

Lune Valley Pre-School Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	309680
Inspection date	27 February 2008
Inspector	Margaret Baines
Setting Address	Caton St. Paul's C of E Primary School, Moorside Road, Brookhouse, Lancaster, Lancashire, LA2 9PJ
Telephone number	01524 770 241
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Registered person	Lune Valley Pre-School Centre
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?

Lune Valley Pre-School opened in 1997 and operates from the pre-school room and the hall in St Paul's Primary School, Caton. The pre-school is managed by a committee who employs a manager who is in day to day control. A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. It is open each weekday for sessions of three hours, term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 30 children from two to five years on roll. Of these, 22 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and who have English as a second language.

The pre-school employs two members of staff, both of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The children are learning the importance of hygiene because staff talk to them about the risks from germs if we do not wash our hands at appropriate times of the day. Children are learning to independently visit the toilets and wash their hands. Children are developing a good awareness of how to care for their health needs and know that they need to wear their hats and coats when it is cold outdoors. Children are also learning about the needs of their bodies and can identify when they need a rest or a drink. Their health needs are met through the provider's good health and hygiene policies and procedures, which include staff wearing protective clothing when preparing and serving snacks. Children's health needs are met effectively because both staff members hold a current first aid certificate. All required written permissions are also in place, should an accident or an emergency occur.

Children are developing an awareness of foods that are good for you because staff talk to them at snack time about the food they are eating. At present this is mainly fruit, therefore, the snack menu is limited. Planned activities also develop children's awareness of healthy eating. Children know when they need a drink and readily help themselves from the water jug available. Their dietary needs are met as the provider records full information from parents. Children chat happily in their social groups at snack times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very welcoming and safe indoor environment. This is planned to meet their needs by ensuring play areas continue to be maintained to a high standard. Resources are readily available, therefore children can make choices because staff carefully plan the environment to ensure children are stimulated effectively. Children learn to keep themselves safe because staff are skilled in the way they talk to them about safe procedures and reinforce safe practices as they ask children to pick up toys, not to run and remind them to be careful. The setting has a comprehensive risk assessment in place, which effectively minimises the risk to children and helps to keep them safe as they play freely. However, the emergency evacuation procedure has not been practised for some time.

The pre-school is very welcoming to parents and children, being enhanced by good examples of children's own work which is attractively displayed. Photographs of children at play also reflect the positive ethos of the setting. Children delight in their work and are eager to share this with others. Children are excited as they play in a setting where they can move freely and without restriction, as they access very good play materials and choose activities and resources from those set out. The environment for young children is carefully planned through staff's good knowledge, to ensure their safety and enjoyment in all aspects of their play.

Children's welfare is protected to a high level because staff are clear in their role in child protection and understand their responsibility to contact the named person. The named person is fully aware of her role and the procedure she needs to follow should a situation occur which requires a referral to the appropriate agency.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children look forward to going to pre-school. They enter happily and eagerly greet staff and their friends. They go to play confidently as they await the arrival of all children before circle time. They demonstrate good independent learning skills. They enjoy a good range of activities which promote their development and enjoyment, for example, children are very busy making Mothers Day cards and playing with the small world toys. They also enjoy painting and making models in the creative area. Their curiosity and eagerness to play and learn are fostered through the well organised provision of choices of play and the enjoyable focused activities. Staff monitor and assess children's development using the 'Birth to three matters' guidance for those children not yet in receipt of funding. Consequently, children's learning needs are met very well within this setting.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children's individual learning needs are ably provided for by good curriculum planning that specifies the coverage of the stepping stones, with consideration given for ability levels and younger children coming in during the year. Children's desire to learn is stimulated by the good range of activities organised for their enjoyment. For example, children enjoy making the Mothers Day flowers using numbers as petals. They also enjoy very much the home corner where they imitate what adults do as they make a cup of tea and care for the babies. Children are also developing their fine muscle movements as they make models using tools and play dough.

The present theme of spring provides many interesting activities for the children to enjoy. Children eagerly select resources for their play ideas and freely move around the areas of the continuous provision to settle to read a book or play in the home corner or the construction area. However, the areas of continuous provision are not at present clearly defined, therefore, they lose their impact on children's learning.

