

# The Beeches Pre-School (Annexe)

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY299557
<b>Inspection date</b>	05 March 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Deirdra Keating
<b>Setting Address</b>	St. John Ambulance, Greenstead Road, Colchester, Essex, CO1 2SL
<b>Telephone number</b>	
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Elaine Joy Beecham
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day 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 Beeches Pre-School (Annexe) is privately managed. It opened in 2005 and operates from two spacious rooms within a St. John's Ambulance Hall in Colchester, Essex. The pre-school is open from 9.15 to 12.00 with a lunch club until 13.00 and from 13.00 to 15.30, five days a week all year. The children have access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 60 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 29 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school currently employs eight members of staff; of these seven staff have early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted through sound procedures that are documented and shared with parents. Written policies and procedures ensure that correct details are provided for parents and staff and consequently children's health is not compromised. Children can rest according to their needs in a comfortable corner. If children become unwell during the session they are made comfortable until they can be collected. Children are beginning to understand simple hygiene practice through consistent routines such as hand washing. Low level sinks and toilets enable children to become increasingly independent in their personal care. Children receive appropriate care if they have an accident, as all staff have current first aid training. A sufficiently stocked first aid box is regularly checked by a designated member of staff.

Children's dietary needs are adequately met as they are provided with a healthy snack of fresh fruit. They develop their understanding of healthy and nutritious food through discussions and projects on healthy eating. Children are offered squash to drink at snack time, however, access to drinking water is only made available on request during the morning session. Children sit at small tables as they have their snack. They gain skills such as pouring and control as they offer drinks to each other. They share quiet conversation as they wait for their fruit, and staff are readily available to support and assist them. Children's dietary needs are recorded on written agreements which ensures that their individual needs are catered for.

Children have daily access to fresh air and enjoy a good range of activities outside in the small secure play area. Outdoor play is available throughout the session and children are able to use large apparatus to gain exercise and develop their skills. Children negotiate space well using ride-on toys, they take care as they steer accurately around the confined space. They enjoy a range of planned physical activities inside where they learn to move in a range of ways as they encounter an obstacle course. Children enthusiastically take part in action songs where they learn about the effects of exercise on the body as they get hot and feel their heart rate increase. During warmer months children have free access to the outside area where careful measures are taken to protect children from the effects of the sun. Children's understanding of this is reinforced through topics and discussions.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm welcoming environment that is well maintained. The organisation of space is creative with defined areas in which children can easily access resources and toys. The hall is shared with other users and there is limited storage and display space. However, staff have effectively negotiated this to make creative use of the areas available. A large hanging display shows a colourful group collage related to a healthy eating topic. Equipment has to be packed away regularly and staff use this opportunity to check and assess all the resources to ensure children's safety. A good range of resources provides a balance of activities that promotes children's learning in all areas. These are rotated weekly and consequently children are interested and stimulated by the resources on offer. There is plenty of space which enables children to eat and play together comfortably. Colourful child sized furniture promotes children's independence well.

Children are cared for well in a safe environment where staff take effective steps to minimise all risks. Daily risk assessments ensure that the hall and outside area are suitable and any hazards are identified. The premises are extremely secure, CCTV cameras monitor the outside of the provision and doors remain locked at all times. Visitors are required to sign in and arrival and departure times are managed safely and effectively. A strong secure fence encloses the outside area and children are closely supervised at all times. Written consent is provided by parents for all outings and road safety is discussed prior to trips. Visits from a community police officer reinforces children's understanding of staying safe. Clear operational plans for outings and emergencies are well thought out and documented. Regular fire drills ensure children know what to do in the event of a fire. Fire prevention equipment is checked and all requirements are met.

Children are protected well from harm by knowledgeable and trained staff who know what to do in the event of a concern. A written statement and incident book allows staff to follow correct procedures should a concern arise. A designated member of staff ensures other staff are aware of procedures. Written policies that are regularly reviewed are clear and up to date. All staff have a clear understanding of their individual responsibilities to ensure children's safety and well-being.

