

St Bernadette's Pre-School Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY258888
Inspection date	07 March 2008
Inspector	Anna Barnes
Setting Address	St Bernadette's Primary School, Devonshire Road, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY2 0AJ
Telephone number	01253 357 891
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Registered person	St Bernadette's Pre-School Nursery
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

St Bernadette's Pre-school is managed by a voluntary management committee chaired by the head teacher, school governors, parent representatives and staff of the pre-school. It opened in 2003 in its present premises but has been running for many years in a nearby location. It operates from a building on the site of St Bernadette's Primary School in Bispham, Blackpool. The provision consists of two main rooms and a baby room. The children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 45 children under eight years may attend, not more than nine may be under two years at any one time. There are currently 83 children on roll, of whom 40 are in receipt of funding for nursery education.

The pre-school is open each week day from 08:00 to 17:30 for 48 weeks of the year. The pre-school accepts children from the local community, not all of whom go on to attend St Bernadette's school. Children may attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties.

The pre-school employs 11 staff. Nine of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. Three members of staff are currently working towards an NVQ childcare qualification. The setting receives support from Blackpool Early Years Partnership.

A breakfast club is also run each weekday morning from 08:00 to 09:00 for children aged from three to under eight years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are very well nourished and enjoy a variety of healthy meals and snacks each day that include a good range of fruit and vegetables. For example, bread sticks, fresh fruit salad, raisins, carrots, pasta and salad. The children lay the table at lunch time with cutlery and cups and pour their own drinks. This helps them to develop their independence skills and hand-eye coordination. Fresh drinking water is always accessible in a water dispenser so they can help themselves. Children demonstrate very good pouring skills as they pour out their drinks of water at snack time. The children's understanding of healthy eating is extended as they participate and learn about growing plants by growing herbs and cress to taste. Staff provide interesting information for parents regarding healthy foods that they can include in their children's lunch boxes, together with the snacks and lunch menu provided.

Children are highly protected from infection because the sick child policy is available to staff, well adhered to and is shared with parents through the policies and operational plan. Staff are trained in first aid, which further supports children's health and safety. There are first aid kits available in case of accidents and emergencies. Children's accident records are completed and shared appropriately with parents and there are clear procedures in place to support children if they are ill. There is a separate area where children can be comforted until the parent arrives. If children are tired they are able to rest in a cot, pram or on sleep mats.

Staff promote good hygiene practices because they implement suitable procedures for keeping children healthy, for example, using antibacterial spray in the cleaning routine and aprons for bathroom and meal duties which is very good practice, effectively minimising the risks of cross infection in the setting and therefore reducing the risks to children. They are also learning about being healthy through the daily routine because they understand the importance of regular hand washing during significant times of the day, such as after visiting the toilet and before eating. There are posters displayed and staff reinforce effective hand washing by reminding the children to always rub the back of their hands with soap. This prevents the spread of infection and the children understand that if they don't wash their hands they get germs as one child clearly explained during a group discussion.

Children take part in regular physical activity both indoors and outdoors. Staff are very aware of the importance of children receiving regular fresh air and exercise. Children move with confidence and coordination as they balance on blocks and planks pretending to be seated and watching a football match between England and Blackpool, shouting 'they've scored'. Children enjoy jumping from one stepping stone to another, rolling a large tyre, skilfully riding wheeled toys around negotiating children and traffic cones. Children take great delight in playing hide and seek in the car tyres, using the material provided to hide from their peers. Children's physical development is supported by, for example, a large climbing frame, a hungry caterpillar tunnel

to move over and through, together with large construction equipment to enable children to develop co-ordination of their gross movement.

