

Kilsby Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	511063
Inspection date	24 May 2007
Inspector	Sheila Dawn Flounders

Setting Address	In the Grounds of Kilsby Church of England Primary School, Manor Road, Kilsby, Northamptonshire, CV23 8XS
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Telephone number	07913848617
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E-mail

Registered person	Kilsby Pre-School
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Type of inspection	Integrated
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Type of care	Sessional care
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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 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?

Kilsby Pre-School was registered in 1969 and moved to the current site in 1992. It operates from a mobile classroom in the grounds of the Kilsby Church of England School, which is in the centre of the village. A maximum of 21 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The setting is open each weekday between 09.00 and 12.00, during term time only. On Mondays, a lunch club also operates until 12.30. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 25 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 19 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local community and surrounding area. The pre-school employs five members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Appropriate action is taken if children become ill during the session, by asking parents to collect them as soon as possible. On the whole they stay healthy because the robust sickness policy excludes children who are ill and parents are asked to inform staff about any infectious illness so that others can be given a warning. There are regular cleaning routines in place, with tasks for daily, weekly and monthly completion. Staff are vigilant about cleaning the tables and additional cloths are used to cover tables before children eat. However, some children's lunchboxes are stored on the floor and then brought to the clean table top, bringing with them the risk of infection. Also, although children know that they need to wash their hands after messy play, toileting and before eating they do not always do so in clean water, which exposes them to cross-infection and compromises their health.

Children are well nourished due to the provision of a healthy snack each session, with a four-weekly menu used which often includes fruit or dairy products. They are also given a choice about what drinks they would like each day and have independent access to water throughout the session, which ensures they are well-hydrated. The pre-school obtains information about children's dietary requirements before they attend and ensures that all food and drinks given comply with these. When children stay for lunch, parents are responsible for supplying their food and drink. All of the children have good access to physical play and many activities are taken into the outdoor area to provide another dimension to their play. For example, outside they are able to mix chalk drawings and painting with water and see the effect this has.

Children in receipt of early education have regular opportunities to move with confidence, imagination and in safety. They move with control and co-ordination, for example, when pedalling bicycles, throwing and catching soft balls or trying to master the hoops. The large climbing frame provides children with daily experience of travelling around, under, over and through equipment and opportunities to exercise their large muscles. Children demonstrate an awareness of space, of themselves and of others, with most able to negotiate a path around with wheeled toys without bumping into other children. Daily access to fresh air and exercise is helping children recognise the importance of keeping healthy and those things which contribute to this, with staff also talking about a healthy diet when opportunities arise. Children use a wide range of small equipment, tools and materials with increasing skill and control, for example, they cut small pieces with scissors, control pencils, use rollers, and use various sizes of paintbrushes in different creative activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and mainly safe environment, where measures are in place to minimise identified risks. For example, a gate is used across the rear door when it is open for ventilation, the radiators are fitted with full guards and the entrance door is kept locked during the session, only being opened as parents arrive to collect their children. Only suitable and safe equipment is used by the children as staff ensure that all items are appropriate for their ages and individual ability. A member of staff has responsibility for health and safety matters such as ensuring that risk assessments are in place. However, these have not always

been reviewed following changes such as new staff, nor highlighted some ongoing issues, for example, the brambles near the rear doors, which could impact on children's safety.

Children are kept safe on outings due to the ratios which are put in place, of an adult to every two children, and the routines which ensure that items such as a mobile phone, first aid kit and children's emergency contact details are always taken with them. They learn to protect themselves through regular practices of the emergency evacuation drill, with records showing they rapidly clear the building, and through the emphasis on protection from the sun by wearing hats. Children are also protected because the staff understand their role in safeguarding children and know what procedures to put in place if necessary. They are particularly vigilant about not leaving unvetted visitors, such as parent helpers, alone with the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children develop confidence and self-esteem as they are encouraged to be as independent as possible, with the environment set up for self-selection during many activities. They are interested in what they do because the staff plan activities which are appropriate for their diverse ages and abilities, using the 'Birth to three matters' framework for the younger children. The small groupings that usually take place around activities provide all the children with good opportunities to interact with staff, to discuss what they are doing together and to ask questions to develop their skills and knowledge. There is always a member of staff either directly working at each activity with the children, or in close proximity, so that they can explain or demonstrate how to do something, for example, to play a game for the first time, or discuss the activity with the children to extend their learning. The organisation of the session provides all the children with opportunities to use their initiative and develop activities in their own way, for example, they decide how to organise the train layout. Staff also interact with the children to provide challenge, for example, having different discussions with varying groups of children, according to their level of understanding, when making shortbread.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Senior staff have good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum which they pass on to newer, less experienced colleagues to ensure they understand what activities involve, what children should learn and the type of language or questioning to use. They all interact with children at an appropriate level to their ability and understanding. The planning is effective in covering all the required areas of learning each week and contains most of the basic elements, including identifying the adult focus for each day. It does not clearly show vocabulary to be introduced or differentiation for varying ability, although these do take place. Discussion takes place about the previous week's sessions, but this evaluation of activities does not fully consider whether the planned learning objectives were achieved and how that affects what children need to learn the next week so that appropriate challenge can then be provided for individuals.

