

Christleton Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	305024
Inspection date	11 December 2007
Inspector	Rachel Ruth Britten
Setting Address	The Scout Hut, Whites Lane, Christleton, CH3 6AH
Telephone number	07890 105935
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Registered person	The Trustees of Christleton 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?

Christleton pre-school is run by a committee. It opened in 1983 and operates from the scout hut in Christleton on the outskirts of Chester. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday during term time from 09.00 to 11.45 and from 12.45 to 15.15 on Thursday afternoons between January and July each year. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 32 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 19 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local catchment area where they live. The pre-school is able to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities and is currently supporting children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs four members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two relief staff are available to cover holidays and sickness, one of whom holds an appropriate childcare qualification. The setting receives support and advice from Sure Start.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is outstanding because staff provide diverse and interesting ways for children to learn how to look after their health and hygiene. They are teaching transferable skills through all the routines of the session, from washing their hands and keeping resources and tables wiped and cleaned, to cleaning their home corner and handing out individual wipes to their friends to clean their hands before snack. As a result, children know how germs are spread and understand how exercise and good food and drink lead to healthy, strong bodies and growth. Children can confidently help themselves to drinking water from the jug and cups or from their own individual drinking cup throughout sessions and they understand the reasons for regularly undertaking physical play both indoors and out. They know about protecting their bodies from the cold and the heat in order to enjoy the outdoors healthily and they are becoming confident to manage their own toileting, nose blowing and coughing, through appropriate use of soap, warm water, tissues, paper towels and wipes.

Excellent attention to individual children's health needs means that dietary requirements and administration of any necessary medication are properly undertaken according to each child's needs and their parents' wishes. If food tasting or handling animals are planned, extra parent consents are obtained to ensure that children do not have allergies not previously noted. Most staff have first aid and food hygiene qualifications and accidents and medication records are fully maintained with appropriate parental signatures. All staff follow clear cleaning, food preparation and sickness procedures and ensure that parent helpers keep toilet areas checked and cleaned throughout sessions. Staff also evaluate their success in teaching children to stay healthy and adapt activity plans and the learning environment to improve this. They also adapt to conditions, for example, to ensure safety in the sun by bringing forward the time of the last sports day because very hot weather was forecast.

Children enjoy very good levels of physical activity indoors and out, taking part in climbing, balancing and riding activities. They also regularly grow plants and flowers, have an annual sports day, and enjoy diverse physical activities, such as indoor obstacle courses using tunnels, tables and boxes. All this activity supports their physical health very well. Children's emotional well-being is also promoted extremely well in the setting because staff are consistent and move easily about between activities. Staff are very warm and responsive to all children, frequently giving cuddles and ensuring that children have independence, but are not isolated.

Children are very well nourished and enjoy a very healthy diet through snacks, such as plain biscuits, fruit, cheese, tomato, carrot and cucumber. There are displays of healthy fruits and vegetables which are frequently referred to and children have regular opportunities to prepare and discuss healthy foods. Water or milk is offered to drink and water is easily available throughout sessions. Staff sit with children and very successfully encourage good manners and discussion about what children have been doing and learning.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, bright, spacious and safe environment with an extremely happy and purposeful atmosphere. There is plenty of room for coats and bags, with name ducklings for children to hook onto the mother duck display so that they feel at home from

the outset. Numerous displays show children's activities and trips, reminding them of what they have enjoyed and learnt during the previous year and useful posters are frequently referred to as children discuss ideas with staff. Resources, drawers and areas are well labelled and attractively set out so that children understand where things like paper and card are, can put away their own work in their drawer and can move easily into the post office or bedroom role play areas. Likewise they can set up the small world train track, investigate in the sand, explore the play areas with their binoculars and torches and go to use the toilet whenever they need to. There are inviting reading corners with books set out on shelves and in boxes by cushions so that children can make themselves comfortable to browse through books. Children use a very good range of stimulating resources which contribute significantly to their enjoyment and achievement.

There is good security to the only public entrance door, which is alarmed, kept locked during sessions and manned as children and parents arrive and depart from the building. Careful arrangements are made to ensure that staff know exactly who is collecting a child if this is not a parent or designated carer. However, registers are not taken as children arrive and depart so that it not always known exactly who is on the premises at the beginning of sessions. This jeopardises children's safety if there is an emergency before the register is taken. Nevertheless, children's safety is supported generally well through documentation and supported well in practice. Regular fire drills are held and records kept of these. Electrical appliances, wiring and fire equipment are checked and documentation about what to do in the event of any emergency is posted. Comprehensive risk assessments are undertaken to manage all planned trips safely and daily checks and stringent setting up procedures contribute to safety and minimise hazards. Toilets are kept clean and safe and spillages are promptly and hygienically mopped up. Staff or parents who use their cars to occasionally transport children are listed and notes of their suitable insurance and vehicles documents are kept.

