

St Barnabas Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	206864
Inspection date	24 May 2007
Inspector	Jean Otter
Setting Address	St Barnabas Church, Pilsley Road, Danesmoor, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S45 9BJ
Telephone number	07813 015817
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Registered person	St Barnabas Pre - School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional 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?

St Barnabas Pre-school opened 1974. It is committee run and is operating temporarily from the Community Resource Centre and Flat in Springvale Close, Danesmoor, Derbyshire, until new premises are completed. The new building is scheduled to be finished in the autumn of 2007. Previously it operated from the church and a detached building in the grounds of St Barnabas Church in Danesmoor.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the setting at any one time. It is open each weekday from 08.30 to 16.00. All children share access to a small secure outdoor play area at the temporary premises and the children are taken out for relevant activities.

There are currently 52 children aged from two to under eight years on roll. Of these, 48 children receive funding for early education. The setting serves the local area and surrounding villages.

The setting employs seven members of staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from varied and nutritious snacks provided by the setting, including a wide variety of fruit. Children who stay all day bring their own packed lunch, and staff are developing their work with parents to advise them of healthy items to include in lunch boxes. Staff comply with any special dietary requirements to ensure children remain healthy. Meal times are relaxed social occasions where children sit and talk together. Water can be independently accessed throughout the day, which ensures children remain hydrated. The importance of personal hygiene is taught through the daily routines and activities, and consequently children know why it is important to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating meals. Extensive procedures are in place that give guidance to staff in health and hygiene matters, which minimises the risk of infection and cross-contamination within the setting. Clear procedures ensure children are given medication safely and the management of accidents has recently been reviewed and improved. Although space is limited in this temporary building, a satisfactory range of physical play experiences are available for the children which helps to develop a positive attitude to exercise, and which supports their physical development. Children have opportunities to go for walks in the local area and play outdoors in the small, secure outdoor area.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

An effective range of safety and security precautions are in place which helps to minimise the risk of accidental injury and harm to children. For example, both entrances to the premises are secure, emergency evacuation procedures are clearly displayed and safety gates ensure children cannot access areas that may be unsafe. Frequent risk assessments and daily checks on the premises and equipment positively promote the well-being of the children. Daily registers are accurate and reflect the times the children arrive and depart, which is particularly important in a setting where they can attend for sessions or for full day care. Staff are vigilant at all times and children are well supervised. A late collection policy is in place that minimises anxiety, and procedures are in place for if a child is lost, however, the procedures are not clear as to how soon the police are called, which may be detrimental to children's safety. Equipment and resources are of good quality, are safe and meet the needs of the full range of children attending. Children benefit because staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the protection of children. They have a secure understanding of current Local Area Safeguarding Children Committee guidelines and training for staff in this area is ongoing.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident within the setting and they enjoy their time there. They benefit from familiar routines which are well organised and activities that they enjoy are well presented. An effective key worker system ensures that children's welfare and development is monitored effectively. The interaction between staff and children is very positive. Staff are sensitive to the children's needs and provide help and support appropriately to encourage their emotional well-being. Children's personal independence is nurtured well, for example they pour their own drinks at snack time. They are learning good social skills such as being caring towards each other and sharing their toys and resources. Children know how to behave appropriately and listen carefully to instructions from staff. A wide range of interesting experiences and activities

are planned which supports learning through play. Staff are using the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan activities for the children under three years and detailed observations and assessments are completed to help plan for all children's next steps in learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making consistent progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have good knowledge of how children learn and use the stepping stones to clearly identify children's achievements. Planning is good, and ensures a range of activities and experiences are provided to extend children's learning. Observations and assessments are used to inform planning for the next steps in children's learning and support the provision of activities that are sufficiently challenging. Staff engage well in children's play and they work well together as a team, sharing aspects of planning. Deployment of staff is effective and ensures children are fully supported during their play. Staff use good communication skills with the children, encouraging them to problem solve and make decisions. They ask open ended questions and introduce new concepts and language spontaneously during activities which extends the children's vocabulary. Staff provide opportunities for children to become independent learners and there are ample opportunities for free play. Focused activities are introduced to assess and promote specific areas of development. Children are eager and motivated to learn, they form good relationships with staff and their peers which helps to promote a sense of belonging. Behaviour is well managed which results in a calm and caring environment for the children.

Children's achievements in speaking and listening are good and they have opportunities to speak out in a familiar group which promotes their self-confidence. Children listen to and join in with stories, and sing their favourite songs and rhymes. The setting has a good selection of books, however, they are not promoted sufficiently well in all areas to encourage the children to use them spontaneously and with interest. Library books supplement their own selection. Children are beginning to recognise familiar words and are learning that print carries meaning. They have good opportunities to see print within the setting via labels at the children's height. Staff frequently introduce new words into the children's vocabulary and link the word with the object whenever possible.

Children are using numbers well. They count reliably to 10 and many children can count beyond this figure. The use of numbers threads through many activities and they have regular opportunities to develop simple calculation skills, for example through number rhymes. A computer and various manufactured toys are available for children to learn Information and Communication Technology. Children are learning concepts such as 'bigger' and 'smaller', 'big one' and 'little one', 'light' and 'heavy'. The introduction of shapes is also good, children know familiar shapes such as circle, square and triangle.

There are good opportunities for children to develop their awareness of the environment and the world in which they live, for example children are able to observe the progress of their new pre-school premises by site visits, taking photographs and doing activities that relate to the project. The various projects help children to extend their learning in that particular subject and staff ensure that children have good opportunities to consolidate their topic learning. Visitors to the setting include the local vicar and road safety officer which enhances the children's awareness of the local community and the wider world.

