present time. The manager is knowledgeable of the foundation stage and how to interact with children to progress their learning. However, other staff show no knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage, early learning goals and stepping stones and are over-reliant on input from the manager to support them in working with the children to promote learning or implement planning. They are hesitant in their interactions with children and infrequently ask questions or provide challenge. Staff are generally more concerned and confident in supervising and servicing activities rather than teaching.

The children are provided with staff chosen opportunities to access equipment and resources across all areas of learning, when the provider is present for the setting up of the hall. Children rarely have independence in freely selecting equipment to enhance their play. The three and four-year-olds are confident and occasionally share their achievements with staff, such as sharing models they have made with magnets. Some children show a high level of interest in activities of their own choosing and show good attitudes and willingness to learn. Many persist at activities for a long time, especially in their physical play, but this is at times preventing them from exploring new and less familiar opportunities, or those they are less skilful at. Children are not given sufficient opportunities and interaction to develop their language skills. The staff also do not use everyday activities such as snack time to promote children's independence and problem solving skills.

The group's planning and assessment covers all areas of learning, and have clear links to the stepping stones. However, this information is not used to inform all staff of where the children's starting points are, which along with their lack of knowledge about the foundation stage means they are not aware of where to progress the children on to provide challenge. During the inspection children were reliant interaction from the manager to help them make progress towards the early learning goals and take the next steps in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop links with wider community and become aware of others by meeting planned visitors to the group and going on outings and trips. Staff also support the children's knowledge and understanding of others through their involvement in a programme of activities about other cultures and communities. Staff work with other professionals to support children's needs, including those with special educational needs, where they have drawn up individual educational plans to help them support the children's progress. However, there was little evidence of staff supporting these children during the inspection.

Children are generally well behaved and build good relationships with others. Although some staff are a little slow to react to disputes, when they do get involved

they handle situations sensitively and give clear explanations of what is expected and what behaviour is unacceptable. This helps the children learn right from wrong.

Parents and carers find staff approachable and friendly. They have built strong relationships and share information readily with each other. These links are often first formed through their involvement with the toddler group sessions provided at the hall. Parents and carers are aware of how to contact Ofsted with compliments or complaints, via a poster displayed on the notice board, although Ofsted's address was added to the policy during the inspection.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. The group provide them with clear written information about the foundation stage curriculum through leaflets and information available in parent and carer box. Parents and carers are also able to see their children's development records, on request. They are able to discuss their children's progress with the manager who is knowledgeable of the foundation stage and children's development. However, the other staff members are not so well informed and are therefore not able to give good quality feedback about the children's progress towards the early learning goals.

Overall, the children's spiritual, moral, social and emotional development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The group are experiencing a lot of staffing changes and recruitment problems at the current time. This has left the group with fewer qualified staff than they have been used to and also makes them reliant on volunteers to remain open. Staff skills and experience show a high level of inconsistency. There is often insufficient interaction with the children to help them make progress and provide challenge. Children who are timid or unsure of what to do are often not given adequate encouragement. In addition, some staff are very new to the group and are not familiar enough with the children to know their individual needs. This makes it difficult for them to meet their specific care requirements. This is particularly noticeable for children under three years of age, who are given little support to join in, make friends and settle by many staff.

All required documentation is in place. Unfortunately not all staff are aware of the policies and procedures and are therefore unable to implement them to a satisfactory level. Their poor knowledge and understanding of the child protection policy means that un-vetted people have unsupervised access to children. The group also have unsatisfactory contingency arrangements to cover emergencies and unexpected staff absences in place. This means that staff cannot maintain the level of care during all sessions.

The leadership and management of the group is inadequate. Although planning exists to deliver the foundation stage curriculum, staff are unable to implement it in the absence of the manager. This means that the children's progress towards the early learning goals is poor. The manager has also focussed her attention over recent weeks on inducting staff into the routines, rather than continuing with the

planning and maintaining the quality of the provision for nursery education. Staff skills are also not being reviewed regularly enough in order to determine and address training requirements, to ensure the quality of the nursery education is maintained.

Overall, the needs of the full range of children who attend are not met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to implement the new ideas for display to enhance the environment and review the paperwork and policies and procedures. Low level room dividers are now in place with posters on, which increases the stimulation opportunities for children. Parents and carers are now given information about the foundation stage when they begin to bring their children to the group, which helps them to support their children's learning. The lost and uncollected children, sick children and child protection policies have all been updated to meet regulatory requirements. This would increase the group's ability to care for and protect the children, except that staff are insufficiently confident and knowledgeable to implement them, so potential risks to children's safety are present.

Nursery Education

After the last inspection the group increased the links between their planning and assessment and the stepping stones and early learning goals, in order to help them monitor their provision for nursery education and prompt children towards taking the next steps in their learning. They also extended their use of additional learning intentions within planned activities to maximise learning. Unfortunately, recent changes in the staff team have meant that the provider has focussed on inducting new staff and the planning and assessment documentation has not continued. As a result, children are not being sufficiently challenged and some staff are unfamiliar with the children's stage of development and how to get them to move on. This along with the lack of knowledge of the foundation stage for some staff, means that the children are not supported in making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals.

Complaints since the last inspection

No complaints to report.

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to improve.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure that staff and volunteers are aware of and able to implement the child protection policies and procedures in order to protect children at all times
- put in place a suitable range of activities for children under three years of age, which are appropriate for their stage of development, based on their individual needs and well supported by staff
- review staff deployment and the policy for emergency cover to ensure a satisfactory level of care can be provided for all sessions. Ensure all staff and volunteers are fully aware of their responsibilities and that there are enough staff working directly with the children to meet their needs, support their development and keep them safe.

These actions are set out in a **notice of action to improve** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure the whole staff team is well informed about the developmental needs of the funded children, so that they are able to support them and provide adequate challenge to help them progress towards the early learning goals
- ensure all staff have the required knowledge and skills to implement the group's curriculum planning effectively during all sessions, by interacting and questioning the children to enhance their learning.

These actions are set out in a **notice of action to improve** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk