

Bitterne Community Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	131530
Inspection date	25 September 2007
Inspector	Amanda Shedden
Setting Address	Methodist Church Hall, Whites Road,Bitterne, Southampton, Hampshire, SO19 7NS
Telephone number	07957 987244
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Registered person	Bitterne Community 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?

Bitterne Community Pre-School opened in 1982. It operates from rooms in the Wesley Centre, which is located in Bitterne, Southampton. It is run by a voluntary management committee. The group serve the local community and surrounding areas. There are currently 144 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 84 funded three year and four year olds. Bitterne Community Pre-school supports children with additional needs and children whom speak English as an additional language. The pre-school offers sessional care and opens four mornings and three afternoons a week, during school term time. Sessions run from 9.00-11:30 and 12:15-14:45. 11 staff work part-time, with the children, six of whom have early years qualifications to National Vocational level two or above. Five staff members are currently on training programmes. The pre-school receives support from the Pre-school Learning Alliance and the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a healthy environment because staff implement good hygiene procedures to help prevent the spread of infection. All of the staff have relevant first aid qualifications ensuring that if a child were to have an accident they would be treated appropriately. All required documentation concerning children's health is in place. Procedures are in place to ensure that accidents and the administration of medication are recorded correctly.

Children wash their hands after using the bathroom and after messy play; however, children are not fully protected as they do not wash their hands in clean water before snack. Children are able to access tissues easily and can easily dispose of them in nearby bins.

Children enjoy their snack time. They sit in their key worker groups, the crockery is colour coded to match which group they are in and staff sit and converse with the children making it a social occasion. They become independent as they count how many plates and cups are needed, giving them out to the children on the table, they are encouraged to pour their own drinks and support is given until the child is able to accomplish this task themselves. Whilst eating, staff encourage children to converse about what other foods they enjoy.

Children benefit from daily exercise and enjoy plenty of opportunities to participate in activities to develop their co-ordination and self confidence. Children learn to ride bikes and scooters, negotiating the space around them well. They climb through the tunnel and up the climbing frame and slides. In the house they "cook" meals for their friends, they use chalks to draw and write on the ground. Inside they learn to use tools and equipment with confidence, such as glue sticks and paint brushes. When needed support is given to the children to learn new skills such as using scissors and hole punchers, they respond to the praise and encouragement given by staff.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are greeted warmly by the staff, many showing their independence by coming into the room by themselves. The pre-school provides a welcoming environment for the children; the room is bright and attractive with commercial posters and displays of the children's work. All the resources and furniture are suitable for the children who may move around easily and safely. During free play sessions children can select from the range of resources that are displayed.

Risks assessments are undertaken each day before the session begins to ensure that all are safe for the children. They are escorted to the toilets and the supervision of the room and garden ensures that the children are safe. However the main door to the play room is not locked enabling persons not connected to the pre-school unauthorised entry. Children and staff practise the fire drill regularly ensuring if an evacuation was necessary they would know what to do. All visitors sign in and out, and they do not have unsupervised access to the children. The supervision at the end of the sessions ensure that children do not leave the room without an adult and effective strategies are in place to ensure that children only go home with the designated person.

All required documentation is in place and shared with parents to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded. Staff are aware to follow the clear procedures which are in their policy if they have a concern over the welfare of a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

A key worker system is in place which entails helping to settle children in, acting as a point of liaison between the pre-school and parents, and completing observation records and assessments for those children. They undertake focused activities and snack time in their key worker groups ensuring that staff get to know their key worker children very well.

Children arrive eager to join in with the activities; they settle quickly into the friendly atmosphere and structured routine. They readily sit for the circle time where they sit for a few moments looking at the number, colour and shape of the week. They count how many children are in today and identify the staff that are present giving the children a sense of security.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the Foundation Stage. Staff organise the day to ensure that children are offered a range of interesting and worthwhile activities. All staff have a good understanding of the stepping stones and how children learn. They use the free play sessions to extend children's learning by asking open ended questions, encouraging children to think and contribute their own ideas. Each day there is a focused activity with children sitting with their key worker which has been planned with learning intentions. However when the children are grouped in this way the activity does not engage or interest all of the children.

Children are introduced to numbers through routine and incidental activities. Each day they look at the number of the week at circle time. They learn that only four children can play in the sand or use the collage table. Staff use their initiative throughout the session to encourage children to count and use numbers for instance, to count whilst finding gems in the sand, and how many pegs they have used to make a pattern as well as at snack time.