Children are learning how to keep themselves safe because staff show them how to manage tools, such as cutlery and scissors, and move chairs safely. They take considered risks, learning to enjoy their play environment safely, for example, by being allowed to crawl underneath tables to hide and explore with torches. They are encouraged to work as a team, helping to carry heavy or bulky boxes when tidying up and picking things up off the floor so that their friends cannot fall over them. They are taught about fire safety and have visited the fire station, and they learn how to walk safely along roads on well planned walking trips. Themes about building or light are used to provide fun experiences where children are learning about how to be safe in the dark and how workmen adopt safe clothing and practices to minimise dangers around building sites.

Children are protected from abuse because all staff have a good understanding of their role in child protection. The named person attends updated training and cascades this to all other staff. They know who to contact if they are concerned about a child and the child protection flow chart and policy are displayed for easy reference.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children settle exceedingly quickly to play, discover and experiment. This is because staff and parents seamlessly help them to get started right away and activity areas are very inviting and stimulating. Staff come alongside children and play with them, reading stories, playing simple games and using the resources with them. Children are developing excellent levels of self-confidence because purposeful staff talk and listen to them constantly and have high

expectations of what they can achieve. They help children to extend their knowledge and develop their natural curiosity as they play with the play dough, sand, construction toys and role play areas. They challenge and test children's knowledge and give them chances to speak, sing, demonstrate their skills and make music both in small and large group situations. As a result, children are confident, concentrate well and play alongside one another and adults exceptionally well.

The session routine is simple and staff constantly explain and link the themes and activities. Children also know what is happening now and next because they can choose their activities, know where things are, and are involved in preparing and adjusting the environment for snack and group times. For example, they tidy up together or prepare for circle time when certain music is played and they can wipe tables and move chairs, taking responsibility for their play environment. This clarity in routine enables children to settle well, enter into diverse activities fully, behave well and enthusiastically join in with group activities like story and song times.

Children are happy and interested in what they are doing because staff are very well prepared and have tailored their activity plans to provide a wealth of real experiences addressing both the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum. Children use a wide variety of media, including water, sand, play dough, junk, soil, paint and natural objects. Interesting construction and information technology resources are made available to them. Children particularly enjoy varied experimental and role play opportunities, supported by visits to and from professional helpers in the community. This, supported by the presence of regular parent helpers, enables children to make very good connections with their peers and the community around them.

Nursery education:

The quality of the teaching and learning is good. Staff are highly committed to providing a caring, welcoming atmosphere and an approach which fosters self-confidence and good social behaviour. A varied programme is evaluated and adapted to ensure that all the areas of learning are covered in a way that allows each individual child to take the next steps in their development. Spontaneous opportunities are used too, such as watching and learning about a bird nesting in the play area. Staff are skilful in preparing and developing role play areas so that they provide a wealth of opportunities for creative, physical, understanding of the world, mark making and social skills to be developed. For example, a child's bedroom and a post office are set up at present which children enjoy using in a wide variety of play. Staff are alert to children who may prefer to play alone and innovatively use one to one, small group and large groups and positive good humour to capture all children's interest and challenge them to take the next steps in their learning.

Children are making good progress in all the areas of learning. This is because staff are very successful in providing for their personal, social and emotional development. Staff spend as much time as possible directly with the children and build fruitful relationships with them. They foster an emphasis upon care and concern for all others and an appreciation of the community and natural world so that children have a strong sense of place and are in touch with their world. For example, they plant and grow flowers, bake, fund raise for children in need, are aware of the weather and learn about police, fire, school and post office services through visits and role plays. They enjoy time to explore their play environment and adapt it as they select and set up craft and small world activities, make dens and use torches, take part in obstacle courses and use the outdoor play house as a bird hide or observatory. Staff weave learning about words, letter and number throughout the routines of the day, so that children are learning

about literacy and problem solving in practical relevant ways, for example, as they find out how many children are here today.

Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. They make some observation notes during sessions about what they see children can do and supervisors take numerous photos showing how children's play and activities are leading to their learning and development. Children's individual progress profiles are completed by key workers with reference to some of these, but the profiles do not contain many examples or evidence to bring them to life. In addition, some of children's work is retained, dated and annotated as evidence of their progress.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children join in very well because the warm environment and friendly, purposeful staff help children feel at home from the outset. Children talk to their friends and staff about their home lives and show care and interest in one another. Staff are warm and tactile, frequently sitting children on their knee, so that they feel loved and cared for. Parents are warmly welcomed into the setting at the beginning and end of sessions and staff communicate clearly and openly with them all, exchanging information about children's particular needs, so that sensitivity and due regard is given to children's present circumstances and feelings. Children are helped to consider and value diversity because there are good books, dressing up costumes, dolls, play figures, puzzles and games which show positive images of various cultures and disabilities. There are also topic activities and project work undertaken to bring other festivals and cultures alive for children and to develop a caring interest in children in need. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children and adults with physical disabilities, behaviour or learning needs, or who speak English as an additional language, are included fully in the life of the setting because staff are committed to inclusion. Staff liaise well with parents and relevant professionals, using interpreters if appropriate, to ensure that they plan and work together using recognised and consistent techniques which benefit children with particular needs.

