

Greenmount Village Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	316848
Inspection date	22 June 2007
Inspector	Christine Marsh
Setting Address	The Old School, Brandlesholme Road, Greenmount, Bury, BL8 4DS
Telephone number	01204 88 6276
E-mail	
Registered person	Greenmount Village 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Greenmount Village Pre-School opened in 1982. It is run by the Management Committee and operates from three rooms in what is known as the Old school. This is now a busy community centre belonging to the local church. It is situated in a residential area in the middle of Greenmount Village, Bury. There are currently 51 children aged between two and a half to under five years on roll. Of these, 37 children receive funding for early education. A maximum of 40 children may attend the group at any one time. The group is open each weekday from 09.15 to 12.00 term time only. Monday to Thursday sessions cater for all the children, while Friday sessions are for pre-school children only. The group have access to a kitchen, toilets and an outside play area. The pre-school serves the local and wider areas.

The group employs 10 members of staff, of whom nine work directly with the children. All nine hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment. They stay healthy because staff have established appropriate hygiene practices during the daily routines. For example, children know to wash their hands before snack and after visiting the toilet. There is an appropriate procedure for nappy changing in place and staff have sound knowledge and procedures for dealing with any minor accidents that occur.

Children have a choice of water or milk to drink at snack time. They also have ready access to fresh drinking water throughout the session to keep them continually refreshed. Children are seen enjoying toast. Other snacks offered include cereals, fresh fruit and biscuits. These contribute to a healthy diet. Children also make cheese spread sandwiches as one of their activities. This helps them to develop their fine motor skills.

Children regularly benefit from fresh air and exercise during their play outside. Bike riding is a favourite activity and children develop their large motor skills as they pedal around the large outside area. They make up their own games, for example, using bean bags and hoops to play hop scotch. Children choose activities with confidence and play happily. They play with sand and water discussing how the sand feels as water is added and they mix it together. Indoors children use coloured pencils, shape play dough with rolling pins and cutters, and play with red coloured rice. These activities help children to develop fine motor skills and strength and coordination in their fingers.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff create a safe, secure and welcoming environment. Some doors are locked at the beginning and end of sessions so staff can monitor people arriving and leaving to keep children safe. When parents have left children are kept safe by gates that are put across the playground to separate it from the car parking area. At the end of sessions there is a one way system whereby parents collect children then leave the premises by a door where staff sign them out. These systems ensure that staff are aware of which children are on the premises at any time.

Child sized settees, tables and chairs are available for children to sit and play. Children have access to a good range of toys and equipment to support them in their learning and play. Toys are set out ready for children at the beginning of sessions. Children are also able to select other equipment to support their activities from the new storage units which are clearly labelled and accessible. Children are developing their independence through making these choices.

The setting has a policy on visits to protect children's safety. An annual trip takes place. Parents and carers come along with their children and children enjoy their company as they engage in active physical play in a different environment. The ratio of adults to children is very high for this trip. This, together with other safety measures, such as ensuring the coach is in good condition and safety restraints are suitable for the age of the children, helps to make it an enjoyable outing.

Emergency evacuation procedures are thorough and are undertaken using different doors so that children are familiar with all the exits. These procedures are followed regularly so that

children are learning to keep themselves safe. Two staff have recently attended fire marshal training to update their knowledge and protect children in the event of an emergency.

Staff are aware of the signs of child abuse and of the procedures to follow. These are outlined in the setting's policy. All staff have received safeguarding training. These measures help to protect children and promote their well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally happy and confident in the setting. Areas are set up for particular activities and children choose where they would like to play. A home corner with dressing up clothes, a reading area, imaginative small world play and construction toys is available. These resources provide children with a stimulating environment in which to play and learn. Children are familiar with the daily routines which makes them feel secure.

Children engage in a range of activities that are suitable to their play and developmental needs. However, currently staff have limited knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. As a result the planning of activities specifically for children under three is limited and observations and assessments are not sufficiently used to inform future planning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have identified roles including responsibility for curriculum areas. In this way staff expertise and interest is used to inform the team and to motivate children in their learning. Children enjoy their time at the pre-school and their personal, social and emotional development is promoted through staff having good relationships with them and knowing them well, through the operation of the key worker system. Practitioners have a satisfactory knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and children make sound progress towards the early learning goals. Activities and experiences are planned using a topic based approach. However, planning is not sufficiently detailed so opportunities to monitor, consolidate and extend children's learning, in each of the six areas, are sometimes missed. Staff receive support from early years advisors and attend courses to develop their thinking and inform their work with children. For example, they are moving away from worksheets and more towards children's free mark making and writing. This approach is more inclusive and more suited to the children's ages and developmental needs.

Children enjoy stories. They are seen joining in with the rhymes in popular children's stories at story time. When the adult finishes reading a book a child immediately asks for another story. Children enjoy being read to individually and in small groups. Children choose books to look at with their friends and sit and turn the pages together. Staff teach children about phonics through a structured approach that includes practical activities. This programme is continued in the local primary school. Children benefit from this continuity in their learning. They have opportunities to do drawing, mark making and writing.