Children have resources throughout the session and rooms to practise their pre writing and reading skills. Each week they are introduced to the sound of a letter and children confidently name items that start with the letter. They practise their writing skills using the range of implements in the writing area; writing lists in the role play area and at times, marking their own work. Children enjoy making puppets using a range of writing implements; they use their imagination as they draw faces on the pre made puppets. Staff extend the activity by encouraging children to think what they have on their faces and bodies, the more able children respond by drawing and colouring clothes on the bodies. Staff encourage children to talk about themselves in small and large groups. For instance whilst in the role play corner children talk about shopping with mummy, at the sand area children talked about their holidays and whether they have been to a sandy or stony beach.

Children have many opportunities to concentrate and persevere at their chosen activities. They focus on their collage creations, painting and when using the construction resources. Children are confident and engage in conversations easily with adults and their peers. For instance the children went to the role play area and discussed about the party they were having, who was coming and what foods they were going to eat. Staff use effective questioning to help children

think, allowing time for the child to respond. When playing with the animals children were asked what they knew about what the animals were and what the children knew about them, where they might live and what noises they make. Staff work with the children throughout the sessions, giving clear explanations and continually asking open ended questions which challenge and extend their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are looked after in a caring environment, where they are valued and treated with respect and equal concern. They are frequently praised and therefore gain in confidence and self esteem. Children are interested, involved, and well occupied in their play and learning. Children's behaviour is very good during the free play sessions, however at other times the children are left waiting for the next event to happen and their behaviour deteriorates. They benefit from positive role models provided by the staff and they respond well to adult intervention. Children are confident in knowing the rules of the pre-school and respond well to reminders to care for each other and the resources.

Children with additional needs are supported well; the pre-school enlists help from other agencies and people in their community to ensure that they are meeting the individual needs of the children and their parents. The member of staff assigned to oversee the support these children have ensures that all staff working with the child that day know what their individual needs are ensuring continuity of care. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents of all children, including those in receipt of nursery funding are provided with information about the pre-school's policies and procedures; thus ensuring that they are fully aware of the practices and routines of the setting. Information about the curriculum and the term's plans are displayed in the hallway keeping parents fully informed. Regular newsletters are sent out inviting parents to come and help in the group, inviting them to look at their children's records and further information about the terms activities. Staff consult with parents to identify areas where they feel their child would benefit from additional support. Parents state that they are very happy with the pre-school and are kept informed about their child's experiences and progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are at ease within the environment, which is well organised, making good use of staff time and resources, providing good play opportunities for children. Space is used well, ensuring children are able to move around freely and safely. However, at the times when the sessions are adult directed the children spend time waiting for the next event to happen, for instance when waiting to go outside or for the focused activity to finish for those children that are not interested this is not conducive to their behaviour. During free play sessions staff are designated an area to work in, however they are proactive in moving around the room to ensure that the children are being continually supervised and supported; the staff work well as a team and are experienced in working with children.

Effective procedures for the appointment of staff are in place ensuring the protection of children at all times. All required documentation is in place, and is stored securely thus maintaining confidentiality. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management are good. The pre-school has two sites and all of the staff and children attend both venues on different days. This works well offering children two different environments. This also ensures that ratios are always met as all staff are experienced in working in both settings. Training is encouraged to increase staff's knowledge and skills. The supervisors ensure that all staff are encouraged to share ideas and contribute to the planning and evaluation of the activities. The parent committee and the staff work together to continually develop and improve children's care and education.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the pre-school was asked to ensure that child protection procedure and policies were improved. They have applied to undertake further child protection training to increase their knowledge. In addition the documentation now includes contact telephone numbers, and procedures to be taken should an allegation be made against a staff member.

They were also asked to improve the outdoor play area and to increase the type of snacks offered to children, giving them a wider range of food to choose from. The garden has now been cleared making it safe for children to play in and procedures are in place to ensure that the garden is kept in good condition. The range of foods offered has increased and children are regularly offered a range of fruits and vegetables.

Nursery Education

At the last inspection the pre-school was asked to ensure that the programme for knowledge and understanding of the world included increased opportunities for children to find out about the local environment and living things.

Children regularly investigate their local environment. They frequently go outside to look in the garden and woods noting the differences between the shapes of leaves and looking for mini beasts with magnifying glasses.

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):

- ensure that the door to the playroom is made secure to prevent unknown persons entering the room
- ensure that children have clean hands before eating snack

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 that when undertaking focused activities that children are able to progress according to their individual stage
- ensure that children do not spend long times waiting for the next event to happen

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