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

The provision is good.

Children are interested to learn through a wide selection of activities and resources that are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Staff know children well and use this effectively to ensure that plans are skilfully adapted to incorporate the needs of younger children. They use tactile materials such as sand and sandpaper as they learn how to form letter shapes. Relaxed registration routines allow children to choose activities which enables them to settle well on arrival. The sessions are fun and varied with a good balance of activities that help children progress well in all areas of development.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of the teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. Good effective use of time provides a balance of adult focused and child focused activities. Staff are skilled and resourceful at spotting opportunities to maximise on children's learning potential. They follow children's interest and adapt activities to incorporate the ideas of the children. Consequently children are extremely motivated to learn as they have ownership and input into their activities. Staff all contribute to the comprehensive planning which clearly identifies learning intentions for children. Carefully structured planning incorporates Montessori equipment and principles with the early learning goals providing a good range of resources and methods. Staff support children well providing challenge with open ended questions that flow with their particular interests and extends their learning well. Varied and interesting activities are planned to capture children's interest and have individual meaning to their life experiences. This incorporates the individual learning styles of the children. An effective observation system enables staff to assess children's progress towards the early learning goals. This is used to build individual profiles of children's achievements. Subsequently, all children are included and making good progress through the stepping stones. Staff manage children very well using explanations and praise to reinforce positive behaviour.

Children are motivated to learn through exciting and stimulating experiences that capture their interest. They are welcomed into the colourful and child-friendly environment by warm and friendly staff. New children separate well from parents with one to one support. Good organisation of resources allows children to self-select resources and work independently. Children's behaviour is consistently good throughout the session. They show care for each other and their environment as they tidy up together. Children work very well as a team taking turns and offering encouragement to each other as they encounter an obstacle course. The children relish this activity and enthusiastic staff encourage and support them very well. Cultural days and traditional festivals are planned for and children are encouraged to respect the views and beliefs of others. Children's achievements are valued by staff who give praise and collate them in a portfolio for parents.

Children are developing their language, writing and speaking skills very well. They enjoy looking at books in the book corner where resources are used creatively to make a comfortable area. A library of books enables children to take home a reading book which reinforces their learning. Open ended questions during a group story encourage children to use language for thinking and speaking as they recall past events. The room has many labels and prompts, encouraging children to know that text carries a meaning. A colourful writing area has a range of mark making equipment which the children readily access. The children are making good progress in their writing. They practise their skills as they make passports which they use for a group activity.

Children are making good progress in their mathematical development. They enjoy a broad range of Montessori and play based equipment which enables them to learn about shape, space and weight. Staff support children using mathematical language as they do simple calculations and compare lengths. Children have many opportunities to count, they add up children and count the days of the week as part of their routine. They enthusiastically sing number songs and are lively and focused as they join in the actions and represent numbers with fingers. A variety of activities encourages them to problem solve. They use a wide range of mathematical equipment including scales, number lines, calculators and interactive programmes on the laptop. Children enjoy using technology as they have access to a computer and a variety of programmable toys. They have a good range of messy activities where they can explore and have hands on experiences of different materials using all of their senses. The outside area gives a perfect environment for children to engage in a range of purposeful planned activities where their curiosity and interest is enhanced. The children are beginning to learn about other countries and travel through well thought out topics and themes. They enthusiastically take part in a pretend trip to India using passports they have made. Staff and children don costumes and make this an exciting and fun journey starting with children's own experiences and interest.

Children enjoy a wide range of planned physical activities that support their physical development. They gain good dexterous skills as they learn how to use scissors and glue. Staff support children well as they develop their cutting skills and individual needs are met well. Children are encouraged to manage coats and shoes with staff on hand to assist as and when required. There are good opportunities for children's creative play. Paint and art and craft materials are available for children to use with their own preferred style and method. Children explore the sounds of musical instruments and improvise their own ideas into popular songs. They engage in imaginary play which is supported well by staff who allow space and time for children to develop their play and become fully engrossed.