Children develop their fine motor skills as they use spades to dig deep in the sand and fill their buckets, use scissors for cutting, pastry cutters for making shapes in the play dough and use a good range of mark making equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Premises are safe and secure. For example, staff ensure that they supervise children's arrival and departure carefully and ensure that the door is always securely closed. The staff ensure that regular risk assessments are carried out and daily checks are carried out at the beginning and end of the day to address areas of potential concern that may impact on children's continued safety. However, glass milk bottles are stored on the floor of the kitchen and plastic bags are kept in an unsecured low level cupboard whilst the kitchen was accessible to children, which is potentially hazardous. The children learn about keeping themselves safe by staff reminding them about tidying up the toys so they do not trip over and explaining to the children that they can run fast outside and slow inside to keep safe. Fire safety is also taught through regular emergency evacuation practises.

The nursery is welcoming to children with colourful displays on all the walls within the nursery which includes a good variety of children's art work. All playrooms are creatively arranged to allow the children to move spontaneously and independently around all areas of play and learning. Children are accessing a broad range of resources which are appropriate to their ages and stages of development and actively support their learning in most areas. Resources are well arranged to enable children to make spontaneous decisions about the toys and resources they are going to use.

Children are very well protected because staff fully understand their important role in protecting them from abuse and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice if needed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the nursery and arrive happy and eager to participate. Planning for children under two is linked to the 'Birth to three matters' framework and is clearly evaluated. Relationships between staff and children are good which contributes to children's well-being. The effective key worker system ensures children are cared for by familiar adults who support and encourage them. As a result they are aware of and meet children's needs effectively. For example, they know when the children are tired, thirsty or need an alternative activity, as staff respond appropriately. The children clearly enjoy attending the nursery where staff create a fun and caring atmosphere. There are systems in place to identify the needs of the children under three and staff have devised a clear system through observations that enables them to consistently cover all areas of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and what they need to work on with the children next.

Children under three acquire new skills as they join in interesting activities. They enjoy examining and exploring a wide range of natural materials, such as woven, wooden objects; scarves, mirrors, foam and shakers made from seeds. Children enjoy dancing and singing to action songs, 'This is the way we wash our face,' or exploring the ball pool. They sit quietly and look at books

exploring the illustrations as they confidently turn the pages. Photographs in the children's files highlight their involvement in a variety of activities. Children are confident and show great interest in all they do. For example, they spend lots of time exploring different materials as staff extend their sensory skills at Harvest time as they smell and touch a variety of fruit, vegetables and herbs. The free play sessions encourage them to continually make many choices in their play. Young children sit on the floor and persevere with a large piece jigsaw with minimal adult intervention. They skilfully manipulate the pieces into place demonstrating their developing hand and eye coordination. The children are delighted with their success and relish the praise from staff on its completion.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress as the staff have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage. This is evident in their planning, assessments and evaluation of children's progress that link very well to the stepping stones. This information is used to aid future planning for individual children and ensures that appropriate challenges are set so that all children make progress. Staff use questioning appropriately, which extends the children's learning.

Children are able to concentrate and actively listen to others; they respond appropriately with questions and make relevant comments during a discussion with staff about the importance of nursery rules, being polite, kind to others and understanding how to keep themselves safe. They are developing their language for thinking as they join in discussions about what they need to buy at the nursery shop. They frequently converse animatedly when undertaking the role of assistant and customer in the local shop. Children are able to easily recognise the initial sounds in many words, including their names and their peers' names. They regularly have opportunities to use writing as a means of recording as they freely access a full range of mark-making resources, such as paper, crayons, rulers, scissors, paints and glue spreaders. Some children can confidently write their own and sounding out the letters as they write. Others enjoy different opportunities to explore and learn to make marks during painting, and chalking on the flags outside. There are opportunities for children to recognise numbers, however, there are few opportunities for children to count and develop the ability to problem solve as part of practical and day to day activities. Children frequently choose to sit in the reading corner with their peers and staff and enjoy looking at the wide range of books available to them.

There are rich sources of reference within the children's environment and staff give careful consideration to clear and consistent lettering and numbering. They spend time together focusing on letter sounds which staff encourage children to identify during play, at registration, during stories, mark making, games and questioning.

