

Barton Clough Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY287424
Inspection date 15 January 2008
Inspector Carla Owen

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Registered person Alison Mary Glasgow

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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Barton Clough Pre-School opened in 2004. It is run by an individual provider and operates from an adapted self contained classroom in the grounds of Barton Clough School, Stretford. Children have access to part of the enclosed garden area at the back of the building. The pre-school serves the local area. There may be a maximum of 25 children on the premises at any one time.

There is a total of 45 children on the register. Children attend for a variety of sessions each week. The pre-school opens Monday, Thursday and Friday 9.00 to 12.30, and Tuesday and Wednesday from 09.00 to 15.00 during term time only, corresponding with Trafford school holidays.

There are four full time staff who work with the children. All staff hold a recognised childcare qualification. The staff receive support from Surestart and the School Improvement service and are also supported by regular volunteers and temporary staff.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Good procedures are followed by staff to protect children from cross infection and illness. A cleaner comes into the setting during the week and staff ensure that the room and toilets are clean at the start of each session. Surfaces and floors are wiped down throughout the day providing children with a clean and well maintained environment.

Children are learning the importance of personal hygiene as they wash their hands at appropriate times of the day, such as before eating and after toileting. An effective sick child policy is in place to ensure children are comforted appropriately and parents are contacted in the event of a child becoming unwell. Children are treated appropriately in the event of an accident as there is a fully stocked first aid box within easy reach and all staff hold a valid first aid certificate. Medication records are generally well maintained, however, parents do not sign to acknowledge that medication has been administered to their children.

Snack times are relaxed, social occasions as children and staff sit together and chat. Children are provided with a range of healthy snacks, which includes fruit and vegetables on a daily basis. This helps to promote their growth and development. Staff responsible for preparing food have obtained a food hygiene certificate to ensure food is prepared hygienically. Parents provide a packed lunch for those children who wish to stay. Lunches are closely monitored by staff to ensure children experience a healthy, well balanced diet. Children are well hydrated as they freely access water to keep themselves refreshed throughout the day. Good manners are promoted as children are encouraged to say 'please' and 'thank you' to staff and each other. A wealth of information is obtained regarding children's health to ensure they receive the best possible care.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into a bright and stimulating environment. Colourful displays of children's artwork along with photographs of them at play give them a strong sense of belonging within the setting. Children move around their immediate environment with ease and confidence. There are clearly defined areas of interest, such as role play, creative and reading areas, which allow children to engage in play as soon as they arrive. Playrooms are well lit and kept at an adequate temperature to ensure children's comfort whilst they play. Children are able to rest and play according to their needs. A separate room, with brightly coloured cushions is available for children to take part in quiet activities, such as playing educational games on the computer or reading a book. A good range of developmentally appropriate toys and resources are available to the children and meet their interests. They are checked regularly to ensure they are safe for children's use, and they are organised for easy access, allowing children to make informed decisions about their play. Children enjoy selecting toys which appeal to their interests.

Risk assessments are carried out on a daily basis to ensure all areas used by children are safe. Entrances and exits are secure and visitor's are asked to sign in which further promotes children's safety. Fire drills are carried out on a regular basis, ensuring that children have a clear understanding of how to evacuate the building in an emergency. All fire detection and control equipment is well maintained and all fire doors are unobstructed.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have a good awareness of the indicators of abuse and the procedures to follow if they have any concerns. All staff have attended training in this area to ensure they have a secure knowledge of all issues related to safeguarding children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children happily enter the pre-school in the morning and confidently separate from their parents and carers. Parents and children are warmly greeted by staff who take time to speak to all children upon arrival. They are happy, confident and have good levels of self-esteem. Staff interact very well with the children. They take the time to support them during their play and extend their learning experiences through questioning. Good settling in procedures are in place helping children feel comfortable and secure in their environment. For example, parents are invited to stay with their children during the sessions until they feel confident to leave them. Children thrive on the routines which operate within the pre-school, as they confidently hang up their coats in the morning without prompting and collect their name tags to self register. Children are clearly secure in their environment and happily talk to visitors.

Children's sensory development is well promoted, for example, children enjoy exploring the textures of sand, water and gloop. They are provided with good first hand experiences, for example, children have fun as they plant vegetables, such as potatoes, tomatoes and beans and later eat them during snack time. Planning covers all areas of learning and observations are used to inform future plans to ensure children are provided with a balanced curriculum.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff successfully provide children with a balanced routine that enables them to make steady progress towards the Early Learning Goals. The activities provided are developmentally appropriate to the children and demonstrate that staff have a growing awareness of the Foundation Stage.

There is currently no clear system for ensuring all areas of the curriculum are adequately assessed or for monitoring children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals, which results in gaps in children's learning not being clearly identified. A range of teaching methods are used to meet the needs of the children. Children benefit from generally well organised areas of continuous provision, which enables them to choose from a suitable range of activities which help consolidate their learning, such as sand play, construction, gluing and sticking and imaginative play.

Children are secure and happy within the pre-school. They have formed good relationships with staff and peers and confidently express their needs. Children have limited opportunities to take responsibility within the pre-school. As a result, their self care skills are not fully promoted.

Children have good opportunities to link sounds to letters, for example, during a jigsaw activity staff members encourage children to identify the sound at the beginning of the item's name, such as 'a' for apple. Activities, such as using magnetic letters also help children develop an ability to link sounds to letters. They learn that print carries meaning as items around the room are labelled and children are able to recognise their own name as they self register on arrival. Children enjoy mark making using a range of materials, for example, a chalk board is available in the mark making area along with a variety of pencils and crayons. Children are also able to

mark make in the outdoor area using the white boards, where they can practise letter or number formations.