Staff use a variety of teaching methods with the children, ranging from whole group activities, through small group to individual support, all of which can be either adult-led, adult-supported or child-led. During the session staff make regular observations of children and collect information about their current ability and progress, some of which is used to inform the next week's planning. A new assessment format is being used with the older children so that this information is recorded in children's files directly against specific aspects of the areas of learning, thus the key worker is more easily able to identify areas that need more focus for each child.

This is very effective in demonstrating progress in those areas where sufficient information was collected about the children's ability when they started in the setting, but currently less useful for other areas.

The children have opportunities to engage in activities which cover all areas of learning every week. Many of these activities are diverse and allow learning to take place across several areas, for example, whilst making shortbread, children are encouraged to be independent and each makes their own mixture in small groups. Lots of discussion takes place about what they are doing, how the mixture feels at different stages, how it changes appearance and even consideration about what might happen when they add water to it. Children use different sizes of scoops to get the correct quantities of ingredients and are able to remember later how many they used. They use rolling pins and various cutters to get their biscuits ready to bake and eventually experience the satisfaction and pride of taking their own home to share with their family. They also take home most of the examples of their creative activities, when they use colour, texture and a variety of materials to work in two and three dimensions. Recent group projects include hot air balloons, a large train and a plan of the village.

Children experience core activities daily, for example, listening to stories, singing or playing instruments, access to role play and dressing up, sand, free painting, outdoor play, discussion about the weather and practical counting about how many children there are. They learn to listen for their name at registration time, decide what they want to have to drink in advance and have social activity at snack time. They share resources with other children, for example, the see-saws outside, or wait their turn to do an activity, such as cooking. They are able to sit still and concentrate for periods, for example, the whole group listen intently whilst a parent reads a story to them. Above all they are always busy, moving freely between practical activities that capture their interests, providing opportunities to explore and investigate. For example, they mix cornflour and water to make gloop and then discover that it can be both liquid and solid, discussing what it feels like at different times. Staff input encourages children to write their name in the mixture, which older children do successfully, using correct letter formation. Outside play is a strong feature of the children's experience with many activities taking place outside, as well as physical play. Children enjoy mixing water and sand on the slabs, using a different consistency than they can in the sand tray when inside. They explore their mark-making skills by using chalk on different materials such as concrete, brick and wood.

Generally the children are well motivated, able to maintain concentration when necessary and take responsibility for their own self-care. They have constant opportunities to have discussions, learn new vocabulary, then practise its use in realistic situations and to respond to what they hear by relevant comments, questions or actions. They are confident about speaking in front of the rest of the group or to the adults in the setting. They are beginning to recognise common words, particularly their own names, and know how to handle books properly. The older children can hold their pencils correctly, and have many opportunities to practise their writing skills during the week. In practical activities, rhymes and discussion children use mathematical language, including the vocabulary involved in adding and subtracting. For example, they count down in twos from 10 when joining in with '10 fat sausages' or count out pennies for 'Five currant buns'. The older children easily recognise the numerals to nine and are confident about using two separate numerals to make up the larger number required to record the total children present. Children are comfortable using technology, with the computer mouse well controlled, realistic tools used in role play and the cassette player used to record and then play back their voices. They are developing an awareness of the local environment and the part their own homes and families play in the area.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met well as the staff obtain the necessary information from parents or carers before they attend, to identify any issues such as language, dietary needs, and learning difficulties or disability. They also collect information about the child's personal and social skills so that children can be helped to settle in quickly. There are appropriate systems in place to identify and support children with any additional needs, including liaison with outside agencies if necessary. All of the children have opportunities to make choices and decisions for themselves throughout the session. They are asked daily about what they want to drink, are able to choose what activities to participate in for most of the session, including a free flow to the outside area and independence is encouraged, particularly in relation to their personal care routines. Children quickly form a sense of belonging in the pre-school, they know where to put their belongings, like their parents or carers to come in and see what they are doing at the beginning or end of the session and join in the routines, such as tidying up, willingly. They have a very good understanding of what is expected of them at certain times, for example, where to sit for stories, or to put on an apron for messy activities and wash their hands afterwards.