As children explore and experiment with different mediums, such as sand, water and play dough, they learn about weight and capacity. They regularly construct with a purpose, using a variety of easily accessible resources, stickle bricks, large connects, blocks and planks. Children are learning to operate equipment during play with the till, microwave and washing machine and show awareness of how these items are used at home and in the supermarket. They have plenty of opportunities to develop their computer skills. They confidently demonstrate good mouse control, accessing the pictures they want, then independently printing them off to colour and cut out.

Children enjoy participating in role play and dressing up in different costumes. Their imaginative development is extended due to the availability of props. For example, one child showed the

pirate hat and eye patch she had made saying, 'I'm Jack Sparrow and I'm going to fight Peter Pan'; another boy wrapped himself in a large piece of material and said he was bat and moved quickly imitating he was in flight.

Overall, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals given their starting points.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have an understanding of diversity through a range of resources and activities. They develop awareness of the wider world through planned activities that are linked to customs and cultures, for example, celebrating Divali, Halloween, Easter, Christmas and exploring other countries as depicted in the display of the 'world we live in', where children had made flags, painted a map of the United Kingdom and gathered postcards and posters of different countries to discuss. Staff extend the experience for children by providing a variety of related books, dolls, utensils, play food, jigsaws and posters depicting positive images of different cultures, however, these are limited in relation to disability. There are systems in place to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities and the designated member of staff is aware of the importance of working closely with parents and other agencies to support children's individual needs. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The staff act as good role models. They are calm and gentle in their own approach, addressing each other politely and respectfully, that in turn reflects on the children who are polite to each other. Behaviour issues are managed using suitable strategies that are in line with the written behaviour management policy, using appropriate explanations at a level children understand which creates an environment that encourages children to behave well. They are regularly praised and encouraged by staff and this makes them feel good about themselves.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive sufficient information about the educational curriculum via the display boards, newsletters, parent sessions and booklets. Parents spoke positively about the induction policy the nursery operates and they also express the view that staff are friendly, approachable and easy to talk to should they have any questions about their children's care. Parents can provide information in the 'All about me' booklet to assist staff in identifying children's starting points. Parents have access to their children's assessment records and informally discuss their children's progress with the staff on a regular basis. Formal parents meetings take place during the second term when children have had time to settle. Parent's views about the setting are also sought through parental questionnaires to assist the staff in evaluating the service and identifying any areas for development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Comprehensive documentation is in place which contributes to the children's health, safety and well being. Rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures are in place to determine the suitability of staff members to safeguard the children attending the nursery. There are clear staffing procedures which include a six month induction review, annual appraisals to ensure the staff's training needs are identified, in order to develop their skills to support children's care and learning. Documentation is supported by policies and procedures which are regularly reviewed and reflected in daily practice. Space within the nursery is effectively organised to enhance the play and learning opportunities for children.

The leadership and management are good. Children's educational needs are very well met through the positive leadership and management of the manager and staff, who attend meetings that are relevant to the provision of the educational curriculum. Some staff have attended relevant courses and they 'cascade' the information to the rest of the team. They have a good understanding and knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. There is an effective system for monitoring the work that is undertaken. The manager is very familiar with the principles for early years education. The manager and the staff regularly evaluate the delivery of the curriculum through discussion, evaluating parental questionnaires and activities undertaken by the children, in order to have continual improvement. An effective level of ongoing support provided by the local authority education advisors also positively supports children's learning.

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 group were given two recommendations relating to reviewing the behaviour management policy to include methods of managing bullying, and protecting children's confidentiality with regard to health records. The behaviour management policy has been updated and children's health records are maintained confidentially in relation to individual requirements. The recommendations have been implemented, therefore improving children's care and safety.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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

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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):

- continue to develop the range of resources to extend children's learning of diversity in relation to disability.
- review the risk assessment to ensure that identified hazards in relation to glass bottles and plastic bags in the kitchen area are minimised

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):

- continue to develop children's ability to count and problem solve as part of practical and routine day to day activity to support their understanding of number.

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