

Sturry Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY216100
Inspection date	05 June 2007
Inspector	Virginia Cooper
Setting Address	Sturry Primary School, Park View, Sturry, Kent, CT2 0NR
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Registered person	Sturry Pre School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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 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?

Sturry Pre-School opened in 2001 and is committee run. It operates from a mobile unit in the grounds of Sturry Church of England Primary School, near Canterbury, Kent. The pre-school has access to two rooms and a large outside play area. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school or after school club at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.00 to 11.30 and from 12.30 to 15.00 in term time only. The after school club is open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 15.15 to 17.30.

There are currently 68 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 41 children receive funding for early education. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 10 members of staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

The pre-school receives support from a Pre-school Learning Alliance development worker and the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a warm, caring environment helping them feel emotionally secure. They enjoy a close relationship with staff, chatting with them easily and are confident to ask for help when they need assistance.

Children's good health is promoted in an environment that is maintained to a good standard of hygiene and cleanliness. There are effective systems to prevent the spread of infection, for example, different coloured cloths and mops for different cleaning tasks. Tables are wiped before and after snack time to ensure children sit to a clean table to eat.

Children take themselves to the toilet, encouraging their independence. They learn the importance of good hygiene through the daily routine. Staff remind children to wash their hands after using the bathroom and they routinely wash their hands before eating their snack. They are reminded to wipe their noses when needed and to dispose of their dirty tissues carefully. Staff provide liquid soap and paper towels, helping to reduce the risk of cross infection.

The provision has written policies that make it clear to parents that they do not care for children who are contagious ensuring other children are not at risk of cross-infection. Children who become poorly whilst attending the group are comforted and made comfortable until their parents are able to collect them.

An effective policy is in place to ensure any required medication is administered safely. Staff obtain prior written permission from parents before administering medicine; this is on a case by case system. Written records are kept of any medication administered and parents sign the entry ensuring they are kept informed. Staff request that parents inform them if any child has been given medicine before attending pre-school, so they have all relevant information if a child becomes poorly. Staff obtain sufficient information from parents about each child's state of health or any medical conditions to enable them to provide an appropriate service.

The manager considers first aid a core qualification and all staff undertake a course as soon as possible after starting work at the pre-school, consequently nearly all staff hold a first aid qualification. There is a first aid kit that a named member of staff checks and replenishes as necessary. They are able to administer first aid to children in the event of an accident or emergency. Staff record any accidents and any first aid that is administered whilst the children are in their care. This results in parents being well informed about what has happened to their child.

All staff are aware of any children with food allergies and are careful that children are not given any foods that may cause an adverse reaction. Staff who prepare the daily snack or tea for the after school club hold a food hygiene certificate ensuring it is prepared carefully to prevent cross infection. Staff provide a good range of healthy snacks; children at the after school club sometimes help staff prepare snacks encouraging them to take an interest in the food they eat. Older children serve themselves at tea time, encouraging their independence. Pre-school children sometimes become restless whilst waiting to eat their snack because they wait too long whilst everyone washes their hands. Children always have access to drinks; there is a water dispenser so they may help themselves whenever they want a drink, preventing de-hydration.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff care for children in a welcoming, secure indoor and outdoor environment. The space is well organised to provide children with a range of play and learning opportunities. There is a good range of equipment that is all well maintained and safe. The room is organised to enable children to access all the resources easily. Images throughout the pre-school reflect diversity positively encouraging children to develop respect and tolerance. There is an office where parents can speak to staff confidentially.

A thorough risk assessment of the premises and outdoor play areas is carried out annually; they also ask a member of the committee to assess the premises as a 'second pair of eyes' to help confirm they have not overlooked anything. The staff undertake daily visual checks to ensure that equipment is in place to ensure children's safety. There are effective systems in place to monitor visitors, and an arrival and collection policy to keep children safe. Fire drills are regularly carried out; staff try to ensure all children are familiar with the procedure to enable a swift evacuation in an emergency.