Staff use their time constructively to reward helpfulness and good behaviour. They use sticker rewards and simple illustrated behaviour rules to good effect and act out conflict situations using puppets and toys as props to prompt discussion and demonstrate simple conflict resolution. As a result, children behave very well and are able to share and cooperate. Staff model appropriate play skills, using short and simple language and help all the children to feel special as they see themselves in photos and can recognise their work in displays at their own height all around the setting. Staff make it easier for children to conform by making it very clear what they want them to do and actively involving them in all aspects of the session, ensuring that children are never aimlessly waiting at times, such as snack, clearing up and movements around the setting.

The quality of partnership with parents and carers is good. Children receive consistency of care between home and pre-school because key staff communicate well with parents and involve them regularly in sessions through the session rota. Some parents also come in to share their own talents, perhaps in fire safety or building. Parents receive a prospectus about the pre-school and thereafter a clear notice board and monthly newsletters inform parents about what children are covering in sessions and any changes to the routine or methods employed. However, no information is given to parents about the Foundation Stage curriculum. Likewise, parents rarely see their child's developmental records. Nevertheless, good termly reports of progress are sent

home from key workers and comprehensive planning and photo albums are displayed which show parents how children's activities are leading to their learning. Parents' levels of satisfaction are high. Parents seen on the day of inspection are very happy with the amount of choice for children and how well the staff use the environment to make a happy atmosphere which is conducive to enjoyment and achievement.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Recruitment, vetting, induction, training and appraisal systems work well to ensure that children are well protected and cared for by trained, up to date and motivated staff. All the committee and child care staff are vetted and have individual staff files. They are well informed, prepared and motivated because they regularly meet as a group and undertake relevant ongoing training. Staff deployment contributes well to children's good health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting. Staff ratios are good and staff and parent helpers know exactly what their roles are throughout each session. They are also willing and able to adapt and cover for one another when children need one to one time, perhaps for personal care needs. They involve children appropriately in all aspects of sessions so that they are becoming independent in taking care of their own safety and health.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The supervisor provides good support to all staff and is well supported by the committee. She acts as an innovative and positive role model and is highly committed to promoting an inclusive environment. She has structured the underpinning policies and procedures of the pre-school into the five outcome areas of the 'Every child matters' agenda and she plans and evaluates the education provision well alongside all key staff. As a result, children's individual learning needs are met well.

Policies and procedures mostly work in practice to promote good outcomes for children. Curriculum and activity planning, evaluation and health and safety aspects are particularly strong. However, some incident records do not name the child who is the subject of the report, making them unusable in working with the child's parent. In addition, written parental permission has not been obtained for the seeking of any necessary emergency medical treatment or advice, should this be needed in the future. There are also a number of other parental consents and information about children's needs and abilities upon entry which are not stored together with the child's enrolment form. This makes it hard to find and use information appropriately and keep it confidential. Nevertheless, policies are reviewed, kept up to date and made available for parents to read, although some parents do not know how to contact Ofsted. 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 for care and two recommendations for nursery education made at the last inspection. The setting needed to improve the administration of medication system to ensure that parents sign to acknowledge all administrations of medication. This is now being done through use of a record book specifically for medication administration which has a designated place for parents to sign. The pre-school was also asked to provide more variety of snacks and personal independence for children. Healthy snacks of sugar free savoury biscuits and various fruits are supplied by parents for the snack and children are regularly involved in snack preparation, serving, and preparing and clearing the tables. These improvements promote children's health in the setting.

Systems for sharing children's progress with their parents have been developed by the provision of termly progress reports by each child's key worker. There is also a displayed planning file showing photographs of how children's play and experiences are linking to the plans and their overall learning and development. However, parents still rarely see their child's own developmental profile and are not well informed about the curriculum.

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):

- ensure that the daily attendance register is accurate and up to date as children arrive and depart in case of any emergency
- ensure that accident and incident records are individual to the child concerned and are organised for easy reference with children's enrolment forms, entry details and parental consents forms
- ensure that written parental permission is obtained, at the time of placement, to the seeking of any necessary emergency medical treatment or advice in the future.

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 parents know how to contact Ofsted, are given good information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and can have regular access to their child's developmental profile.

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