

Play Centre Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	113651
Inspection date	29 November 2007
Inspector	Jill Steer
Setting Address	102 The Street, Rustington, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN16 3NJ
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Registered person	The Trustees of Arun Community Church
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?

Play Centre Pre-School is run by a committee. It was registered in 1992 and operates from Arun community Church in Rustington. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.05 to 12.00 and from 12.45 to 15.30 during term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 36 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 21 children receive funding for early education. Children attend from the surrounding area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties.

The pre-school employs eight members of staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children have the opportunity to enjoy active play every day, making good use of the large outdoor space. Whatever the weather, children are encouraged to venture outside, suitably dressed. Children demonstrate real pleasure in outdoor play as they pedal bikes around the windy pathway and put fallen apples in the wheelbarrows which they carefully balance as they push them along. Children use tools with skill. For example, they dig in the ground with trowels and are able to cut competently as they are provided with good quality scissors.

A tasty selection of snacks such as crumpets, toast, crackers and fresh fruit are all available for the children to choose from. The setting promotes a rolling snack system for children to eat and drink at their own discretion, which allows them to make choices for themselves. Children spread their own choice of toppings and assist staff in cutting up the fruit, skilfully using the knives and staff discuss healthy food with the children, emphasising how appetising the food is which encourages them as they eat. Drinks are freely available and children can pour their own drink from jugs of water whenever they want to drink, including outdoors, ensuring they remain hydrated.

Children are able to go to the toilet independently and are encouraged to wash their hands afterwards to prevent the spread of germs. However, they are not routinely taught to wash their hands and faces after eating so they remain sticky. Staff attend suitable first aid training to ensure they are able to treat children's minor injuries and to care for them if they become unwell. Parents are expected to keep their children at home if they are sick to minimise the risk of spreading any infection.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a very welcoming environment. They arrive happily and settle extremely well, needing little support from their parents and the staff who are on hand ready to greet and talk to them. The well organised environment is arranged into specific areas which the children can move freely between to enjoy their chosen activity. For example, they may choose to sit at a construction activity, use their imagination in the role play area or go outside in the fresh air. Daily risk assessments enable staff to identify and reduce any potential hazards, and ensure suitable precautions have been taken where necessary.

The welfare of the children is safeguarded because staff are familiar with the setting's child protection policy and understand their responsibility if they have concerns about any child. They are vigilant about protecting themselves against allegations, but the written policy does not detail what they would do should this occur and is not shared with parents.

There are effective procedures in place for the safe arrival and collection of the children. Parents and children enter through the rear garden for safety as the main entrance leads to the busy street. Children learn how to keep themselves and each other safe through the group's guidelines. For example, picking things up from the floor, pushing their chair back under the table when they move away, and using the equipment as it was intended.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy to be at the setting and enjoy choosing what they would like to do from the good selection of activities prepared for them. They separate confidently from their parents, showing they have made trusting relationships within the playgroup. Children are keen to learn and are encouraged to try out new skills which foster their emotional wellbeing and help them to achieve well. Younger children learn from a range of activities that are stimulating and well balanced.

Staff support children well, providing them with plenty of praise and encouragement. They help children express their thoughts and ideas, and follow their individual interests. They enjoy choosing hands-on activities such as crafts and role play. This captures their interest and provides many opportunities to explore and experiment. Staff use guidance such as the Birth to three matters framework to plan activities for younger children, to ensure they are offered a variety of interesting experiences.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and support children's progress through the stepping stones. They plan and provide a wide range of meaningful topics and experiences which interest children and which cover all areas of learning. Children are becoming confident learners as they move between and readily ask to join in the activities. They confidently approach staff to talk to them and ask for help when needed. Children enjoy getting fully involved in themed activities which are well planned and presented, with positive learning intentions and which arouse their natural curiosity. For example, they make their own compost, dig in the ground to grow vegetables and aromatic herbs which they then smell and taste. Observations inform staff of children's progress, enabling them to plan the next stage in learning and development. However, assessments are not made when children first start to inform staff of what children can already do and to ensure the planning provides suitable challenge for them to progress through the stepping stones.

