

Longham Community Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	144293
Inspection date	06 July 2007
Inspector	Christine Coram

Setting Address	UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, HAM LANE, LONGHAM, FERNDOWN, DORSET, BH22 9DP
Telephone number	01202 572210
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Registered person	Longham Community Preschool
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?

Longham Community Pre-school is a committee run setting. It opened in 1976 and operates from two rooms in a church hall. It is situated between Wimborne and Ferndown, and serves the local area. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 08.55 to 11.55 and from 12:30 to 15:30 on Monday and Thursday, with an additional afternoon session on Tuesday when numbers are greater. The setting runs for 38 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 60 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 48 children receive funding for early education. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs six members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's hygiene is promoted well. Children always wash their hands before snack and after toileting. Staff use these opportunities well to develop children's awareness of health issues by discussing germs and how hand washing removes them. Suitable facilities are available for nappy changing. Effective procedures are in place to ensure that the equipment is clean. Children help to wash equipment on a regular basis. Parents take home boxes of toys or dressing up clothes to wash each term. Effective cleaning routines make sure that the premises are very clean.

If children have accidents or need medication, they are protected very well because accident and medication recording is extremely comprehensive. There are forms in place for different levels of accident. In addition to this, an accident investigation form gives an opportunity to monitor the frequency or pattern of accidents so that staff can further protect the children. All staff are trained in first aid.

Children's nutritional health is promoted well. Snacks and drinks are very healthy and include wholemeal toast, fruit, milk, water and sugar free squash. However, children do not have a great deal of independent choice at snack time. The drinks are in large jugs that children cannot use and one large tray for toast does not enable the children to help serve the food. Children have very good access to drinking water at other times of the day. Cups and jug are placed on a low table for them to help themselves.

Children have excellent opportunities for physical play and fresh air in the large tarmac and grassed areas. A wide selection of activities is provided to encourage large physical skills such as throwing and catching.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are protected through good security of the premises. A bolt is used to secure the outside door and is checked each morning. The fire exit leads into outside area and cannot be locked but a padlock on the gate prevents children from accessing the car park. It is also checked each day. The system to record visitors is maintained so that staff always know who is on the premises. Risk assessments are completed using a clear system with clear and useful evaluation of risk. Daily safety checks are also completed. Fire safety is very clear. Regular fire drills are undertaken and these are well thought-through.

Staff effectively promoted children's knowledge of keeping themselves safe. For example, a child tells others to be careful with the scissors. They are taught about safety during activities such as sewing when each child is reminded that the needle is sharp and shown how to thread away from their faces. Children assist in daily risk assessments and print smiley or sad faces on the chart.

The equipment is checked and safe. The deputy supervisor is responsible for repairs and checks the equipment each day. Supervision is excellent and staff are vigilant throughout. Outings are undertaken but are limited to local area due to the busy road. Local walks with are undertaken with a one-to-one or one-to-two ration. Children are also protected because

comprehensive policies about safeguarding are in place. All staff have attended basic training and further courses are undertaken as they become available.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children benefit from an excellent range of activities and resources throughout. These are carefully planned to give a wide variety of experiences. In addition, children have opportunities for self-selection from storage drawers, and by using picture cards to choose activities for the mat. This gives the children independence and control over their day. Planned activities are carefully selected and organised to promote the early learning goals.

Children are happy, enthusiastic and settled. They are well occupied throughout the session and clearly enjoy the challenges and opportunities to develop and learn. Children's activities and learning is enhanced and extended through attentive support. They benefit from the knowledgeable and effective interaction and input from staff.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Most staff are qualified to at least level two and have a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They are very encouraging and positive with the children and freely praise the children's efforts. They increase the challenges for more able children by the effective use of individual play plans for each child. Staff are excellent at explaining and questioning until children understand. They hold their attention very well in interesting whole group sessions, such as singing, numbers songs, using props to great effect. Staff create their own sound and problem solving games that are exiting, innovative and motivate the children to participate.

Planning is comprehensive and detailed. It is informed by the assessments of individual children's development and is flexible. For example, if at the end of a week, staff do not feel that the children have grasped the concept for the theme, they will extend into the following week and adjust future plans to suit. Observation and recording of children's progress are very detailed and clear. Evaluation of child's progress is carefully achieved through thorough evidencing. There must be at least two observations for each stepping stone before the child is deemed to have achieved it. Staff then set achievable targets in each area of learning. They ask parents to comment on the plans and then give clear evaluation of the targets at the next assessment.

The organisation of staff is excellent. They all clearly know their roles and the session runs smoothly with little need for instructions or interruptions. Resources are also organised very well. All necessary items are easily to hand and clearly labelled. Children have some opportunities to self-select from labelled draws and using picture cards. Children with specific requirements receive excellent care. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is organised, knowledgeable and clear about the children and her role. Records and 'Individual Education Plans' are detailed and there is frequent liaison with parents and health professionals. Care is tailored to the specific need of the child and activities are constructed to promote their development and inclusion. Children who speak English as an additional language also have individual activities to support their needs. Dual language books and picture cards are used and parents are asked to provide key words in the child's first language.

Children arrive with confidence and independently put their names on the board. They share their news and generally speak confidently in the group. They settle quickly to their chosen

activities and focus well. They remain at these for short periods and enjoy the support of adults. They are keen to show their work and activities adults, clearly proud of their achievements. A four-year-old takes her picture to show a member of staff, clearly expecting praise. Most children choose to play in groups, chattering as they play and enjoying the social interaction with the other children and with staff. Children behave well. They listen to each other speak in turn in the group time, although they sometimes need reminders. They use a sand-timer to help with taking turns. A child is encouraged to explain to another that when the sand is through they must allow the other child to have a turn. This is successfully achieved with minimum support.

