

# Seashell Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	223785
<b>Inspection date</b>	21 January 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Lucy Showell
<b>Setting Address</b>	St James Church Hall, West Cotes, Tile Hill, Coventry, CV4 9BD
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<b>Registered person</b>	Janice Hunt
<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 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?

The Seashell Pre-School is a privately owned setting which was registered by the present provider in 1994 but was established during the 1980s. It operates from the hall at St.James Church in Tile Hill, Coventry. A maximum of 26 children may attend the setting at any one time. The nursery opens five days a week in term time only and children attend for a variety of sessions from 09.00 until 12.00. All children have access to an outdoor play area.

In the pre-school, there are currently 37 children on roll. Of these, 22 children receive funding for early education. The setting serves families and children in the local community and surrounding areas.

The setting employs seven staff. Of these, six, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's overall health and welfare is promoted through effectively implemented policies and procedures. Children develop increasing awareness of the importance of good health and enjoying a healthy lifestyle. Their self-care skills are effectively promoted through discussions and daily routines which encourage and support independent personal hygiene. Children learn about healthy eating as they select and slice their own fruit in their café style snack area and through planned activities such as fruit tasting and extended discussions in the role play area.

Children are making good progress in their physical development. There are many opportunities for good physical play through well-planned and well-resourced indoor and outdoor activities. Children are encouraged to use a good range of small equipment during free and focussed creative activities. For example, they use scissors, glue and a range of materials to make collages in the creative area. They are encouraged during discussions and challenged by staff as they say 'Look how many star jumps I can do!' Outside children move with increasing control as they negotiate around obstacles, running and jumping in puddles and playing games with staff. Plans are in place to develop the outside area to enable all weather use and the recent addition of a sensory garden provides exciting opportunities for children to explore in the outdoors.

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

The provision is good.

Children's welfare is effectively promoted through the staff's good knowledge and proactive skills with regard to safety. Regular risk assessments and safety checks are carried out to ensure children are safe to use equipment and any resources which are broken are mended or discarded. Children are supervised well and encouraged to learn about their own and others safety through gentle reminders during play. They show awareness of themselves and others as they are mindful of their head, hands and feet as they sing action songs and share space around the room.

Children enjoy varied activities in the well-organised space available. The play areas are large enough to give scope for free movement and there are different areas for separate activities. For example, floor space allows children to express themselves in various role play activities and construction, tables offer places for creative and more structured play whilst cushions and seating in the book corner are appropriate for rest and quiet times.

Children are protected from harm through the staff's valuable knowledge of child protection issues. Staff have good awareness of their responsibilities and clear understanding of the procedures to follow if there are concerns regarding a child. However, the written policy lacks clarity in the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer.

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

The provision is good.

Children's enjoyment and achievements at the setting are promoted through examples of children's work and photographs of children which decorate the rooms. Children develop good confidence and positive self-esteem through free access to a good range of resources. Their

independence is effectively promoted as they select activities and opportunities which extend their learning through play.

Children interact well with each other as they act out scenarios and take up different roles in the home corner and sit quietly to look at books together. Children build effective relationships with the staff who are welcoming, enthusiastic and value children's responses and ideas. The key worker system and high adult:child ratio promotes children's development and ensures individual needs are met.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning for children who receive funding for early education is good. All children are making steady progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Children's learning is promoted because staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They have developed effective planning systems which are facilitated through good use of space and the wide range of stimulating resources. Focussed and incidental observations are carried out to assess children's achievements and to identify strengths and areas to build on. Plans are devised with regard to current themes, festivals and special events and incorporate a range of activities and experiences to promote children's overall development.

The challenges set for children are thought through using the observations and assessments and activities are adapted for individual children to link with their needs and abilities. Staff work well with the children extending learning through good questioning and support and giving children time to express and explore at their own pace.

Children are confident to try new activities during circle time and speak out in familiar groups as they explain to staff that the displayed sausages are upside-down and show them how they should be before singing 'ten fat sausages'. They interact well as they take turns to choose songs and wait enthusiastically for everyone to be ready to sing 'wind the bobbin up'. Children are developing early literacy skills and begin to understand that print carries meaning as they enjoy interactive stories with staff in the comfy book area. They recognise their own names and some of others as they select their draws to put in special items and creations ready to go home. In the role play area they enjoy writing shopping lists and taking food orders on the notepads provided as they talk about healthy foods such as fruit and vegetables that 'help us to grow strong'.

