

Great Bardfield Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	203620
Inspection date	25 April 2007
Inspector	Lynn Clements
Setting Address	Great Bardfield Primary School, Braintree Road, Great Bardfield, Braintree, CM7 4RN
Telephone number	01371 811580
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Registered person	Gt Bardfield 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?

Great Bardfield Pre-School was registered in 1999. It operates from a purpose built unit, which is shared with the after school club, in the grounds of Great Bardfield Primary School. The pre-school serves the local area.

The pre-school is registered to care for a maximum of 24 children from 2 to under 5 years at any one time. There are currently 38 on roll. This includes 33 funded children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently has a small number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.05 until 11.45 and there is an optional lunch club from 11.45 until 13.00 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. On Thursday the group opens from 09.05 until 11:45 and there is a preparation for school class from 12:45 until 15:15.

Nine members of staff work with the children on a part-time basis. Four members of staff including the manager hold relevant early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority and the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children talk about washing their hands before eating and after using the toilet to protect themselves from the 'germs you can't see.' They develop independence in their personal hygiene, taking themselves off to wash their hands or going to the toilet as they need to. Safe nappy changing routines are in place to protect children and staff from cross-contamination. A clear sick child policy is shared with parents and implemented in practice to prevent the spread of infection. Up-to-date records are in place to ensure children's individual needs are met and respected, helping them to remain fit and healthy. Staff obtain clear written instructions from parents about the administration of medicines and relevant permission is in place to protect children in an emergency. The majority of staff have completed first aid training enabling them to care appropriately for children in the event of an accident.

Children benefit from the good knowledge and understanding of childhood nutrition held by staff. They enjoy healthy snacks, with fresh fruit and vegetables every day. All children are able to help themselves to water from the cooler and this ensures no child remains thirsty. Staff and parents work together to support the pre-school's healthy eating programme, through topics, cooking activities and when children bring packed lunches. Children learn about healthy eating through meaningful experiences such as helping to make snacks, joining in cooking activities and tasting the organic produce they grow in their garden. They know that 'vegetables and fruit are good for you.' In addition, children learn to lead a healthy lifestyle; they take part in regular exercise such as playing in the well-equipped adjoining play area or participating in lively music and dance sessions. They enjoy outings to the local farm and church or investigate wildlife where they live as they go on bug safaris in the nearby school field.

Opportunities for children to develop their fine and gross physical skills are good. The classroom opens onto a large outside play area which is available everyday and children move freely between both well-organised and well-resourced areas. Staff plan carefully for the outside play space enabling children to join in activities or initiate their ideas on a larger scale than is possible indoors. All children are able to rest or be active according to their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children and staff work well together to create bright cheerful displays which provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere for families and visitors. All children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Systems are in place for the safe arrival and departure of children to prevent them leaving the premises unsupervised. Members of staff are careful to check the identification of visitors and supervise them at all times to ensure children remain protected.

There is a wide range of child-height furniture and equipment which enables children to play and learn in safety and comfort. Child-height storage promotes children's independence as they make their own selections to extend their play and learning. Toys and resources are regularly checked and cleaned to ensure they remain in good condition for the children to use. Children are beginning to learn about keeping themselves safe. They learn about 'road safety while out and about. During cooking activities they learn about being careful with 'knives' and 'hot ovens'. Safety equipment such as socket covers and finger guards on doors help to keep children safe as they move freely around the provision. However, formal risk assessments are

not in place to ensure all potential hazards both inside and outside are clearly identified to keep children safe from harm.

The setting has an appointed child protection officer who has recently completed safeguarding children training and has a clear understanding about reporting concerns. However, the rest of the staff have not completed child protection training and their knowledge and understanding with regard to reporting concerns is limited.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have a busy time at the pre-school and play happily. Their confidence and self-esteem is promoted through daily routines. They are encouraged to try activities for themselves without fear of failure and staff provide interesting investigative opportunities to develop their imagination and curiosity. For example, sourcing and setting up interesting logs and branches where mini beasts have made their homes, then providing children with equipment such as magnifying glasses so they can explore the bug world.