Children are developing an awareness of mathematical concepts. For example, they learn simple calculation as they sing number songs, such as 'Five currant buns'. They also learn about measure through filling and pouring activities in the water tray.

Children are able to express themselves creatively within the pre-school as they paint pictures and have access to a wide range of creative resources. They are able to use their imagination as they play in the role play area and play with small world toys. The role play area is rotated regularly to ensure children are provided with a range of experiences. They also thoroughly enjoy dressing up in a wide range of costumes.

Children have sound opportunities to explore and investigate their surroundings. A gardening area has been allocated outside, which allows children to explore what's hidden in the soil and to observe growth as they plant seeds. They are able to develop their exploration and investigation skills through activities, such as 'floating and sinking'. Melting chocolate when making cornflake cakes and observing how water turns to ice when frozen and then melts back into water, allows children to learn about physical changes. Information technology is established well within the setting. Children have access to a computer, where they are able to play educational games to help consolidate their learning.

Children's physical development is well promoted. A gym club is conducted every week which provides opportunities for children to develop a variety of skills. For example, they learn to use a range of large and small apparatus safely, develop spatial awareness and learn to move their bodies in different ways. A free flow of choice between indoor and outdoor play has been established well. Children can make choices in where they would like to play and are supervised effectively by staff. Children are developing their hand movements as they take part in activities, such as threading and manipulating play dough. Many children also use tools, such as cutters, rollers and scissors competently.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children and their families are warmly welcomed into the pre-school. Children's individual needs and requirements are known because staff obtain a wealth of information from parents in order to fully understand how best to meet children's needs. Children learn about the wider world and cultural diversity as they celebrate different religious festivals and have access to a wide range of resources which promote positive images of race, gender, culture and disability. Staff respect the uniqueness of each child and their individual needs. Children with English as an additional language are well supported as staff with additional languages are employed at the pre-school. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are also well supported as staff work closely with parents and outside agencies to ensure children's needs are met. Activities are adapted and appropriate teaching strategies are used to promote inclusion for all children. Overall, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are well behaved. Staff adopt appropriate techniques to manage children's behaviour. All children are treated with individual care and respect. Staff make good use of praise and encouragement to promote positive behaviour within the pre-school.

Parents are warmly welcomed into the pre-school at the beginning and end of each session. The pre-school operates an open door policy to ensure parents feel confident to approach staff regarding their children. Informal chats help to keep them up to date with their children's care. Information on the staff employed at the pre-school is displayed which keeps parents informed on the staff caring for their children. Policies and procedures are made available, keeping parents fully informed of practices which operate within the pre-school. Planning documents are displayed to allow parents to view the range of activities on offer. Parents are encouraged to volunteer at the pre-school and take an active part in their children's care. Discussions with parents along with results from the parental questionnaires indicate that they are happy with the service provided. They clearly value the 'friendly, helpful and welcoming staff' and feel well informed of the care which is provided for their children.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of nursery education is satisfactory. Open days throughout the year give parents an opportunity to meet staff and discuss any issues they may have in relation to their children's progress. Information is obtained from parents regarding children's starting points in their learning, however, they are not kept fully up to date with their children's progress throughout the year. Transitional reports are provided before children begin full time education and are linked to each area of learning. Parents are not provided with sufficient information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and do not have sufficient opportunities to contribute to their children's assessments throughout the year. This prevents them from being fully involved in their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Good procedures are in place for the recruitment and vetting of new staff to the pre-school. However, there are currently no formal systems in place to monitor staff's continued suitability to work with children. Children benefit from a well qualified staff team. Space is well organised to provide children with a balanced range of activities to support their learning. Staff organise their time and daily routine well. A structured timetable is in place, however, this is flexible to the needs of the children. High staff-child ratios, effective key worker system and grouping of children ensures that the children receive positive support and interaction with familiar staff who promote their health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution.

All necessary policies and procedures are in place and work in practice. Most documentation was available at inspection and correctly maintained, however, an omission has been identified; explicit written permission has not been obtained from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The manager monitors the education and care through working closely with staff. The manager is very professional and acts as a good role model for staff. She is able to identify the setting's strengths and areas for development and action plans are put in place to address issues in a timely manner. There is a clear commitment to improvement and annual appraisals and regular staff meetings enable staff to identify any training needs. Staff are keen to attend regular training to improve their knowledge and understanding of childcare and learning. The manager works closely with the local authority and other outside agencies in order to improve the quality of the provision and has built a committed staff team who clearly enjoy what they do.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

During the last inspection the provider was asked to ensure all staff know and understand the policies and procedures relating to the setting and to ensure records for administering medication are in place. These recommendations have now been met. Staff are made fully aware of all policies and procedures during the induction period and these are reviewed regularly. A medication record is maintained of all medication administered to children at the setting.

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):

- ensure explicit written permission is obtained from parents for seeking emergency medical treatment or advice and ensure the medication records are signed by parents to acknowledge the entry
- improve systems for monitoring staff's ongoing suitability to work with children

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 a system for tracking children's learning to ensure they are making good progress in all areas
- provide more opportunities for children to develop their self care skills
- provide good quality information for parents on the Foundation Stage Curriculum
- develop systems for keeping parents fully informed on their children's progress in all areas of learning.

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