Children are developing awareness of their own needs and have growing personal independence in daily routines. For example, they automatically wash their hands 'to get rid of the germs' before selecting their own carton of milk, taking off the straw and placing it in through the hole at the top. They then choose a piece of fruit and sit at the table as they cut it up and eat it. Children learn to respect differing needs and beliefs as they select from a range of multi-cultural clothing and jewellery and support each other whilst dressing-up.

Children explore colour, texture, shape, form and space in two or three dimensions during a range of well-resourced creative activities. They construct with a range of objects and select appropriate resources and tools. For example, children scoop up the sand using a fixed 'digger arm' and manipulate 'Bob the Builder' figures and trucks as they build 'roads' for the cars. During fruit tasting sessions they talk about the smell and taste of blueberries and raspberry and show interest and discover what is inside the melon and kiwi as they are cut open. Children

use their imagination and express their ideas at the craft table as they select and cut paper and materials to make collages.

Children develop mathematical skills as they play in the water tray comparing size and quantity in response to staff questions and ideas. At circle time they count the sausages as they sing and find out how many are left and during general play children use mathematical language as they build towers with construction bricks and complete floor jigsaws and inset puzzles. Children develop understanding of information technology as they play games on the computer using the mouse and keyboard.

They investigate and explore, ask questions about why things happen and how things work and find out and identify some features of living things as they look for mini beasts in the environment. They use binoculars and magnifying glasses to look for creatures and at the tree bark. There is great excitement when they find a worm and all gather around to watch how it moves. Children enjoy watching the mobiles 'dancing' in the wind and help staff to untangle them from the tree branches. They look in the sky for aeroplanes and talk about how they are 'coming to land and look very big now because they are so close'.

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

The provision is good.

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

Children's awareness and understanding of the diverse community is developing well. Their diversity is recognised through good access to a variety of activities and resources and through opportunities to celebrate a range of festivals and special occasions. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are welcome in the pre-school and the written statement has regard to current legislation.

Children are well behaved and respond well to the boundaries set. They share space and resources well and learn about maintaining their environment as they help to tidy up after play. Positive methods of behaviour management promote children's responsibility of their own actions although the written policy does not explain these methods fully.

Children have good self-care skills and are most are independent with toileting and personal hygiene. Children's independence is further developed as they select resources for themselves and express their ideas, thoughts and feelings during general discussions and play. They respond well to staff's open ended questions and extension of ideas within daily routines.

Partnership with parents and carers of children receiving funding for nursery education is good. Children benefit through the positive relationships between parents and staff and the two-way flow of information. Parents are invited into the pre-school before their child starts to share information which is used to assess the children's starting place for new learning. Ongoing verbal and written communications, such as newsletters, are shared with parents and they are invited to appointments or welcomed at any time to discuss their children's achievements and progress using the observations and assessments carried out. Parents are involved in their child's learning by bringing in requested items from home which link with topics.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Staff deployment and high adult:child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play. The grouping of children at focussed times contribute to children's ability to fully take part in the setting. Space is organised well to ensure children access a good range of fulfilling opportunities and experiences. Children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution is promoted well through the implemented policies and procedures that work well in practice although some documentation is unclear.

The quality of the leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Dedicated and caring staff are committed to offering good quality care although not all staff are involved fully in the planning of the programme for education. They attend relevant training to update knowledge and skills and performance management systems ensure that children are nurtured and protected by suitable adults. The group assesses their own strengths and weaknesses through successful monitoring and evaluation of practice to ensure children's progression towards the early learning goals is actively promoted.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the previous care inspection the setting received three recommendations. With regard to safety, concerns were raised about the lack of risk assessments and potential hazards accessible in the garden. The setting have addressed these issues as regular checks are conducted and the garden is safe and secure. They were also asked to improve attendance records which they have done by including times of arrival and departure of children and staff.

At the previous education inspection the setting had four key issues.

Staff were asked to develop the use of information from parents, observations and assessments. This has improved as children enjoy experiences planned with regard to staff's informed knowledge of their individual skills.

Other issues around the opportunities for children's development with regard to language and mathematical skills and independent access to resources were expressed. Each of these have been actioned as children enjoy a range of fulfilling experiences across all areas of development and independence is effectively encouraged.

## **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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### 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):

- clarify the procedures in the written child protection policy to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer
- ensure the written behaviour management policy states the methods used to manage children's behaviour.

#### 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 staff involvement in planning so that they understand their roles and responsibilities and work together to help all children make progress toward the early learning goals.

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)