Counting and calculating take place informally through discussions with staff. For example, at snack time they discuss how many cups there are and how many more they need for the children at their table. Shapes and colours are talked about through activities too. For example, jigsaws include number and shape ones, while posters show the alphabet and numbers up to ten. A member of staff talks to children about clothes and how the children's clothes are too small for her. They laugh at the idea of an adult trying to wear children's clothes then a child says,

'When we get bigger we won't be able to wear these clothes' showing her understanding of size and growth.

Children are learning about the natural world through learning about lifecycles. For example, the lifecycle of frogs has been discussed and staff bring in a small frog which captivates the children. Children learn about their local community through visits to the local school and discussions of local events. For example, staff talk about the thunder and lightning that happened the day before and children eagerly describe their experiences of this. Children also learn about different cultures by doing activities related to different religious festivals and celebrations. Recently children made flags for Australia Day, for example.

Children sometimes use a computer as one of their activities, however, currently they have limited opportunities to play with programmable toys to support their learning. Children's creative work is valued. There are large displays on recent themes and a display of children's individual drawings of themselves which are lively and expressive. Dressing up is a popular activity and children are seen getting into character. For example, a child with bangles and small hoops on her arm moves in an elegant way as though she is pretending to be someone grown up. A small group of children work collaboratively arranging a selection of resources against a wall and announce, 'We're making a show'. Songs and rhymes are a regular part of sessions and music is used to indicate register and tidy up time. This provides a positive atmosphere that helps children cope with these transitions.

Children enjoy the company of others and are confident and happy with staff.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Several staff have received recent training on catering for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The setting's policy clearly outlines its commitment to equal opportunities and its role in teaching children about the diversity within society. When children with additional needs require special equipment this is borrowed from the local authority to support their integration within the setting. Resources promote positive images of difference and help children learn about other cultures. For example, miniature toy figures and dolls represent a range of ethnic groups, while displays and books include references to other languages some of which have different alphabets. This inclusive environment supports children in learning about the wider world.

The behaviour policy supports staff in dealing with a range of children's behaviours, however it does not currently include a statement on bullying and how to address this. Staff encourage appropriate behaviour and remind children of the 'magic word' (please) when they want something. Staff provide appropriate role models thanking children when they have tidied up and asking them politely when they want them to do something. Children are seen behaving well and they have special friends who they choose to play with regularly.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Special times, such as children's birthdays are celebrated. Festivals like Christmas and Chinese New Year are included in the planning and through doing activities on these topics, children are learning to respect their beliefs and those of others.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Children are inducted into the group by visiting for short periods of time gradually building up the length of time they stay without

their parent. One or two new children start at the same time so that staff can focus on them initially. As children attend for two years there are always older children present who provide good role models and help children become familiar with the routines. Parents are very happy with the care that staff provide for their children. All children have a key worker as their first point of contact. Staff have children from the same families so that parents and children can build up a positive relationship with an individual member of staff.

Parents are informed about social activities that the setting is planning through regular newsletters, and they receive children's creative work regularly. They are also given their children's work, as well as information about their progress and achievements, when the child leaves. This covers the six areas of learning, however, parents and carers are not currently fully informed about the Foundation Stage curriculum and how their children are progressing in relation to the stepping stones. Most children attending the pre-school go on to the same local primary school. During the children's time in the pre-school they visit this primary school, for example, to see the nativity play. School staff visit the pre-school so children are familiar with them before their transition.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The leadership and management within the setting is satisfactory. All staff are suitably vetted and contingency plans are in operation in the event of staff illness. The manager has been in post for several years and there is a very low staff turn over. The children benefit from this consistency in their care. Children are cared for by a staff team who have a sound knowledge and understanding of child development, which contributes to children's care, learning and play. Daily routines provide a mixture of free choice and adult organised activities. These ensure opportunities for children to learn to concentrate for short periods and to engage in group activities.

Children have opportunities to mix with older and younger children as most children attend for two years. This enables them to develop friendships with children of different ages. Friday sessions are for the pre-school children only and these children feel special on this day. During the summer term this session includes a short lunch time where children bring lunch boxes and sit and eat together. This is an enjoyable social occasion that also helps to prepare children for their transition to primary school the following term.

All documentation required by the National Standards is in place. This promotes the safety and well-being of the children. A range of policies and procedures are available for parents which keeps them informed about the organisation of the setting and their children's care. The manager is aware of the strengths of the pre-school and has a clear view of how to develop the provision on offer further. The staff work well together as a team to promote children's health, safety, emotional well-being and ability to enjoy and achieve.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to ensure that the named person undertook training for child protection. The manager has received this training. The provider was also asked to review the policies and procedures to ensure that they accurately reflect the practice in the setting. Policies and procedures have been reviewed, updated and revised. They now

provide an accurate reflection of the day to day operation in the setting. The provider was also asked to ensure that chairs are stored safely when children are present. This is achieved by daily risk assessments that take place before the children arrive.

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 can be seen 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- write a statement about bullying and add this to the existing policy on behaviour management
- develop planning and assessment procedures for the under threes using a scheme such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

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):

- develop long, medium and short term planning to provide children with planned opportunities to make progress along the stepping stones in each of the six areas of learning
- develop further opportunities for children to play with programmable toys.

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