

Little Stars Pre School at Emmanuel Church

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	120020
Inspection date	11 July 2007
Inspector	Amanda May
Setting Address	Emmanuel Church Hall, Shepherds Lane, Stoughton, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 9SJ
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Registered person	Emmanuel Church P.C.C
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?

Little Stars Pre-School at Emmanuel Church has been established since 1976 but was known as Emmanuel Playgroup until January 2004.

The pre-school operates from the Parish Centre of Emmanuel Church in Stoughton, Guildford and serves the local community and surrounding areas. Opening times are five mornings per week from 09:15 to 12:15, with an optional lunch club until 13:00, term time only. Children have access to an open plan area that can be divided into three rooms and a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 50 children on roll. This includes 23 funded three-year-olds and 19 funded four-year-olds. The setting has procedures in place for caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities and children who have English as an additional language.

There are nine members of staff who work with the children on various days, of which six have a recognised early years qualification and five members of staff hold a current first aid certificate. The setting receives support from the Early Years Child-care Service.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children who attend the setting learn about good health through a ready access to drinks and nutritious snacks which take account of known allergies. Children bring in fruit from home to share with their friends at snack time. As they sit up at the table together, they take turns to choose some banana, apple or orange before passing the plate onto their friend sat next to them. Children drink water which they generally pour independently from jugs after helping to prepare their own snacks by chopping up their fruit. Children also practise their independence as they collect a tissue to wipe their own nose, and when preparing jam and marmite sandwiches to share with their friends later at a teddy bear's picnic.

The pre-school encourages children to live a healthy lifestyle through incorporating posters and resources which provide positive images of healthy foods. Children concentrate hard as they skilfully complete a puzzle of different fruits, and talk eagerly to staff about what food is healthy in the picture. Accidents are handled very well within the setting and detailed records are made and shared with parents if a child has a minor bump or scrape. A high percentage of staff are first aid qualified, and as a result children's health is well-maintained and protected. Medication is given at the setting by a qualified first-aider when requested to do so by parents. Parents sign to acknowledge when medication has been administered, and a member of staff witnesses it being given, ensuring children's health and well-being is fostered. Children enjoy a wide range of opportunities for physical play as they take part in physical education (PE) lessons after taking off their own shoes and socks. Children visibly enjoy keeping active and talk about how fast their hearts are beating as they listen on a stethoscope. Children confidently manoeuvre themselves on bikes and trikes skilfully around their friends whilst playing outside, and giggle as they pass them.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe environment indoors and out. Equipment is checked regularly by staff, and risk assessments are done at the beginning of each session in the building as well as the enclosed play area outside. All staff members and visitors are kept aware and updated about policies within the setting including the pre-school's fire evacuation plan which is practised regularly.

Children are kept safe through the staff's consistent supervision and procedures when they count children as they leave a room to go and play in the large sports hall or another classroom. Children register themselves as they arrive at the setting, and are eager to add their named apple picture on the apple tree chart. Staff also register the children as they sit down together to sing some songs and talk about what topics and activities are available for children to do that day.

Children are well protected through a good awareness of issues surrounding safeguarding children by staff. An incident book is in place to record any concerns or existing injuries which are discussed and acknowledged by parents at the start of the session. Secure policies are in place for staff which explain the procedures to take if they have concerns about a child's welfare, however the policy in place concerning allegations about a member of staff is not clear, and would benefit from being more detailed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children experience a well varied range of activities and have the ability to self-select their own resources independently. Children visibly enjoy their time at pre-school and settle immediately as they choose the toys and activities they wish to play with and explore. Children look out for their friends, and smile as they sit next to them to play. Children's abilities and interests are found out from parents on first joining the group through packs being sent out asking children to draw a self-portrait and ask parents for details of what each child can already achieve. This ensures children's individual needs are supported effectively, and they are always challenged and stimulated in their play and learning. Close relationships are easily evident as children seek staff out to show them how well they have decorated their teddy bear pictures, and talk to them about all their news. Staff in response, listen attentively to the children, asking questions and showing a genuine interest in what they have to say. Children's self-esteem and confidence is clearly boosted, as children beam with pride.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are very knowledgeable about each child's abilities and struggles and supports these accordingly through planned activities. Children are questioned in their play and challenged to think about differences such as big and small whilst children are showing a member of staff their new shoes, and comparing them to the size of the adult's shoe. Activities are generally planned appropriately, however some plans are missing and lack detail about each activity's learning objectives. As many of the staff have been at the setting a number of years, they show a clear understanding of what these objectives are, however these are not always clear for visitors or students attending the setting. Observations of the children are done in order to ensure they are consistently being challenged in their learning, and to ensure children are progressing through the stepping stones to the early learning goals within the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. Photographs are also regularly taken of children to add to key-worker files as evidence of each child's abilities, along with pieces of work for parents to see each term to illustrate their steady progress.

Children benefit from exciting and interesting activities from each area of learning, particularly in mathematical development and whilst developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children enjoy regular outings into the local community as they visit shops to buy buns for a treat, or visit the Fair Trade shop to look at jewellery made from around the world. Children learn about growing and life changes as they watch caterpillars make cocoons, and eventually turn into butterflies which the children hold on their fingers, before letting them fly away in the playground. Children develop their understanding about numbers and simple mathematical terms as they independently access the weighing scales where they use corks to try to make them balance. Children use numbers independently in their own initiated play. They extend their activities independently as they count how many teddy bears there are and point out confidently to their friends what colours they are.