Children receive plenty of praise and encouragement, which helps to promote positive attitudes and dispositions to future learning. They have good opportunities to develop their language skills as they join in circle time discussions which also help them to develop their thinking and listening skills. All children enjoy singing rhymes and listening to stories, which further promotes their language development.

Children are secure in the setting and develop a sense of place as they confidently hang up their coats, return greetings to each other and members of staff and generally move around the building freely selecting activities and games to explore. They negotiate small world and role play scenarios based on real and imagined experiences, busily making pretend meals in the play-house. Younger children are encouraged to become vocal through, for example, imitation and use of appropriate language and gestures to communicate their needs. Older children communicate their thoughts, ideas and experiences, using language appropriately.

Staff plan a range of activities for younger children. They are beginning to explore the use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to support their work with younger children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making sound progress towards the early learning goals. Overall, staff have sufficient understanding of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn through play. Staff organise varied activities which promote the children's independence and decision-making skills. They support children in their play and learning, particularly in small group work. Staff are interested in what the children say and do, taking time to listen and respond positively to their suggestions and ideas. Children are confident in their relationships with each other and staff as they move freely both inside and outside, making independent choices about their play.

Children's achievements are clearly linked to the stepping stones. Systems for recording their progress are in place. However, records of assessment are not consistently maintained to ensure progress over time can be accurately plotted and children's next steps for learning are not clearly identified or used effectively in planning. Differentiation in planning is limited which impacts of the challenges set for children.

Children enjoy what they do and the majority are able to sustain interest in a range of activities which promote their understanding and learning. Overall, children concentrate reasonably well at activities. Children's self-esteem and confidence increase as they share stories from home and proudly seek out others to show them their finished creations. They form good relationships with each other, making room at activities and learning to share and take turns. They become increasingly independent when dealing with their own physical needs. For example, they put on their sun hats before going outside, help themselves to water when they are thirsty and see to their personal hygiene as necessary.

Children begin to take the initiative to be self-sufficient in their learning because they have access to a range of equipment and resources stored at their level. They are confident communicators, seeking out adults to share their ideas and suggest different activities they want to do or enquiring what the visitors are doing. They are developing their understanding of letters and the printed word using books independently and noticing environmental print and labels which are displayed around the classroom. Children join in large group story time, using pictures as clues to the story line and guessing what happens next as the spider makes a web. They are beginning to form letters correctly and are linking sounds to letters to develop skills for later learning.

Children start to make sense of the world around them as they explore and learn to care about living things, for example, when growing their own organic fruits, vegetables and fungi. Children talk about the weather and know that their plants need water and sunshine to grow. Children access their well-equipped outside play area in all weathers and staff provide suitable clothing such as raincoats so children can experience weather and change first hand.

Children are beginning to use number language as they play, counting the numbers on the dice during games of hop-scotch or noticing and matching number names and symbols, They use positional language talking about travelling 'under' or 'over' or sitting 'in' their boat. They develop calculation skills as they count the children at registration and work out what one more is when their friend arrives late. They show an interest in shape and space as they create three dimensional models using a variety of building bricks and magnetic blocks or when making potato 'Humpty Dumpties'. Children enjoy a range of physical activities that help them develop confidence and skill, they move around safely, demonstrating coordination and control while using apparatus or balancing on the small climbing frames. Children use wheeled toys such as push-chairs, carefully avoiding each other and showing a developing understanding of spatial awareness. They have opportunities to develop their fine motor skills as they use single-handed tools and utensils. Children are beginning to learn about the importance of physical exercise and how it can help them to stay fit and healthy.

Children enjoy dancing and moving to music, making their bodies bend and stretch. They express their individual creativity through a satisfactory range of activities. For example, they freely draw and paint and their creations are displayed around the classroom, providing opportunities for children to proudly show their parents and carers their achievements.