Children have warm and friendly relationships with both staff and each other, which gives them the confidence to ask questions in order to develop their thinking. There are many opportunities for children to see and hear how words and letters sound. For example, they point to the letters hanging from the ceiling when staff sound them out and those they recognise. Children see and identify words around the setting labelling various items of furniture and objects, some in different languages. They enjoy books and stories, choosing to sit and 'read' books alone and with their friends as the mood takes them. They handle books carefully, turning the pages correctly from front to back, showing interest and familiarity in their content.

Personal independence and self care is positively encouraged through planned activities such as Physical Education (PE). Children proudly emulate their older siblings as they arrive at the setting carrying their bags of PE kit. They then become competent at changing their clothes for a brief exercise session, in readiness for when they attend school and receive limited assistance.

Children count confidently in a variety of situations during everyday activities. They count sufficient trowels for each child to dig with and sing number rhymes such as Five Little Ducks and Five Fat Sausages, counting the remaining number of fingers each time there is one duck

or sausage less. Children are beginning to understand time as they share details of events in their lives such as going to a firework display and fun fair. Music playing quietly in the background introduces children to a variety of sounds and rhythms as they play, and they use their senses during a variety of activities. For example, they experience various textures making dough which is sticky then soft, the sand is dry then soggy.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

A friendly atmosphere welcomes children and their families to the setting. Partnership with parents is good. Staff are available each day to discuss children's progress and they share information with parents through a regular newsletter. However, little information is shared with parents about daily activities to enable them to take an active part in their children's learning. All children are valued as individuals and their needs are understood using the information gathered from parents.

Children behave very well; they share, take turns and play together harmoniously. Staff are calm and consistent; reinforcing and praising children's good behaviour, encouraging their feelings of self-worth. Children with additional needs are welcomed into the inclusive environment and systems are in place to ensure they are fully supported and their needs met through co-operation between staff, parents and outside agencies.

Children demonstrate a sense of belonging as they share their experiences about their own lives and families. Children are treated with respect, helping them to feel good about themselves. Staff have a positive attitude towards diversity and help children develop an awareness of their own and other cultures. Planned activities and a good range of resources help them celebrate a variety of festivals. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and at ease in the setting because staff create a relaxed and welcoming environment. They are cared for by suitably qualified staff who have been appropriately vetted due to effective recruitment procedures. Policies and documentation work well in practice, ensuring the efficient and safe management of the setting. However, some require adjustments to ensure they are sufficiently detailed and comply with the latest guidance. For example, the visitor's book does not show the times of attendance. Staff have a clear understanding of child development which enables them to plan appropriately to support children's individual needs.

Leadership and Management is good. Management has a high regard for the staff team. They work well together and clear communication and guidance allows them to provide a stimulating, well-balanced programme. However, there are occasions when only one member of staff is outside with the children whilst the remainder are occupied with indoor tasks. This results in children not benefiting from full support whilst enjoying the well resourced garden area. Individual staff training needs are identified, with staff attending a range of courses to ensure they can fulfil their individual roles. For example, this year staff have attended sessions on drama, speech and language and creativity. Management evaluate the service provided and there is a strong commitment to creating a rich learning environment for children. All staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and contribute to the curriculum planning, providing a comprehensive timetable of play based learning. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to ensure that all parents are informed of the pre-school procedures for child protection and have opportunities to share displayed information. The setting have now included the child protection policy in the prospectus for all parents to see and have fitted a notice board by the entrance to clearly display information for parents.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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

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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 documentation in line with the latest guidance
- ensure staff are deployed effectively so that children are well supervised at all times

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):

- improve initial, individual assessments to establish what each child can do and ensure this information is used to plan the next steps in their learning
- involve and support parents in extending their children's learning by sharing with them information about the weekly curriculum planning

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