

Village Centre Pre-school Partnership

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY260329
Inspection date	02 October 2007
Inspector	Judith, Mary Butler
Setting Address	The Village Centre, Beech Tree Road, Holmer Green, Buckinghamshire, HP15 6TD
Telephone number	01494 711513
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Registered person	Village Centre 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?

The Village Centre Pre-School Partnership has been open over 30 years. It is a privately managed group. The pre-school operates from the hall in the 'Village Centre' building in Holmer Green on the outskirts of High Wycombe. They have use of a large hall and two other rooms plus kitchen and cloakroom facilities. There is an outside play area. A maximum of 40 children may attend at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday during school term times from 09:15 until 12:15.

There are currently 26 children on roll. Of these, 21 children receive funding for early education. The pre-school serves the local surrounding area and children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently no children attending with learning difficulties or English as an additional language.

Nine part-time staff work with the children. All staff hold relevant early years qualifications to level two or three.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children remain healthy due to the effective procedures in place for recording accidents and administration of medication. All completed forms are countersigned by parents when they collect their child. Children are developing their independence and many go to the toilet and wash their hands without assistance. Staff act as good role models and offer gentle reminders to children about hygiene issues. They assist younger children in completing these tasks, for example, helping a child who has washed their hands but not dried them, explaining that their hands may become sore if not dried correctly.

Children enjoy daily access to fresh air when running around in the outdoor area and playing with the hoops and stepping stones. Further equipment is available to ensure the children have many opportunities to develop their large muscle skills. All children enjoyed participating in the obstacle course, balancing on the beams, kicking the ball, jumping into the hoops and crawling through the tunnel. Children have opportunities within planned activities to walk in the local environment, for example, on the common or to the duck pond.

Children enjoy an interesting and varied diet while attending this pre-school. Staff plan a range of snacks and these include items such as fruit loaf and pitta bread accompanied by fresh fruit or vegetables. Children are developing their independence skills and are confident in finding their names at the snack table and collecting their own drinks. However, children are not able to access drinking water throughout the pre-school session. Snack time is a sociable occasion with staff and children sitting together. They chat about activities they have taken part in or what may happen next at pre-school. Staff discuss the individual dietary needs of the children with parents to ensure that snacks offered meet all of the children's needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are clean and well maintained. Staff ensure that the hall is attractively laid out prior to the arrival of children. Children enter the pre-school and settle into play with the good range of resources. Parents are encouraged to settle their child and most children are happy to say goodbye to their parents and start their morning at pre-school. Staff are aware and offer support to children who are new or get upset when their parents leave. Children access a good range of toys and resources to meet their individual play preferences. Children especially enjoy the dressing up clothes with most expressing a desire to dress up at some stage during the free play session. Staff ensure that toys are in good repair and appropriate for the ages and stages of the children attending. Children can self select the toys they wish to play with from the range set up and rotated each week. Children enjoy a range of active, quiet, outdoor and indoor activities within their daily routine.

Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding children procedures and signs and symptoms of child abuse. They have attended training and are clear about the routes for referral and advice should they have concerns regarding a child in their care. All existing injuries are recorded confidentially in the incident book. This ensures the welfare of children.

The safety of children is protected through the procedures in place. Staff undertake a daily safety check to minimize risks and dangers to children. All visitors and parents have to ring the

bell to gain entry. Visitors are requested to sign in and out of the visitors' book. Children are developing an awareness of keeping themselves safe. They have regular opportunities to practise procedures such as emergency evacuation of the building. Staff remind the children about safety issues and children often remind each other, for example, one child tells another not to run inside.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children receive a high level of individual attention and support from the stable staff team. Staff know the individual children well and use this knowledge to support all children in their play and work. Children's understanding of language is promoted well by the staff through constant conversations and questions. Consequently, children are able to converse with adults, other children and clearly express their needs and views.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children settle quickly into the pre-school routine and are confident and happy. Very positive relationships are evident between staff and children who enjoy each other's company. Children enjoy the range of activities, toys and resources they access during their time at the pre-school. They are well behaved and most are able to take turns and share the toys. They enjoy the discussion that takes place at large group times and take turns to listen and speak. Children are confident in expressing their thoughts and ideas, for example, one child talks to a staff member about what they need to do to make the baskets on the scales the same. Children are developing their independence and select the toys and resources they wish to use from the variety set up. Staff understand that children need opportunities to complete their chosen tasks by themselves. However, they are observant and step into assist if required.

Children really enjoy stories and are keen to name the characters and chat about the story and what may happen, for example, naming the baby Owls in the story and showing their concern that the Mummy Owl may not return. Staff sit with children and look at books and read stories in small groups and children enjoy this experience. Children are able to recognise their names and many are beginning to write letters that are familiar to them. There are limited opportunities for children to recognise words through the labelling of familiar objects and mark make in everyday situations including when outside. Children have practical experiences of mathematical problems, for example, using the scales and simple subtraction at group times. They are confident in their counting skills and recognise simple numbers at group times. However, further opportunities to count and recognise numbers are missed in play situations throughout the pre-school.

