

# Minus Five Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 120127  
**Inspection date** 27 September 2007  
**Inspector** Patricia Jane Daniels

**Setting Address** The Pavilion, Victory Park, Addlestone, Surrey, KT15 2EW

**Telephone number** 01932 820811

**E-mail**

**Registered person** Minus Five 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](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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Minus 5 Pre-school has been registered since 1970 and is committee owned. It operates from two rooms in the Pavilion, in Victory Park, Addlestone. Kitchen and bathroom facilities are available. Children make use of the park and tennis courts for outdoor play. The group serves the local community.

There are currently 33 children on roll. This includes 17 children in receipt of funded education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group has experience of caring for children who have learning difficulties.

The Pre school opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 hours until 12:25 hours and 12:30 hours until 14:55 hours.

Five members of staff work with the children. Three members of staff have a recognised early years' qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good hygiene through the daily routines at the pre-school. They wash their hands before eating and notices are displayed by the snack table and in the toilet area as reminders. This together with the staff's good practices prevents the spread of infection. Sick children are excluded until they are no longer contagious, in line with recommended exclusion times displayed for parents' information. Staff have training to administer first aid to children in the event of an accident.

Very young children attend the afternoon session, which offers a quieter environment so that staff can offer extra emotional support. The children have opportunities to rest and sleep, if needed.

Snack time is a social occasion; children and staff sit together and talk about general topics. Children help to prepare the range of fruit provided for snack time. This nourishing snack helps them to develop healthy eating habits from an early age. Drinking water is always available and children can help themselves whenever they are thirsty. This encourages them to think about their personal needs and promotes independence.

Children play outside daily in the park area, playground or tennis courts. They enjoy running around in the fresh air and kicking the footballs to each other. They practise throwing and catching balls with the staff and wave streamers around to watch the effect of the wind. The range of activities develops all aspects of their physical skills. The children use a range of equipment independently and with support, such as scissors, pencils, rolling pins and cutters.

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

The provision is good.

Children have use of a messy playroom and the larger main room. The main room is divided into activity areas and the soft furnishings in the book corner provide opportunities for children to relax or read in comfort. Children can move around between the rooms independently and play safely. Toys and equipment are in good condition.

Staff undertake a visual check of the premises every day and the manager is developing a formal risk assessment to record checks made. The main entrance door is kept locked at all times to prevent unwanted access from visitors and to keep children secure. Staff are vigilant when taking children outside to play. They ask owners to restrain any dogs in the area. Children each hold a ring on a rope as they walk from the pavilion to the play areas, to keep them safe. Fire drills are held once a term, but this is not frequently enough for all children to experience the evacuation procedure. Children develop an awareness of safety through explanations from staff. For example, they learn how to use the sellotape dispenser safely and not to run indoors.

Staff have a good understanding of their responsibility to safeguard the children in their care. They all receive training in this area and know the procedures to follow if they have any child protection concerns. Parents are informed of the staff's responsibilities in the information brochure. The children's welfare is promoted.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children willingly come into the group and quickly settle to play. Younger children who have difficulty separating from their parents are reassured gently. Positive relationships have developed between staff and children. This helps young children develop social relationships and supports their communication skills. A range of activities is presented for the children's selection. The range is adapted to suit the younger group attending the afternoon session. Activities are age appropriate, but do not always offer challenges to extend the children's play and learning. Observations of young children are not used to inform and plan the next stages in their learning.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning and provide activities to help children learn through first hand experiences. Activities link to a theme, to consolidate the children's learning. For example, the theme of the week is the colour orange and this is reflected in the art and craft activities and in the colour of the play dough. However, planning does not clearly identify the learning outcome, or offer suggestions for support or extension, according to children's abilities. Observations of children's abilities are not always recorded and used to plan the next steps of learning. As a result, children are not always challenged within activities and staff do not always have high expectations of what the children can achieve. Staff ask open-ended questions to help children think and extend their understanding. Sometimes the staff tend to focus on the children making a specific end product, rather than following the children's direction within a play activity.