Induction procedures ensure all staff understand the child protection policy and procedures. Staff are all familiar with signs and symptoms of abuse and know who to contact if they ever have concerns about a child's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children play happily and relate well to one another and staff. The environment is well organised for the younger children; they have lots of opportunities to explore natural materials. Sand and water play is always available and children enjoy experimenting and discovering what they can do, for instance, how far they can pump and spray the water. Children undertake lots of role play enabling them to develop their imagination. The development records for the children under three years old relate to the framework Birth to three matters. Children's next steps are identified and staff include appropriate activities in the plans to aid children's development. Children free-flow between indoors and outdoors; this freedom allows them lots of choice in the activities they undertake.

Children arrive happily at the after school club; there is a family atmosphere and this is very evident at tea time. The children are very companionable; they chat about school, their home lives and take a very active role in organising activities. For example, whilst eating their tea they arranged a badminton tournament, the children are very fair and everyone is invited to play from the youngest to the oldest. They are learning how to co-operate with one another and how to take other people's thoughts and feelings into consideration.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have good knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. They effectively plan activities that follow children's natural interests; covering all six learning areas. Staff maintain the assessment records very well. The records are interesting to read and provide very good evidence of how children are progressing. All staff feed into the plans ensuring that the areas they wish to work upon with individuals are included, enabling children to progress at a pace that suits their individual learning needs.

The interesting and detailed conversations staff have with children is a strength of the pre-school, they seize opportunities throughout the session to extend children's knowledge.

Staff encourage personal independence, for example, children pour their own drinks, serve themselves, and put on their own coats easily. Staff demonstrate particular skill at consulting with children familiarising them with the idea of making their own decisions. Children are developing good listening skills, they are able to sit still and concentrate when appropriate. Children are sociable and are able to take turns when playing games. Children celebrate a variety of different festivals encouraging them to view diversity positively.

Children enjoy in-depth conversations with staff, they relate what they learn at pre-school to the experiences they have at home. The current topic is recycling and children love to share with staff what they understand about recycling, and what their parents have told them. The role play area provides many opportunities for children to expand their vocabulary because staff take a very active part in the children's imaginary games. Staff explore with children the different sounds letters make. Quite a lot of the children can write all or part of their name. Children self register giving them a regular opportunity to recognise their own name. They love story time and can recognise the front cover, the back cover, the spine and the title of the book. They join in excitedly with familiar stories and recognise words that rhyme.

Staff support children's mathematical development; they use regular activities like snack time to count with the children. Most of the children count competently beyond ten. The children measure when they cook and explore volume playing in the water tray. Staff often refer to colours and shapes and children are becoming familiar with the correct mathematical terms and the shape's properties, for example, they know that triangles have three sides, squares have four and rectangles have two long sides and two shorter sides. Understanding how to measure and compare is made fun; they chalk around themselves and staff in the garden to understand the concepts of size.

Staff encourage children to take a keen interest in protecting the environment teaching them about recycling. They examine bugs closely and learn about what they eat and how they live. A child is fascinated to find a shell in the garden and had an interesting conversation with a member of staff about how it may have got there. She helps him find a relevant book teaching children that books are for expanding knowledge as well as for pleasure. Children love to build and make large constructions with milk crates outside. The outside area is used to good effect, children learn how to grow plants and take notice of the weather and the changing seasons. Children use the computer confidently; however, whilst they achieve good mouse control and have some understanding that clicking on the pictures produces certain effects, they do not always understand all aspects of the games.

Children develop good co-ordination and learn how to use tools with increasing control. They mould dough and clay and are able to make recognisable models. The outdoor area provides lots of play in the fresh air; children have good spatial awareness and run around safely. They love to balance on the large tractor tyre and the cylinder and show real perseverance to master this skill. These activities also stimulate their imagination, children pretend there are sharks in the middle of the tyre and are careful not to fall in and get eaten. Children can ride bikes competently; they follow the arrows on the track and learn how co-operating and going in the same direction prevents accidents. Children love to dig and one area of the garden has been left to grow naturally to encourage butterflies and bugs for children to find and examine. There is not much in the way of challenging climbing equipment but they do visit the local park on occasions.