Children are creative and really enjoy the role play, dressing up and playing in the home corner. They have a good repertoire of songs and like to act out the parts while playing ring games. A range of art activities are organised but these are often adult initiated and do not allow children to express themselves freely. Children are gaining an understanding of the world around them through a range of topics and activities. They learn about the environment and are keen to wash their milk cartons in preparation for recycling at the end of snack time. They are confident in their use of a range of tools including glue sticks, rolling pins and pencils. They develop their hand and eye co-ordination through the range of equipment available, for example puzzles and construction toys.

Parents and staff share information about the children, this enables staff to meet the needs of all children and plan activities to suit their individual ages and stages of development. Staff know the children and their families well and chat to children about their home life while they play. This enables children to feel valued and happy in the pre-school setting. Effective techniques are used to gather information about what children know and to reinforce their learning, for example, discussion, revisiting topics and one to one time with staff. A key worker system is in place and staff undertake daily observations on the children in their play. These are used to update the developmental profiles of the children and clearly identify their next steps in learning. Daily discussions, an open door policy and annual open days allow parents to discuss their children's progress with staff.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff have a very good knowledge of the children in their care and value each one as an individual. Good relationships are in place between children and staff and children are beginning to foster friendships with their peers. Children are well behaved and learn right from wrong. Staff offer reminders to children about the expectation for behaviour at pre-school, for example, reminding one child that he has to join the end of the line to go outside. Staff act as good role models and encourage positive behaviour through praise and encouragement.

Although there are no children currently attending the pre-school with learning difficulties, disabilities or English as an additional language, there are effective procedures in place to support all children and their parents. Children are developing an awareness of other people and have opportunities to learn about different cultures and traditions. Staff invite parents to the setting to share information about their particular culture and traditions with the children. Children access a range of resources including role play, small world toys and books that reflect the diverse society. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff and parents develop strong relationships and work closely together to ensure that children make the transitions from home to pre-school with ease. This includes opportunities for parents to visit the pre-school and stay with their child before they start. Existing parents are also invited to stay for a full session in order for them to see their children at pre-school and chat to staff about their progress. Parents complete entry profiles for their children and this enables staff to be aware and provide toys and resources specific to their needs and preferences. Parents receive information through the daily notice board, verbal discussion, newsletters and policies and procedures. However, parents of younger children do not receive information about Birth to three matters and how this is used to plan activities or record children's progress.

The partnership between the staff and the parents of children in receipt of funding for nursery education is good. Parents receive information about the Foundation Stage through the prospectus, daily discussion and notices, however, ongoing information about activities and how they link to specific areas of learning is limited. The pre-school operates an open door policy and parents can discuss their children with the key workers at any time. Staff invite parents to an annual meeting where they have the opportunity to view their children's work and discuss their progress in a more formal situation. Parents speak highly of the pre-school and many parents are returning with their second and third children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff make good use of the available space within the hall. They ensure the premises are clean and well maintained, welcoming and attractive for children and parents. Children are confident in their surroundings and move freely around the hall. The stable staff team are very clear about their individual roles and responsibilities and work well together as a team. The high adult to child ratios ensure children have appropriate levels of support and supervision within the daily routine.

Clear policies and procedures are in place and all documentation is presented in an orderly fashion and readily available for the inspection. All of the required documentation is in place. However information regarding the contact details of the regulator is incorrect. Effective systems are in place to accurately record children's attendance, including children who arrive late or leave the pre-school early. All staff have completed the vetting process and the management have robust recruitment procedures in place for new staff. This ensures the safety and welfare of children at all times. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management are good. Staff show a good knowledge of early years guidance, including the National Standards, Birth to three matters and the Foundation Stage. An appraisal system has been introduced and staff complete documentation to identify their own particular strengths, weaknesses and training needs. Staff regularly attend training and support meetings to update their childcare knowledge. Effective systems are in place for evaluating each aspect of the care and education they offer. This enables staff to address weaknesses and build on strengths within the staff team. Regular staff meetings are held and these are used to discuss planning, the daily routines, children's progress and next steps in learning.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection for day care there were two issues to be addressed. These related to ensuring that appropriate facilities and resources were available for children under three years, and that the incident book remained confidential.

Staff have introduced Birth to three matters and use this to plan a range of age and stage appropriate activities and resources for children under three years of age. All records held are now individual to each child and this ensures the health and welfare of children.

At the last inspection for nursery education there were three issues to be addressed. These related to the evaluation and monitoring of the curriculum to identify how children make progress towards the early learning goals, increasing children's awareness of cultures and beliefs other than their own and to ensure that physical activities have a clear learning outcome.

Since the last inspection staff have introduced a new system for planning, evaluating and recording children's progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Children's progress and next steps in learning are clearly recorded. The developmental records are shared with parents. All areas of learning are recorded on the planning forms and clear outcomes for learning are identified. Children are increasing their awareness of cultures and traditions other than their own through a variety of different topics and themes.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider of Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is requested 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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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):

- ensure children have access to drinking water throughout each session
- provide all parents with further information about the planning and curriculum in place (also applies to nursery education)
- ensure that all documentation includes the correct contact details of the regulator

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 offers children further opportunities to freely express themselves through art activities, recognise simple words, numbers and mark make in everyday situations.

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