Children are encouraged to speak in groups at the pre-school, and they confidently talk about items they have brought in for show and tell, and whilst helping the staff change the day and the date on the pre-school calendar. Children write for a purpose as they play with shop tills and as they label their own work and have chances to mark make in a variety of different media such as sand, corn-flour as well as pens, pencils and crayons. Children address all their activities with interest and enthusiasm which is mirrored by staff who extend each activity appropriately for the children's abilities and needs. Children learn new skills and enjoy listening to the staff

talk about their own experiences such as when they visited different countries and saw real bears which linked to the topic the children were learning about.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are relaxed and feel at home in the setting's comfortable environment. Children confidently make choices and take decisions as they initiate and extend their own play and learning. Children become aware of the wider society through a wide range of activities and resources which are made available to the children at all times. Children enjoy topics about different countries, and celebrating festivals from around the world such as Chinese New Year where they dress in silk robes, and practise eating noodles with their chop-sticks. Staff ensure children become well aware of their local community as they meet people from different occupations such as fire-fighters, nurses and local musicians. They also benefit from trips into the local village to buy coffee from shops, and practice counting out the change before they leave. As a result, children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Children who attend the setting who have English as an additional language are supported exceptionally well. Books and other resources are included which are written in the child's home language. Children also have the opportunity to listen to music from different countries. These resources ensure children feel secure and included, as well as being an important learning tool for other children who attend, as they get to learn about different cultures, languages and customs.

Exceptional support is in place for children who attend the setting with learning difficulties and disabilities. Children's needs are met consistently through expert understanding and practice in ensuring children are challenged and supported according to their abilities in all aspects of their learning and care. The special educational needs co-ordinator shows dedication and commitment to ensuring each child is motivated and stimulated as they practise techniques and exercises to help them address any difficulties they have. Parents are well informed and through excellent communication, consistency of care and learning is evident in all instances.

As a result of the professional approach of all staff, children are stimulated and interested in all the activities and resources which are provided for them. Therefore, behaviour at the setting is very good. Children play together in small groups and take turns as they play the snail board game. A secure behaviour policy is in place, and shared with parents through copies within the prospectus and a copy displayed on the notice board. Stickers are used to highlight good behaviour from children and for working hard, and children show pride in the fact that they are awarded them for doing well.

Nursery Education

The quality of partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning effectively through sharing information about their child's development at parent meetings and through sending children's development and key-worker files home every term. These also include lots of photographs and examples of their child's work. Parents learn about the curriculum provided for children through attractive wall displays giving detail of the areas of learning and the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. Photographs are also used to give clear examples of how the setting covers each area, both in displays and in newsletters which are sent home to parents at the end of each term. The regular newsletters also contain a detailed re-cap of all the activities children have enjoyed and what they have been learning about. The newsletters also include activities for children to do at home with their parents. This ensures children can share their new found skills with parents in a fun way,

whilst parents have a clear knowledge of how they can best support their child in their learning, whilst they are at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children who attend the pre-school benefit from good organisation of time, space and resources. Children have access to a number of different rooms such as a sports hall used for PE and soft play, and a classroom used for music and drama. The children's main base room has doors which access the secure outdoor area, allowing children to enjoy free-flow play where they can access bikes and trikes along with books and an outdoor home corner. The supervisor of the setting shows a high understanding of the children's needs, and ensures that quality care and attention is provided for each child through maintaining high staff ratios. Staff deploy themselves at the setting well, and children enjoy having a member of staff spend quality time with them to make a puzzle or read a story.

Through robust recruitment and vetting procedures, the pre-school benefits from staff who are well-qualified and have a wealth of experience in caring for young children. The setting has recently introduced staff appraisals ensuring that staff are encouraged to continue their training and self-development, whilst celebrating their strengths within the team. Outside training is encouraged, however the pre-school also makes good use of each staff member's qualities and knowledge through in-house training where information is shared with the rest of the staff. This ensures consistency as well as opportunities for extending and improving each staff member's professional practice.

Nursery Education

The quality of leadership and management is good. Although all members of staff are involved in the planning of the curriculum, the teaching is overseen by the supervisor and her deputies. New staff are monitored and supported effectively, ensuring that their development is encouraged. Activities and plans are evaluated constantly in order to ensure any issues are rectified and to improve the levels of teaching and learning when the topic is re-visited in two years time.

Best practice is generally achieved through sharing observations and ideas at weekly team meetings. This ensures staff all work together to achieve the same aims and objectives in preparing children for school life. The team of staff work very well together, and overall provide a supportive network for children to feel comfortable, happy and eager to learn. The supervisor has clear plans in place to ensure the continued high levels of care and education are maintained, as she evaluates and improves the service offered to parents and children accordingly. As a result, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the provider was recommended to ensure all policies meet requirements and ensure that staff and children are aware of procedures to be followed in the event of a fire. The setting has now put these previous recommendations into practice through updating the complaints policy and safeguarding children policy. However the policy concerning allegations against a member of staff, would benefit from being further developed. Children and staff are all aware of the fire evacuation procedures, and these are shared with parents

and visitors who attend the setting verbally and through a copy being available on the notice board.

In respect of nursery education, the provider was recommended to allow children to develop their ideas through access to the full range of materials and resources and to continue to develop planning and record keeping so that each child's progress is clearly identified. Since the last inspection the setting has re-arranged facilities in the base room in order for children to have full access to all resources. Planning and record keeping has also been further developed to ensure children's individual needs are addressed through specific planning of activities which incorporate the early learning goals.

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):

- develop and update safeguarding children policy to make procedures clear concerning what action would be taken if an allegation was made about a member of staff.

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):

- ensure planning is consistently completed for each session detailing each learning objective to ensure all staff and visitors are fully aware of the aims of every activity.

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