Staff work closely as a team, praising and encouraging children to develop their personal independence and curiosity as learners.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff work with parents and carers to meet children's individual needs and ensure they are included. Children learn about other cultures and beliefs during topics and discussions, examining artefacts and tasting foods from around the world. Staff ensure that there is no bias in their practice in relation to gender, race or disability. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported appropriately and staff work closely with families in the best interests of the child. Systems are in place to support children as they move from the pre-school into the reception class to ensure their needs continue to be met.

Staff throughout the pre-school provide a consistent approach to behaviour management. Older children and staff discuss their pre-school rules and devise ways of making the atmosphere pleasant and welcoming. Children learn to share, take turns and negotiate with each other. 'Wiggly fingers' are used to gain attention and refocus children as required. Children develop a sense of belonging as they hang up their things and move freely around the setting making choices about what they want to do or explore. Staff create an environment that encourages children to behave well.

Relationships with parents and carers are sound. Parents, carers and children are greeted warmly as they arrive each day. Verbal feedback is shared with them at the end of the session. Notice boards are kept up to date with information about forthcoming events, funding and general pre-school business. There is a clear prospectus in place, containing information about policies and procedures and an operational plan is available to parents and staff to promote the smooth running of the provision.

Partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of nursery funding is satisfactory. Parents and carers have access to the planning displayed on the classroom wall and displays are in place linking activities to different areas of learning. Parents and carers are told about their children's records of assessment and can ask to view these at anytime. However, there are no formal systems in place to encourage participation or to share information about their children's achievements at home to provide the key workers with a picture of the whole child.

Children are learning to share and care for each other. They encourage others to join in their games and make room for them at activities. Children's spiritual, moral and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff maintain documentation appropriately and all policies and procedures are in place. Robust vetting systems are implemented to ensure that children are protected. Staff induction procedures are in place to ensure new members of staff are working appropriately with children. An operational plan has been made available to parents and carers to support the smooth running of the setting.

The manager has completed training. However, the majority of staff do not hold appropriate qualifications, which impacts on their overall knowledge and understanding of child development and related frameworks such as 'Birth to three matters' and the Foundation Stage curriculum. The organisation of the setting ensures that children are well cared for and are developing positive attitudes towards their learning. Overall the needs of the children are met.

Leadership and management of the nursery funded provision is satisfactory. The recently appointed manager has worked hard to implement new systems such as planning meetings and key worker groups to ensure children are supported appropriately. Clear development plans have been devised with regard to previous recommendations made at earlier inspections and staff are now working closely with the local authority to develop their knowledge and understanding through relevant training. Appraisals are now in place to identify training needs and support existing members of staff with the delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection outcomes for children have been improved by the implementation of a key worker system to support and monitor children's progress. One member of staff has completed relevant training. However, the provider has not met regulation requirements with regard to the minimum of 50% of staff qualified to level 2 - a new manager is now in place and is currently working with the local authority to ensure qualification requirements are met - this has been taken forward at this inspection.

At the last education inspection the provider agreed to develop planning to ensure learning intentions are clear and children are supported appropriately by staff. Clear systems are now in place identifying different learning intentions in all six areas of learning, enabling staff to support children as they play and investigate activities.

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 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):

- formalise risk assessments to ensure all child accessible areas both inside and outside remain safe for children
- ensure that at least 50% of staff are appropriately qualified to level 2
- ensure that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put safeguarding children procedures into 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):

- ensure children's achievement records are up-dated consistently enabling progress to be accurately plotted over time and that observations of children's next steps for learning are used to inform future planning
- ensure differentiation in planning is clear to support members of staff to challenge individual children effectively
- increase opportunities for parents and carers to contribute to their children's records of achievement
- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of relevant frameworks to support children, including the Foundation Stage curriculum (this also applies to care).

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