

Combe Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	133487
Inspection date	08 February 2008
Inspector	Gillian Little
Setting Address	Methodist School Room, Park Road, Combe, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX29 8NQ
Telephone number	01993 898813
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Registered person	Combe 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?

Combe Pre-School opened in 1968 and is managed by a parent committee. It operates from a Methodist school room in the village of Combe near Witney. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The group serves the local area and surrounding villages.

The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 11:45. A lunch club is available from 11:45 until 13:00 on Mondays and Thursdays.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 21 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 17 children receive funding for nursery education.

The pre-school employs three staff all of whom hold appropriate level three early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a further qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's risk of infection is minimal as the premises are clean, staff store food safely and there are hygienic procedures in place for nappy changing and hand washing. Children learn to wash their hands thoroughly with soap under close supervision of staff and they have easy access to paper towels from a low-level dispenser.

Children benefit from daily opportunities for physical play and have free access to the adjacent outdoor area for about an hour each session. They enjoy making up their own games, such as pushing and pulling each other in a wheeled box, and staff offer challenges, such as trying to weave cars in and out of cones or building a tower from bricks, to further develop children's physical skills.

Effective procedures are in place to ensure that children receive appropriate care in the event of an illness or accident. For example, children's health records are in place and easily accessible, and staff hold appropriate first aid certificates.

Children receive a healthy diet and have regular meals and snacks times. They enjoy a good variety of fruits and low sugar carbohydrates such as apples, grapes, pitta bread and crumpets. Parents supply packed lunches and staff effectively encourage children to eat the healthy items first. A jug of water and plastic cups are easily accessible to children at all times. Mealtimes are relaxed and social occasions where staff sit with children and engage them in interesting discussions to develop their learning.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are able to play comfortably in a welcoming environment. A spacious main room is available with a good range of resources easily accessible to children. A smaller adjacent room is available for quiet activities with a book corner, a rug and cushions, making it cosy and inviting.

Children's risk of injury is minimal as staff assess risks well and take effective precautions to prevent accidents. For example, they ensure that the main door is secure during sessions and that children do not have access to the kitchen. Staff supervise children well at all times to ensure their safety. Resources and equipment available to children are safe for them to use as staff clean and check them regularly. Very well organised risk assessments ensure that staff carry out effective checks on a daily, weekly, termly and annual basis as necessary. Effective fire prevention and evacuation procedures are in place. For example, a fire extinguisher is easily accessible and exit signs are clearly displayed. Staff practise fire drills with children regularly to help them learn about safe evacuation.

The outdoor area is fully enclosed and free from hazards. Staff ensure that a security lock prevents children from opening the gate and that an adult is outside with the children at all times. Staff are very familiar with procedures for taking children on outings, such as increasing the adult to child ratio and teaching children that if the whistle is blown it is a sign of danger and they must pay attention.

Children's risk of harm from others is minimised as staff are familiar with possible symptoms of child abuse and have a good understanding of their role in child protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children show a keen interest in what they do and develop a wide range of skills as there is a stimulating range of activities for all ages. Children settle quickly on their arrival in the group and enjoy exploring small world resources, such as a garage and cars and a dolls house with furniture, as well as jigsaws, books, dressing up clothes, a home corner and computer games. Staff warmly welcome children into the group and engage keenly in their play using lots of planned and incidental opportunities to develop children's learning across the curriculum. Staff are very aware of children's different ages and abilities and they adapt activities in discussions effectively. For example, they ask younger children which sound their names start with and older children which sound their names end with. Staff make initial and regular assessments about children's progress and ensure that planning covers activities suitable for all ages and levels of ability.

Children are interested and engaged in their play throughout the sessions. They are attentive when listening to stories and taking part in group times and they keenly join in with conversations and group discussions. They are very confident in asking for additional resources to extend their play, such as a doctor's bag and toolkit to use in their imaginative play outside. Staff are very accommodating in helping children to do this, giving them good opportunities to further develop their learning.

Children show that they are happy and settled as they are able to develop good relationships with staff and with other children. Staff are calm and patient which creates a pleasant and settled atmosphere.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children have good opportunities to develop independence, such as hanging up their coats and bags as they arrive in the group, pouring their own drinks at snack time and clearing away their dishes. They effectively develop language skills as they confidently find their name labels, enjoy listening to stories read expressively by staff and have good opportunities to express their ideas and offer opinions. They show good progress in mathematical development as they count confidently in a variety of situations, such as collecting the correct number of plates to set the table at snack time, counting the number of children present at registration and counting the pictures set out on a number card. They talk confidently about shapes, describing how many sides a shape has, whether the sides are long or short, and are able to recognise the names of some solid shapes, such as a pyramid and cube.