All of the children form close relationship with each other and the staff, who act as positive role models for them, showing that their opinions are respected and listening to their ideas and suggestions. Children's behaviour is very good because they are very involved in activities, provided with enough variety so that there is always something to suit everyone's interests and ability level, and with good access to physical and outdoor play to burn off excess energy. They are aware of the routines and boundaries of the setting which they respect, for example, how many children should be at certain activities, so that incidents are largely avoided. There is a behaviour statement in place which staff follow when dealing with any incidents that do occur, however, it does not specifically include bullying, which could be overlooked. Low ratios within the setting ensure that children get individual attention at times. Together with opportunities, such as an individual response at registration and being asked what they have enjoyed that morning, which enhances children's self-respect. They see that other children give differing answers or make different choices and so begin to understand that not everyone has the same needs, views and beliefs. Resources and activities throughout the year, which provide positive images of diversity, help children to become aware of wider society. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. They have access to general information about the setting and the educational provision offered and good opportunities for general day-to-day contact with staff. Some information is collected from them about their child's abilities when they start the pre-school and verbal discussions add to this, although relevant comments are not always added to children's assessment records. Parents are made aware that they can have access to these records at any time, however most do not do so and as a result do not feel informed about their child's progress or what they are learning in the setting. Provision is made for a more formal meeting before children leave to start school. Some opportunities are provided for those who wish to be involved in their child's learning, for example, they can attend as a helper, read stories to the group, or send in items relevant to the current topic.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The committee are aware of their responsibility to notify Ofsted of significant changes and do so. They ensure that policies and procedures are subject to an annual review, with some currently in need of minor alteration to reflect recent internal and external changes. The staff ensure that daily paperwork is accurate and up to date, including the operational file, with all necessary documentation in place. They share out many of the roles and responsibilities necessary for the smooth running of the pre-school, for example, one takes on health and safety, whilst another takes responsibility for co-ordinating special educational needs. Senior staff all know the routines and are very capable of deputising in the absence of the supervisor. Generally, the premises are used well to provide a child-friendly environment, where independent learning is encouraged. Activities take part in various areas of the premises, including the outside area, to allow as much choice for children as possible each session. Staff work directly with the children for most of their time in the session, some briefly moving away to set up the next activity or prepare the snack, whilst other staff engage in whole group activities with the children.

The leadership and management of early education is good. There is a close relationship between the staff and the management committee, with regular meetings taking place, particularly between the supervisor and chairperson. The officers of the committee do spend time in the setting regularly, so they know what happens on a day-to-day basis and they try to involve all parents in their decision making. The pre-school do access their own strengths and weakness, for example, they are currently getting feedback from parents and the annual appraisal provides opportunities to discuss how well staff are doing. Most of the issues raised during the last inspection have been addressed and an upgrade of the building has improved the environment for the staff and children. The committee keep a sufficient overview of the provision, alongside the staff's own assessments, to monitor and evaluate the provision of funded education. The recent changes to the children's assessments will provide a more useful means of demonstrating progress once they are fully applied. A strong commitment to improvement is demonstrated by ongoing fundraising, support given to staff for new resources and the continuing links with school, for example, welcoming the reception class teacher in.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to ensure children access activities and resources which promote diversity, to request permission from parents for emergency medical treatment, to develop their planning system and to provide more opportunities to use rhyme. There is now an extended range of resources which provide positive images of culture, gender and disability in the setting, which enhance children's experience of the wider community. All parents are asked to provide consent for emergency medical treatment, which ensures children's health if parents cannot be contacted. The weekly planning provides staff with planned occasions to undertake observations on the children and they also use the spontaneous opportunities that arise to get a broader picture of each child. Many of the activities that take place are evaluated, though little of this evaluation is recorded, with the information gleaned then used to develop the next week's planning. Action songs and rhymes are used daily to enhance children's language and introduce simple addition and subtraction.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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):

- take positive steps to prevent the spread of infection, particularly with regard to children's hand-washing and the storage of lunchboxes
- ensure that the behaviour management statement includes bullying
- review risk assessments after significant changes and include an action plan with timescales to minimise any identified risks.

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):

- inform parents more regularly about what their children do, about their progress towards the early learning goals and provide opportunities for them to contribute to their child's assessment records
- ensure that the planning cycle contains sufficient detail of differentiation for children of varying abilities and evaluation of activities to enable practitioners to determine if the learning objectives have been achieved for individual children.

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