Children talk enthusiastically about special interests or events at home. They are beginning to form friendship groups and play together cooperatively. They show pride in their achievements, for example, when successfully using scissors to cut paper. Children enjoy listening to stories and join in with songs, such as 'wind the bobbin up'. Some children can recognise the rhythm of the songs and play their musical instruments in time. Children are beginning to link sounds and letters together, for example, when they write their names on the wipe board. They enjoy a range of books and choose their favourites to take home. Children's hand-eye coordination is developing as they use a range of tools, such as glue sticks and paintbrushes. This helps them to acquire the skills needed for handwriting.

Daily activities such as counting the number of children present help the children's mathematical development. The children willingly attempt to count the number of name cards and bowls. Some children use number names spontaneously during play. For example, they recognise number shapes presented in the sand tray. Children learn to calculate how many bowls are needed at snack time and to recognise when there is more than the number needed. They talk about shapes and biggest and smallest when playing with the shape puzzle.

Children learn about changes to jelly, when the staff show them liquid and set orange jelly during the session. They enjoy designing models in the messy playroom and use the computer mouse to drag and paint pictures. Children talk about the weather and the days of the week at circle time. They go on nature walks within the park, to learn about the environment.

Children have daily opportunities to design and make models and collages using a variety of resources, in the messy room. This is a very popular area and the children spend time concentrating on their chosen tasks. They investigate the sounds made by musical instruments

and join in with songs. Children use their imagination during play. Several children play together pretending to be cats, while one child 'gives them milk' using the plates from the kitchen role-play area.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

All children have their own labelled coat pegs, to help them feel a sense of belonging within the pre-school. The youngest children are grouped together and attend sessions in the afternoons. This helps them settle more easily, within a smaller group. Children learn about different cultures by celebrating a variety of festivals, such as Divali, thanksgiving and Christmas. Resources such as dressing up clothes and small world toys reflect diversity during children's everyday play. There are systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Liaison with parents and outside agencies ensures that children's needs are met.

Children learn to share toys and equipment and they are praised for their good behaviour. Staff use positive strategies to help children learn right from wrong. Sometimes, staff remind children of the rules for behaviour but do not ensure that they are followed. This can give some children inconsistent messages about the acceptable boundaries. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are happy with the service provided by the pre-school and speak highly about the group. They receive information about the group in a brochure, which contains outlines of policies and a brief guide to the Foundation Stage. Regular newsletters inform parents of the themes for the week and term dates. Children's files containing records of their achievements are sent home at the end of their time at the pre-school. However, parents do not receive regular formal updates on their children's progress and do not contribute to a baseline assessment of their abilities.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The recruitment and induction procedure ensures that staff are suitable to care for children. Regular staff appraisals help to identify strengths and training needs. All staff have the opportunity to attend workshops and training courses, to keep up to date with current practice. Staff are deployed to have responsibilities for certain activities within the session and a key worker system is in place. There is no system for using the Birth to three matters framework to plan activities for younger children. A baseline assessment of young children's abilities is not made and observations of all children's abilities are not used to plan the next steps in learning. The new manager has identified these areas for improvement and has taken steps to implement the changes needed.

All required documentation is in place. However, there are some omissions in obtaining written parental consent to seek emergency treatment and for photographs and outdoor play. A range of written policies informs daily practice within the pre-school; the chairperson reviews this annually. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The manager has identified the need to improve planning for the Foundation Stage as a priority and is developing a system to support this. She has an action plan in place for other aspects, such as incorporating more print and labels into the children's environment. Staff meetings are held regularly, so that all staff can exchange

information about children and contribute to the planning process. These steps taken by the manager indicate her commitment to improvement.

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

At the previous inspection, Ofsted requested that the pre-school should make several improvements. Children have more independence because they now help with the preparation of fruit for snack time and can pour themselves a drink of water when they choose. More resources to reflect the diversity within society have been provided. Documentation is in place and staff have updated their knowledge of the procedures to safeguard the children. These actions have improved the care for children within the pre-school.

### **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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### **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):

- practise the fire drill frequently enough for all children to experience
- implement a system for recording observations of children's abilities and use this to plan the next steps in their learning (this also applies to nursery education)
- ensure that written parental consent is in place for all relevant procedures

#### **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):

- implement a system for planning that clearly identifies specific learning outcomes and that demonstrates support and extension within activities
- implement a system to inform parents about their children's abilities and progress

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)