Children effectively learn about technology as a computer is easily accessible and staff teach children to use the different keys so that they understand how to delete or use the space bar. Children enjoy good opportunities to engage in creative play such as painting, baking, making models and role play, such as a doctor's surgery and garage.

Staff ensure that there is a good balance of adult and child initiated activities and they vary activities effectively according to the children's interests. They ensure that resources are easily accessible so that children can develop their learning as they wish and they effectively engage

in children's play to take advantage of learning opportunities. They make regular and effective assessments of children's progress towards the early learning goals and use these to plan children's next steps in learning. Planning is well organised, covers all areas of learning, is easily accessible for all staff to use and shows how staff can adapt activities to suit individual children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children behave well and effectively learn about responsible behaviour. For example, staff are kind and caring and they remind children about pre-school rules in a very positive way. Staff act as good role models and effectively support children in sharing resources and in developing respect for others, which encourages children to develop positive social skills. Children develop positive attitudes towards diversity as they have access to a range of resources reflecting people from different backgrounds and they celebrate a range of festivals including Chinese New Year, Divali and Holi. Staff ensure that all children are treated with equal concern as they are very attentive and caring towards all the children in their care. They know children well, such as their home backgrounds, friendships and favourite activities, and are therefore able to meet their individual needs effectively. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is therefore fostered.

There are currently no children on roll with learning difficulties and/or disabilities but there are suitable procedures in place to provide appropriate care when necessary. For example, a written policy is in place and staff have appropriate training and experience to support children.

Children benefit from good continuity between the home and the pre-school as staff develop positive relationships with parents. For example, an active committee is in place and the parent rota system is very well supported. Parents comment favourably about the staff's relationships with their children and their effective skills in helping children to develop their learning. Parents have good information about the pre-school and about their children's development as there is an informative prospectus in place, all parents receive copies of the group's policies and parent evenings are regularly held to discuss children's progress. For parents of children receiving nursery education the partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents state that children are enthusiastic about their learning and quickly develop new skills. Staff encourage parents to support children at home, for example, by contributing items to reflect the letter or shape of the week, and by asking children open-ended questions to encourage discussion.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are able to make good progress as staff have a strong sense of purpose, keeping children safe, providing a caring environment and a range of stimulating activities. Staff use resources and time well to ensure a good balance and variety of experiences depending on children's individual needs and levels of development. All staff hold level three child-care qualifications ensuring that they have the necessary skills to support children effectively. Staff have good opportunities to attend further training and a regular appraisal system ensures that training needs are identified effectively.

Effective recruitment and vetting procedures are in place to ensure that all staff working with children are suitable to do so. A formal induction process ensures that new staff receive appropriate support to help them carry out their role effectively. Staff maintain the adult to child ratios at all times to ensure that children are well supervised and supported. Documentation,

policies and procedures are well organised, easily accessible to staff and parents where appropriate, and work well in practice. The operational plan clearly shows how the pre-school is organised although the group have not yet updated information about new staff and committee members. Well-documented action plans show how the pre-school has met all recommendations from the last inspection. The pre-school staff and committee are able to evaluate their practice accurately.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Staff work well together as a team and have clear responsibilities. They evaluate plans regularly and organise planning and assessments effectively. The new manager has introduced a range of effective changes to support individual children and has further plans to develop the educational programme in the future.

The pre-school meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the pre-school was asked to ensure that fresh drinking water is available to children at all times. A jug of water and plastic cups are now available at all times on a low-level table for children to access easily.

The pre-school was also asked to formulate an induction process for new staff, ensure that details of public liability insurance are available for inspection and review and update the fire procedure in line with the group's recent changes. An induction process is now in place which effectively supports new staff in their care of children and the fire procedure is now updated which contributes to safe evacuation. The public liability insurance certificate is now displayed in the group and is therefore easily available for inspection.

At the last education inspection the pre-school was asked to extend opportunities for learning taking into account children's individual needs and abilities. The staff now include details in their written plans of how to support children of different abilities and are skilled at adapting activities depending on children's needs.

The pre-school was also asked to review the use of space and resources to provide additional opportunities for learning and independence. The pre-school now has a different layout and resources are easily accessible to children. Child led activities are included in written plans and the outdoor play area is available daily. This all increases opportunities for children to develop their learning and independence effectively.

The pre-school was also asked to develop the management of activities to improve outcomes for children. The pre-school has purchased a variety of resources and rearranged the layout of the rooms to effectively improve outcomes for children.

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.

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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):

- update the operational plan with details of new staff and committee members.

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):

- continue with self-identified plans to further develop the educational programme.

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