

Ilketshall Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY234676 |
| Inspection date | 04 July 2007 |
| Inspector | Gill Thornton |
| Setting Address | Ilketshall St Lawrence School, Hoggs Lane, Beccles, Suffolk, NR34 8ND |
| Telephone number | 01986 781315 |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | Ilketshall 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 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?

Ilkeshall Pre-School is managed by a voluntary management committee made up of parents of children at the pre-school and members of the local community. It opened in 2002 and operates from the nursery classroom at Ilkeshall St Lawrence Primary School near Bungay, Suffolk. A maximum of 13 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open five days a week during term time only from 12.45 to 15.15. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school serves the local area.

There are currently 15 children aged from two to four years on roll. Of these, nine children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school employs two staff, who both hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted as staff follow correct procedures that are documented and shared with parents. A sickness policy ensures children are protected from cross-infection and cared for appropriately should they become ill. Positive steps are taken to promote children's understanding of good health and hygiene practices and to encourage them to manage their own personal needs. Children receive appropriate care in the event of an accident as a well-stocked first aid kit is easily accessible and a member of staff with a current first aid certificate is always present.

Snack time is social occasion when children all sit down together to enjoy a healthy snack brought from home and they pour themselves a drink of either milk or water. However, children do not have free access to drinking water throughout the session to ensure they do not become dehydrated. Children's dietary requirements are recorded on their registration forms to ensure their individual needs and preferences are respected.

Children benefit from regular access to the fresh air and exercise in the enclosed nursery garden and the school grounds, they especially enjoy the excitement of running about in the small wooded area. They have access to a range of equipment, such as ride-on toys, climbing equipment and bats and balls, to develop their physical skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a bright and welcoming environment that is well-maintained and decorated with posters and examples of their artwork. The premises are clean and well organised into clearly defined areas that are comfortable and inviting, consequently children feel relaxed and at home. Resources are stored at low-level which promotes children's independence as they freely access their chosen toys to support their play. Toys and equipment are safe and suitable and provide children with a balanced range of activities to support their play and learning.

The premises are secure and sound arrival and departure procedures are followed by parents and staff to promote children's safety. Staff supervise children closely during their play, especially when playing outside. They carry out visual safety checks while preparing the room before the children's arrival, with risk assessments seen as the responsibility of the school. However, a gap in the fencing in the wooded area potentially compromises children's safety as they could leave the school grounds unsupervised.

Children are cared for by adults who are vetted and have relevant experience, knowledge and skills to promote their welfare. They are protected because staff understand their role in safeguarding children which is underpinned by relevant training. Appropriate documentation is available to ensure correct procedures can be put into place should a concern arise.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive happy and settle enthusiastically into their chosen activity. They form good relationships with each other and eagerly greet their friends as they arrive, excitedly showing them what they are doing, for example, when playing with the ice in the water tray. Children are confident and can play well on their own or with others. Staff are supportive and caring towards the children and take time to listen to them, this helps children develop their sense of self-worth as they know staff value their contributions. Staff show genuine enjoyment in children's play, laughing together with them, for example, when some paint was spilt on the floor.

The organisation of activities and routines of the session encourage children to initiate their own play and follow their own interests as they freely chose to spend their time engaged in activities that interest and motivate them. The daily routine has a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated play which promotes a relaxed atmosphere in which children learn well and make good progress. Children enjoy using their imagination while playing in the well-resourced home corner where they re-enact familiar scenarios, such as making cups of tea and toast for each other.

All children enjoy coming together for well planned, whole group activities, confidently offering their own ideas, for example, when using the 'share and tell sack'. Staff use 'Birth to three matters' effectively when planning activities to meet the needs of younger children and record their progress using photographs and meaningful observations based on the framework.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching provides realistic challenges for all children. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn and they use this to provide a broad range of stimulating play and learning opportunities to motivate and extend children's learning. Planning is balanced across the areas of learning and based upon appropriate stepping stones. Short term plans build upon children's interests from the previous week to consolidate their learning, with focused activities showing adaptation and evaluation. Assessment is thorough, regularly evaluated and used effectively as a guide to planning.

Staff support children well during activities and use an effective range of teaching strategies to encourage children's interest and participation. Varied and interesting teaching techniques are employed to meet different learning styles and capture children's interest. For example, skilfully using open-ended questioning or deliberately saying the wrong word in a sentence to encourage children's thought processes. Ongoing training enables staff to be innovative and creative, for example, introducing strategies learnt at a music workshop to promote children's participation during music and movement sessions. Staff manage children's behaviour well, giving good explanations and using praise to reinforce positive behaviour.

Children form positive relationships with staff and each other, chatting happily during their play while sharing news and ideas. They develop their independence and self-care skills, for example, when washing up their cup after snack time. Children are confident to initiate conversation with adults and their peers and offer their own comments and ideas. They are making good progress in their early writing skills and they ascribe meaning to marks. Their interest in the initial letters of their names has been stimulated through forming letter signs

while singing a 'Hello' song using 'Makaton'. Children listen and respond with enjoyment to books, recalling elements of the story and joining in appropriately, for example, saying 'Poor little bear'.

Children use mathematical language during their play and staff encourage their counting skills and number recognition. Some children can count confidently to 10 and above, for example, while playing hide and seek in the woods. They take part in number rhymes and have access to resources such as 'Compare Bears' and games to develop their sorting and matching skills. However, their interest in simple calculation and problem solving is not fully extended during their play.