Children develop good listening and communication skills. Children choose to look at books in the book area. They observe the pictures with great interest. They are beginning to link letters and sounds. A four-year-old is able to name the sound that his name starts with and that of his friend. They enjoy sound boxes, looking at a range of objects starting with the same sound. Many of the children recognise their own names and begin to recognise others. They are developing an understanding of numbers. They count confidently in a group, instantly show five fingers on request and recognise numbers up to 10. Their skills in problem solving are developing well. For example, a child is asked to repeat a pattern of objects and mirrors the pattern. Children are beginning to calculate. For example, a four-year-old holds up five fingers, and when asked to show three, states 'you put two down'. They can match a shape when only shown a tiny corner.

Children greatly enjoy exploring and investigating the extensive range of scientific objects such as kaleidoscopes, bellows, spirit levels, pipettes, magnets and magnifying glasses. They focus intently and share their findings with the other children with excitement. They develop excellent skills in information and communication technology. They are extremely confident with the computer. They use the mouse efficiently and with clear intent. A four-year-old tells an adult about the game he is about to play and correctly clicks on the icon to find the required game. Many cultural events are experienced through exiting activities such as dragon dances, art craft and food activities. Children enjoy free painting, cutting and sticking throughout the session. They have complete freedom to express themselves and utilise their imagination. They are encouraged to talk about their creations. They are fascinated by mixing colours in the paint palate. A three year old adds more and more colours, observing and enjoying the effect. Children enjoy singing and enthusiastically join in with the actions at the same time. They use their imagination in role-play. They love to dress up and act in role, strutting in a spider-man outfit, for example.

Children enjoy moving in many different ways. They balance on a beam with some adult help, but many are confident and hold their hands out to help them to balance. During singing they shrug their shoulders and tap toes together. Children have a good understanding of health and their bodies. A four-year-old tells a member of staff that her heart was beating really fast because she had been running. They develop good skills in using equipment, sweeping up sand with dust-pan and brush, and working together to carry a chair. They competently use tools and some children thread a needle with support from adult. They use hole-punch and tape dispenser effectively, they 'sew' through holes in card with a large needle. They cut accurately and use a stapler.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff create a very welcoming environment for the children. The rooms are colourful with displays of children's art and images of people from different cultures. An excellent range of resources that positively reflects diversity includes pictures of children from different cultures, books, small world resources that show disabilities and specific range of books dealing with specific occasions and incidents that is used effectively. Children social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children's sense of belonging is fostered well. They come into the setting clearly understanding that it is their group and that the activities and equipment are for them. They confidently select and participate in activities, taking turns on a rota basis to participate in helping, preparing and checking the premises. The adult's knowledge of individual children is excellent. The whole system for assessing the children is geared to the individual and staff are clearly very aware of the personalities, interests, capabilities and needs of each child. Children's behaviour is managed sensitively and effectively. Staff are excellent role models. They are all polite, enthusiastic and caring. Effective and positive methods are used to promote sharing.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. A welcome meeting is arranged for all new parents. Any that cannot attend are offered an alternative. Parents complete an initial child profile prior to the child's first day, so that there is good input from them from the outset. This means that the needs of the children are known from the outset and can be effectively met by the setting. Records and play plans are sent home every other term for parents to read and share with others in the family. They are asked to comment on the plans in writing. This enables parents and the wider family to become actively involved in the child's learning and development. The records of the child's achievements is available to the parent at all times on request. A wide variety of information about the setting is delivered to parents through the prospectus, newsletters, notices and discussions. Parents report that they are very pleased with the level of information given and that they are able to support their children's learning. Their in-put is sought through regular parent questionnaires.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide. The committee and managers makes sure that suitable adults care for the children through sufficient systems for recruiting and vetting new staff. New adults in the setting are clear about their roles and the procedures through a clear and effective staff induction programme. Staff have good opportunities to undergo further training and to update and increase their knowledge and skills. This is achieved through both in-house and external training, and through sharing knowledge amongst the staff team. This benefits the children by ensuring that all staff are up to date with current childcare practise.

Space is organised well to meet the children's needs effectively, and allows sufficient space to move safely, whilst discouraging running. Activities are set out well throughout the pre-school rooms. Children can see what is available but screening provides cosy areas where they feel secure. Organisation of snack time is less effective, and children's independence is not always well promoted. The outdoor space is used very well. Two separate areas are available, one with hard surface and one with grass. Again, the areas are set out with different activities and these are planned carefully to promote varied skills and development. Staff are deployed very

effectively to support and monitor the children. They work directly with the children. All documentation is extremely well organised, clear and effective. Policies and procedures are comprehensive and detailed.

Leadership and management are good. There is a very clear vision for nursery education that includes learning through supported play and meeting the individual needs of the children. There is an initial focus on social skills. Teamwork is a key to the effective management of staff. Their contribution is valued and encouraged, and results in a motivated, dedicated staff team where children are the main focus. There are various methods used to monitor and evaluate the educational programme, but these do not always successfully identify the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Parents are involved in the evaluating process through discussion and questionnaires. The managers' commitment to improvements is very clear. They are keen to take up new ideas, and see scope for improvement in all areas. They value the input of others in the assessment process.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the setting agreed to ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that provide positive images of cultural diversity and disability. In Nursery Education, they also agreed to review the organisation of staff and resources to ensure that the needs of younger children are met.

A large range of multi-cultural resources is now in place. This is used effectively to help children to develop an open view of society. The introduction of the Birth to Three Framework means that the needs of the youngest children are met effectively and the planning includes activities suitable for the full age-range. Staff have a good understanding of the needs of all the children and the ethos of planning meets the individual needs of all 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.

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):

- review the organisation of snack-time to increase children's opportunities for independent choice

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):

- develop further the system for monitoring and evaluating the nursery education 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