Children enjoy playing musical instruments and are able to play them loudly or quietly. They keep good time to the songs they sing and explore rhythm, tone and pitch. Staff use the instruments as a way of exploring emotions by playing happy and sad music. Staff use humour to good effect, for example, a child is given control of conducting the others playing their instruments by using red and green to stop and start the playing. They really enjoy this game so much that they all end up giggling. The staff create different role play areas; there is an office with a keyboard, phone and printing materials. Children pretend to take messages and write notes, encouraging them to develop their writing skills. Staff often provide everything the children need at the art and craft table. Children have less opportunities to make decisions and self select from a wide range of resources the materials and tools they think they may need to complete a self-chosen project.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The mix of children attending the group is diverse; children celebrate other festivals and their knowledge of other cultures is being extended. Resources and posters about the pre-school reflect our multi-cultural society positively. Staff greet every child on their arrival; the children and parents are familiar with the self-registration system, they come in happily and settle quickly. This method of welcoming the children allows family members and staff to share information easily each day about anything that might influence the children's care.

Staff are aware that some children may have learning difficulties and can identify children who may need additional help. They listen carefully if parents express any concerns about their child and all staff are informed so everyone can be extra observant. The member of staff nominated as the special educational needs co-ordinator is trained to assess children who may have speech and language difficulties. The staff work with other agencies when necessary to benefit children who require additional support.

Children behave very well and show kindness and consideration toward one another. Staff help children to take responsibility for making decisions, they often consult with them asking what they think they should do and then they help them achieve their ideas. Staff are positive role models, they speak to children calmly with respect, understanding and kindness; they take children's age and stage of development into consideration when managing their behaviour. There is a pre-school bear who sometimes accompanies children to the doctors or dentists giving them confidence if they find themselves in an unfamiliar situation. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good. The pre-school have an open door policy and parents are able to visit at any time. There is lots of information available for them about the provision, a notice board, regular newsletters and face to face contact. Photos are used to good effect to demonstrate to parents how the six areas of learning are addressed. Staff encourage parents to look at their children's assessment records regularly; they are able to contribute to their children's records. Staff encourage parents to become involved in their children's learning, they are kept well informed about current topics and there are opportunities to take an active role, for example, they help their children bring in articles of interest from home to discuss. There is a comprehensive complaints procedure; the pre-school keep a complaints log.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The pre-school is well organised; there are comprehensive policies and procedures that are always available for parents to read. The recruitment procedure is robust and all staff are checked by the criminal records bureau. Nearly all staff working with children hold a childcare and first aid qualification. Staff who deliver the Foundation Stage have good knowledge of the curriculum. All mandatory documentation is in place; staff appreciate and understand the importance of confidentiality. Staff relate development records for the youngest children to the framework Birth to three matters.

The leadership and management are good. The staff respect the supervisor and they all work very well as a team. The day runs smoothly; they have an admin assistant who helps organise much of the paperwork. There is a staff appraisal system that identifies training needs; all staff are encouraged to update their knowledge regularly. The staff meet regularly to review their policies and procedures, evaluate how they meet the five outcomes for children and how they deliver the Foundation Stage. They are reflective practitioners who can identify strengths and weaknesses in their practice; they are continually striving to improve the effectiveness of the care and education they provide. They have effective induction procedures but do not yet have a staff handbook. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection five recommendations were made that relate to Standard 3, Standard 6 and Standard 14. It was recommended that the times of arrival and departure of children are recorded in the attendance register; that they obtain written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment; that they ensure that all policies are revisited, reviewed and in line with current guidance; that they plan a range of activities and play opportunities for children attending the after school children club and develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues.

The manager has addressed all these recommendations; the times of attendance are recorded; they have obtained written permission to access emergency medical treatment; the policies are discussed at staff meetings and any necessary changes are made. The manager attended child protection training and cascaded the information to all the staff and child protection is included in staff induction procedures. Activities are planned for the after school club but these remain fluid to enable children to influence the plans.

All the improvements have had a beneficial effect on the operation of the provision and the quality of care for the children.

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):

- review how snack time is managed to prevent children becoming restless whilst they wait for everyone to wash their hands
- continue to write and develop a staff handbook

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):

- encourage children's creativity further by providing more opportunities for children to make decisions and self select from a wide range of resources the materials and tools they think they may need to complete a self-chosen project
- review the software available and ensure children use an appropriate programme for their stage of development

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