Children persist at their play for good periods of time and concentrate well in the group times that are focused very well by staff who encourage their sharing and listening skills. Their progress is regularly assessed by staff identifying the key skills achieved and those to be revisited, consequently children's individual learning needs are met well. Their specific achievement of stepping stones towards the early learning goals are recorded within their development records.

Children are making good progress in all areas of learning, supported by effective teaching that stimulates their curiosity and motivation to learn. They use numbers readily in their play and can count to five and some beyond as staff make good use of everyday opportunities, such as circle time, to extend children's mathematical skills. Their calculation skills are developing as they decide how many children are sat around the table and how many cups are needed.

Children have good opportunities to recognise numbers as they consider the day of the week and match numbers in activities. Children also have good communication, language and literacy skills as they eagerly use their good range of vocabulary to express their ideas during circle time. They are developing their understanding of linking sounds to letters through the use of the Jolly Phonics reading scheme, which is confidently delivered by staff. Children use their thinking skills to explain how they will fix construction pieces together. Children's emergent

writing skills are developing as they write their name on their artwork and make lists in the home corner.

The children competently use tools as they make models at the workbench. Children have opportunities to develop their imaginative and creative skills as they enjoy the role play in the home corner. However, the current role play area of the garden centre lacks sufficient resources to support the children's learning effectively. Children enjoy music and are learning to sing songs from memory, for example, they enjoy singing Twinkle Twinkle and Incy Wincy Spider. They have good access to musical instruments as they develop their skills to recognise loud and soft sounds. Children are learning to work together, for example, as they build a tower using the construction resources.

Children show good care and concern for each other and readily relate to each other's experiences and news. Their good self esteem is encouraged by staff who foster children's sense of belonging to their community and their place in their close families.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are enthusiastically welcomed into the setting; they are valued and respected because staff ensure each child has the opportunity to engage in all aspects of the curriculum. This applies to all children, whether they attend daily or on a part-time basis. The inclusion of all children is actively planned and monitored. Children who have a learning difficulty are welcomed and supported effectively within this setting as are children who have English as a second language.

The children are learning to take responsibility for their behaviour because the staff follow positive and effective strategies for helping children learn to manage their behaviour. Children learn the boundaries and guidelines because staff are consistent and are very good role models, having high regard for each other and the children. Children's behaviour is good; they learn right from wrong because staff are consistent in their approach and provide gentle reminders to reinforce boundaries.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. The effective partnership contributes significantly to children's well-being. Parents are provided with comprehensive information which informs them about the care provided. Parents' views are actively sought and they are provided with regular newsletters to update them on aspects of the pre-school. Parents learn about their child's development through discussion and strong links with their key worker. They are actively involved in their child's learning by providing detailed information at the time of the child's registration. They also update the key worker on any significant changes and development and they contribute to the topic work particularly with the funded children. This ensures children's individual needs are met and a strong link is made with home.

The children learn about their community and other cultures as they engage in activities which promote their understanding. They enthusiastically make their Mothers Day cards. They enjoy playing together, they are learning to share as they wait their turn, for example, in the sand tray and at the computer. They learn to manage their behaviour and are well mannered as they ask for a piece of fruit, saying please and thank you. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by an organised environment which enables children to make choices from a good selection of appropriate resources. Children's needs are met and safeguarded because all legally required documentation is well maintained. All policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated. As a result, children's welfare is further protected. The pre-school has provided a robust system for the vetting and clearance of all staff, in line with the change in legislation, to further meet the needs of children.

The leadership and management is good. Staff work together, are committed as they work as a team and support each other in their roles. Training is promoted for staff to increase their knowledge and skills, to improve their practice and, therefore, the care of the children.

The setting promotes the education and outcomes for children well, with a team of staff who continuously review their own performance through staff meetings and the assessment of the activities that they plan for the children. The management committee monitors staff performance through discussions, in order to improve the care and education provided for children.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the pre-school agreed to develop further the lost or uncollected child policy and to devise and implement a system to record any significant incidents. The documents have been revised to meet the requirements. The pre-school also agreed to ensure that the contents of the first aid box are checked and replenished as and when necessary. The first aid box was examined which confirmed that it is now replenished. Consequently, these improvements have significantly enhanced the care for the children in this pre-school.

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):

- increase the variety of healthy snacks served to the children
- ensure children have regular opportunities to practise the emergency evacuation procedure.

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 the role play area to ensure that it provides a quality learning environment for the children

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