Children move confidently, are developing good co-ordination skills and learning to move their bodies in different ways. They can march in time to the musical instruments and bend and

stretch to touch various body parts in songs and games. They are developing fine manipulative skills as they learn to handle a range of tools and small equipment. Children are learning the importance of being healthy, they wash their hands before they eat and staff talk to children about germs on their hands and wiping their noses with a tissue.

Children use a good range of different materials to develop their creativity and imagination. They explore texture through various materials, for example, during the 'testing textures' activity, and have the opportunity for free expression as well as more organised creative opportunities. Painting, drawing and colouring, and sand and water play is regularly available and children are encouraged to name a wide range of colours during everyday activities. Staff extend creative play, for example, by introducing various ways of using paint, such as finger painting, marble painting, and string painting. Many varied opportunities are available for children to use their imagination, for example during role play scenarios such as 'the vet' and 'the garden centre'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a supportive and caring environment where they settle well and play happily together. There is free choice of toys and activities which fosters their independence and decision making skills. Children develop their sensitivity through discussion about what is kind and unkind, they learn to take turns, share their toys and develop good manners. Praise and encouragement is used by staff to promote children's self-esteem, their contributions are valued and good work and behaviour is acknowledged. Good relationships are developing with adults and other children, in a setting where staff work with parents and carers to meet individual children's needs. Children behave well in response to clear boundaries set by staff. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are welcomed into the setting and staff are committed to the full inclusion of all children. Children's awareness of the wider society is introduced through a range of planned activities. A satisfactory range of resources are available which give children a balanced view of the world and supports their learning in this area. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. New parents receive written information in the form of a prospectus, which informs them of how the setting operates, and includes a written complaints procedure. The setting responds appropriately to parental concerns, however, the recording of such concerns does not currently include the date which the concern was received, or when the response to the concern was made. Staff work closely with parents to ensure their child's needs are met and, as a consequence, children settle and progress well. Daily verbal feedback ensures parents are informed about what their child has been doing whilst attending the setting, and this can take a written form if parents prefer. Planning for the younger children is supported by the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff have adapted the activities to ensure the emotional, intellectual, physical and social development of the younger children is embraced within the setting. Key workers have a good knowledge of the needs of the children under three years. The partnership with parents who receive nursery education funding is good. They receive information about the educational programme via the prospectus and are kept well informed of their child's progress. Curriculum planning is comprehensive and available for parents to view. Parents are encouraged to share their knowledge about their children with staff and have opportunities to play an active part in the management of the group.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by staff who are qualified, have relevant experience and childcare knowledge. They demonstrate a good understanding of the needs of all children to promote their well-being. All staff have been appropriately vetted, and are encouraged to undertake further training which in turn benefits the quality of care and experiences for the children. Staff are very approachable, and children are confident to ask questions and request support, which is freely given. Children benefit from a familiar and consistent routine which helps them to feel secure in the setting. Staff have a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and how to implement these in practice. Staff have met the challenge to organise space and resources successfully in this temporary setting. They work well together to ensure the smooth running of the facility and to minimise disruption to the children's well-being during this time. Most policies and procedures are robust, and support the care, safety and welfare of the children. An accurate record is maintained of children's attendance.

Leadership and management of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. The manager has a good understanding of the children's learning and developmental needs. She provides a good role model for the staff team, is enthusiastic, and includes them in decision making regarding the running of the setting. A system of observation and assessment is in place, and staff are using these to inform planning for the next steps in children's learning. The educational provision is monitored and evaluated to ensure the curriculum is being delivered effectively, which promotes the progress of the children. Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and systems are in place which provide them with good direction and support.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last nursery education inspection the setting was asked to address three key issues: to introduce a rigorous system to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching; to make the learning objectives clear in the plans and to ensure these are used so that assessments inform future planning, and finally, to increase the knowledge and understanding of staff to use activities and routines to help children develop their understanding of number through practical problem solving, to increase their awareness of linking sounds to letters and words, and improve their handling of books in a variety of situations.

The setting has made improvements to most of the identified key issues. The deputy manager is responsible for all aspects of planning and works closely with the staff team to ensure the quality of teaching is monitored and evaluated. Issues are raised during team meetings and/or at individual supervision sessions. The learning objectives are clear and understood and are being used effectively to inform future planning. Good use is made during routines and activities to help children develop their use of number through practical problem solving, for example staff ask children how many plates they need today at snack time. However, books are not promoted sufficiently well in all areas to encourage spontaneous handling and a further recommendation has been raised in relation to this.

At the last care inspection several recommendations were raised, some of which are no longer applicable as they related to the previous premises which have now been demolished. Remaining

recommendations asked that the fire evacuation drills be evaluated, the wording with regard to staff checks in the child protection information given to parents is amended, and that reference is made to the regulator and the Criminal Records Bureau.

All the recommendations raised have been addressed. The fire evacuation drills are recorded and evaluated. The manager has very robust procedures in place regarding this. The child protection policy is also robust and correctly worded. Information is given to parents that includes the contact address and telephone number of the regulator.

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):

- ensure the lost child procedures reflect appropriately at what point the police need to be involved
- ensure the date of any complaint received from parents is recorded, together with the date of the response.

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):

- promote the use of books to ensure children handle them regularly and staff encourage maximum interest in this area.

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