

Epworth Thurlow Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	205696
Inspection date	05 July 2007
Inspector	Pauline Garfield
Setting Address	Thurlow House, Station Road, Epworth, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN9 1JU
Telephone number	01427 875016
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Registered person	Epworth Thurlow 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Epworth Thurlow Pre-School opened in 1978. It operates from a purpose built single story building set within the Memorial playing fields in the village of Epworth. There is off the road parking. The pre-school is run by a committee. A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The group is open each weekday from 09.00 to 11.30 and 12.30 to 15.00 during school term times. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 39 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 20 receive funding for early education. The group serves Epworth and surrounding villages. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group have support systems in place for children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports children who speak English as a second language.

The pre-school employs four staff. Of these, three have early years qualifications and two members of staff are working towards higher qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn good hygienic practices through the daily routine. For example, they wash their hands before snack. Children are cared for in a clean environment. Members of staff take positive steps to ensure the equipment and toys are cleaned at regular intervals to avoid risks to children's health. A first aid kit is readily available and a sick children's policy is in place.

Parents are encouraged to donate fruit for their children's snack. Children enjoy tasting a variety of fruits. They talk about their likes and dislikes. For example, 'I don't like pineapple'. Staff talk to children and encourage them to try new fruits. Children count the number of scoops of powder a member of staff puts into a bottle of milk to make strawberry milk shake for snack. However, fresh drinking water is not available to children at all times.

Children thoroughly enjoy the movement to music sessions. They move in a variety of ways stretching up tall, wiggling fingers and bending knees. Children also have access to an indoor climbing frame.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The environment is bright and colourful with displays and posters around the room. Toys and equipment are of good quality and well maintained. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own safety. For example, to pick up toys so that they do not trip and fall. Fire evacuation procedures are practised and recorded in a fire log. A general risk assessment is in place for both indoors and out. However, risk assessments regarding water hazards do not clearly identify potential hazards to children. For example, a water tray collects rain water outside. This means that risks and hazards are not identified and reduced effectively both inside and outside.

A child protection policy is in place which includes the procedure to take in the event an allegation is made against a member of staff. There is an ongoing training initiative to ensure staff are up-to-date with current child protection procedures. Staff have a satisfactory understanding of what to do in the event they have concerns about a child, and they know the signs and indicators of abuse. This ensures children are safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

There is good interaction between staff and children. Staff listen and value what children say. They ask open ended questions to develop language and thinking. Children are happy and settled. They explore the indoor environment with ease. Children individually select books and show an interest in the illustrations. They join in and predict what is happening in the group story. Children have opportunities to develop their physical skills indoors through a range of activities and equipment. However, they have limited play opportunities to develop their physical skills outdoors.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a good understanding of the stepping stones towards the early learning goals and use the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage to plan activities. Planning is developing and ongoing but not always readily available on a daily basis. Staff record children's achievements in a profile. However, this does not clearly identify the stepping stones children are achieving, although the wording in the profile is similar. A transitional 'Foundation Stage Profile' that does identify children's achievements along the stepping stones to the early learning goals is completed before children leave to attend school. This means that planning and assessment does not always record children's achievements along the stepping stones to the early learning goals and this is not used to move children onto the next stage of learning.

Children have a positive approach to new learning. They independently access resources, for example, shells and cones from the creative trolley. However, they do not have personal independence at snack time. Children separate from the main carer with confidence. They collect their name cards from alphabet pockets and place them above their coat peg. Children make rubbings with crayons and attempt to write their name on drawings. However, there are limited resources and activities for children to ascribe meanings to marks, understand the concept of writing for a purpose, begin to form recognisable letters and write their own name. Children listen and respond with enjoyment to songs and rhymes. They sound out letters, for example, 'm' for 'mummy'. Children handle books carefully and listen and respond to stories.

Children willingly attempt to count numbers in the correct order. They show an interest in number problems as they count the number of dots on a domino game. Children build and construct with construction bricks. They use a range of tools for a purpose. For example, rollers and cutters with play dough, and scissors to competently cut a variety of materials. Children remember and talk about significant things that have happened to them. They know how to operate some simple equipment, such as cameras and telephones. Children have occasional access to a computer but they do not have independent access on a regular basis. They are beginning to differentiate colours and choose different coloured cups at snack time. They use liquid paint to paint pictures but do not have independent access to powder paints. This means the opportunities to explore colour is limited. Children have access to satisfactory role play. They use musical instruments including shakers to make soft and loud noises.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Partnership with parents and carers of children who receive funded nursery education is satisfactory. An initial profile is completed with parents to ascertain their children's starting points and capabilities. There is a parents evening once a year for children who are due to attend school and children's profiles are shared with parents. Parents are happy with the care provided but would like more opportunities for their children to begin to write their own name. There are good links with the local school. Teachers make visits to the group to meet the children, and they in turn make visits to the school, in the term before they are due to attend. There is a parents' notice board with photographs of members of staff. Parents sign their children in and out of the pre-school and an attendance register is in place. Policies and procedures are readily available in the entrance to the pre-school.

There are systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Children have access to a range of resources that promote equal opportunities and diversity. Staff help children to learn about the wider world through planned activities and displays. For example, an attractive display is in place about people who help us. Children are well behaved. They have

good manners saying 'please' and 'thank you' at snack time. Staff praise and encourage children's achievements. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. Staff have a good understanding of how to promote children's learning through satisfactory teaching practices. However, there are some gaps in the quality of teaching with regard to independent access to resources to enable children to become independent learners, and opportunities to develop communication, language and literacy. Staff are developing the systems for planning to ensure they have more input into the daily activities that are provided for children. Staff are appropriately vetted and have regular appraisals to discuss any concerns or training requirements. They have the appropriate qualifications and a positive attitude to maintaining and improving the quality of care and education provided for children. Documentation is in place and stored safely and securely to ensure confidentiality is maintained.

Staff build effective relationships with children and this helps them feel secure and content. Children appear at ease in the environment. They are confident and happy.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were two recommendations made at the last care inspection regarding documentation. All documentation is now in place including permission from parents to take photographs. Two key issues were raised at the last funded nursery inspection with regard to regular opportunities to develop mathematical development through practical everyday opportunities, and further opportunities to develop communication, language and literacy. Progress has been made with more daily opportunities for children to develop their mathematical skills. Some progress has been made with communication, language and literacy and a mark making area is available. All of which ensures children's safety, welfare and learning is maintained.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 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.

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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 fresh drinking water is available to children at all times
- ensure risks and hazards are identified and reduced effectively both inside and outside
- increase the opportunities for children to improve their physical skills outdoors.

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):

- further develop opportunities for children to develop their independence skills and become independent learners at snack time, when using the computer and when exploring colour
- further develop planning and assessment to ensure children's achievements along the stepping stones to the early learning goals is identified and use this information to move children onto the next stage of learning
- provide resources and activities for children to ascribe meanings to marks, understand the concept of writing for a purpose, begin to form recognisable letters and write their own name.

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