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

The provision is good.

The children in this setting are valued and have a good sense of belonging. Staff promote a warm and homely atmosphere where children are individually welcomed. Children's individual likes and dislikes are carefully obtained prior to admission which enables staff to know all children well and meet their individual needs. All children are included as staff are intuitive in offering the right amount of support tailored to individual needs. Children are able to make choices about how to spend their time. They learn about other cultures and beliefs as the setting is very proactive in discussing the children's lives and experiences. They learn through a range of exciting hands on experiences such as cooking, dance and celebrations. The setting actively involves parents as they invite them in to share their cultures and customs. This gives children a good sense of belonging and results in a setting that celebrates its diversity very well. A good range of resources such as posters, figures and games are used to reflect wider society and help children understand their differences and similarities.

The setting has a very proactive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff follow good clear policies in line with the code of practice. They have all completed manual handling training and have experienced supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A named Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) has completed comprehensive training. Activities are adapted skilfully to ensure they are fully inclusive and provide equality of opportunity. Staff have a good understanding of how to best support children by working closely with parents and utilising specific resources in order to meet the individual needs of the child. Comprehensive policies detail specific guidelines to behavioural expectations within the setting. There are a few simple rules which the children clearly follow as their behaviour is very good. Staff are calm and consistent as they model polite and considerate behaviour. Children are encouraged to manage their own disputes by communicating their needs. Occasional behavioural incidents are recorded and shared with parents at the end of the session. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are welcomed and receive good information about policies and procedures. Children are welcomed in for an introductory session with their parents where good links are established with families. Staff use this opportunity to explain their practice and emphasise the Montessori equipment and teaching methods. Written agreements provide details of children's needs in order that they can be looked after according to their parents' wishes. Details of learning achievements are taken home at the end of each session which provides parents with some information about their children's learning. However, there is insufficient information given to parents regarding children's progress towards the early learning goals. A notice board provides parents with up to date information and a clear complaints procedure is available.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by safe suitable adults who are motivated, dedicated and have had all necessary checks to ensure children's safety. Good and effective working policies are in place to support staff and ensure their well-being. Children are settled and secure as ratios are well maintained and the environment is welcoming. Children's care, learning and play is supported well by the policies and operational plan. Staff are very well qualified and individual staff records detail all staff's details and qualifications. The leader has a clear understanding of the National

Standards and her responsibility to comply with the details of the registration. Well organised documentation is stored securely and all requirements are met.

The leadership and management is good. The group is led by a strong leader who has a clear vision with emphasis on the children's achievement and development. She works closely with all members of staff to form a dynamic team. Staff also work with an early years teacher to ensure that planning and teaching methods are inclusive. Regular staff meetings enable staff to review the effectiveness of the curriculum planning. This ensures that the quality of nursery education is monitored and adapted accordingly to meet the individual needs of the children. Job descriptions and an appraisal process ensure staff are all aware of their roles and responsibilities and identifies further training needs. Staff development plans show the strong commitment to ongoing professional development and ensure children are cared for by qualified and knowledgeable staff. Consequently, children are making very good progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Overall, the children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provider was asked to improve the book corner. This has been developed to provide a soft and comfortable area which is enhanced with appealing resources. This makes it more stimulating and inviting for children to access and enjoy. The provider was also asked to develop the provision to provide a rich, informative and stimulating environment for children and parents. This has been done and the room carries many labels, questions, posters and pictures. Consequently, the children are stimulated and have a good sense of belonging as their achievements are displayed. Information for parents is now displayed on a notice board outside the setting. This enables parents to be informed of relevant contact numbers and ongoing events.

### **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 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):

- ensure that drinking water is available to children at all times

## **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 systems which provide parents with further information about the foundation stage.

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)