Children enjoy the freedom to explore and experiment using all of their senses with a range of materials. They observe and comment on change when they eagerly offer their own ideas, for example, suggesting why the ice has melted. Children develop their competence at using the computer using child-friendly equipment and confidently follow the instructions from computer programmes. They have many opportunities to learn about living things such as growing plants and vegetables in the garden and can recall why bees collect pollen. They delighted in a visit from the 'Creepy Crawly Roadshow' and refer to 'Malcolm the Millipede' during their play.

Children display good dexterous skills as they use scissors and glue. They roll and manipulate dough with care, making specific shapes using careful and thoughtful movements, for example, making 'buns' from playdough mixed with porridge oats. Children enthusiastically take part in well planned music and movement sessions in the school hall. They respond rhythmically to instructions, moving their bodies in a variety of ways, such as waving scarves in time to the music. They use props such, as puppets and 'Teddy Bears' brought from home, to support their wide repertoire of songs and use instruments competently to make different sounds and rhythms.

Children make good use of imaginative language during their play and use their imagination in planned and spontaneous events supported by available resources and materials, for example, to act out the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. They develop their creativity while exploring colour and texture as they freely access the painting easel and experiment with a range of collage materials.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued as individuals and are able to make positive choices and decisions during their time at the pre-school to develop their confidence and self-esteem. They enjoy celebrating events in each others lives and proudly point to photographs of themselves on display, which helps them to develop a sense of belonging to the group. Sound procedures are in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the group works in partnership with parents and other professionals to ensure children's specific needs are met.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered as they are learning to respect each others similarities and differences and to use simple sign language. They have access to some resources reflecting a positive view of diversity and gain an understanding of the wider world through topics and discussions during their play. Children behave well as they know what is expected of them. They are learning to show concern for others and staff thank children for being kind and thoughtful, this use of positive praise reinforces their understanding

of good behaviour. Children develop a sense of pride as they take responsibility for certain jobs, for example, helping to carry resources over to the school hall.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff have built a good rapport with parents and exchange information verbally on a daily basis to ensure children's changing needs are met and to ensure continuity of care. Parents are well informed about the Foundation Stage and 'Birth to three matters' and share in their children's records of achievement. This gives them a good understanding of the progress made by their children, in addition, staff provide parents with ideas of how to support their children's learning at home. Staff encourage parents to share their knowledge of their children, however, there is no formal system in place to gather information on their children's starting point to support their initial learning needs. Parents value staff's advice and support and comment on how much their children enjoy coming to the pre-school. All the required documentation and consents are in place to ensure children are cared for according to their parents' wishes.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The good organisation of time, space and resources ensures children's needs are met and helps them make good progress. Sound appointment and recruitment procedures ensure children are protected and cared for by qualified staff with a sound knowledge and understanding of child development. Staff work well together as a successful team, they are aware of each others roles and are effectively deployed throughout the session to contribute to children's good health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting. Clear routines and procedures help children settle well and become confident. Overall, children's needs are met.

All the required operational policies and procedures are in place to support children's care, welfare and play, although some require updating to ensure they reflect current practice. The required documentation is maintained to ensure children receive appropriate care, although medication and accident records are not recorded confidentially.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. The manager is a good role model and sets clear direction with a vision of providing high quality nursery education to help children make good progress towards the early learning goals. The strong committee of parents supports staff in identifying areas for improvement and future development. The manager effectively monitors and evaluates the provision for nursery education and actively follows guidance from the support teacher to enhance children's learning. The group have successfully applied for funding to improve the range of toys and resources to support children's play and learning.

Improvements since the last inspection

At their last inspection the provider was asked to provide staff with job descriptions and implement a system of staff appraisals. Job descriptions are now in place and a system of staff appraisals has been implemented to identify strengths and weaknesses and areas for professional development to improve staff effectiveness and the quality of teaching and learning. They also agreed to provide children with resources promoting positive images of disability. The group obtained some posters and small world figures and have since received a substantial grant to purchase further resources reflecting diversity to help children learn to appreciate and value each others' similarities and differences.

The provider was also asked to ensure that children had access to drinking water throughout the session. The group purchased a water dispenser for the children to use, but staff felt the children were not capable of using it and a jug of water was made available during the session. This has since been overlooked and therefore remains an area for improvement.

The group also agreed to make improvements to documentation and parental consents. They have since developed an outings policy and now request consent from parents to administer medication and seek emergency medical advice or treatment, therefore enhancing children's health and welfare. They were also asked to develop children's assessment records and involve parents in their children's learning. Comprehensive observations based on the Foundation Stage and 'Birth to three matters' are now used to form a meaningful record of children's time at the setting. These are formally shared with parents during termly coffee afternoons and parents know they can ask to see them at any time. In addition, regular newsletters keep parents informed about topics, consequently enhancing parents involvement in their children's learning.

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):

- provide children with free access to drinking water throughout the session
- ensure regular risk assessments are carried out on all areas used by the children, in particular the security of the fencing in the 'wooded area'
- review system of recording accidents and medication administered to ensure confidentiality is respected and update operational policies and procedures to ensure they reflect current 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):

- provide more opportunities for children to develop their simple problem solving skills during everyday activities
- develop opportunities for parents to share information on their children's starting point.

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