

Chetwynd Barracks Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	253110
Inspection date	13 September 2007
Inspector	Anne McKay
Setting Address	Chilwell Station, Chilwell, Beeston, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, NG9 5HA
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Registered person	Chilwell Station Playgroup
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?

Chetwynd Barracks Pre-School opened in 1986. It is run by a voluntary management committee and operates from the community centre on the site of Chetwynd Army Barracks in Chilwell, near Nottingham. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open from 09:15 to 12:00 and from 12:30 to 15:00 during term-time only. Provision is made for some children to attend for the full day. The children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 23 children aged from two and a half to under five years on roll. Of these, 20 receive funding for early education. The group serves the resident service families and any Ministry of Defence employee employed at the Barracks.

The Pre-school employs seven members of staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications. The Pre-school receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well-promoted by staff at the setting. They learn to wash their hands as part of the daily routine and understand that they do this to stop them getting germs. Older children develop independent skills in this area with little prompting whilst younger children receive appropriate support from staff. Children are protected from the risk of cross-infection because staff are consistent in their health and hygiene practices, such as washing their own hands and cleaning surfaces regularly with anti-bacterial cleaner. Parents understand not to bring their children to the setting when they are ill so other children are protected from infection. All accidents are recorded in sufficient detail to understand what has happened to a child and to see what treatment they have been given. All staff have undertaken first aid training to ensure appropriate treatment is given to children when required. Staff obtain written permission from parents before administering any medication to children and follow relevant guidance and procedures. All health records are shared responsibly with parents to promote continuity of care.

Children play outside in the fresh air each day. They access a range of outdoor equipment that is suitable to promote their physical development. Children who are funded to receive nursery education have their physical development very well promoted. The equipment is used to promote their gross motor skills such as climbing and balancing. They run, skip and jump with confidence and develop a good sense of space. Children's co-ordination and small muscle control are promoted through the use of tools such as scissors and glue spreaders which they use with increasing control. Children learn about how their bodies change when they exercise and this is supported by learning the names of their bones and muscles. They learn about a healthy diet and talk with staff about cleaning their teeth.

The setting recently changed their practice to exclude biscuits from snack time. Children now have a healthy snack each day, for example, a choice of fresh fruit and vegetables. They have juice, water or milk with their snack, according to parents' wishes. Fresh drinking water is available for the children at all times so they do not become thirsty or dehydrated. Some children bring a packed lunch if they are staying all day. Parents have been given guidance from staff regarding the contents of the lunch boxes to aim for a healthy and nutritious balance. Staff sit with children and help them identify the healthy foods and they eat these first. Any sweets that are included are not eaten at the setting. Children's individual dietary requirements are recorded by staff and fully supported.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very welcoming, child-focused environment. Staff take care to set out a variety of activities and toys for the children so when they arrive they enter a bright and stimulating area and are eager to play. Furniture is suitably child-sized for their comfort. Activities are set out on table-tops and on the floor with designated areas for messy play and quiet play. Children have space to move around and explore freely. There is a very good range of resources, with toys and activities to support all areas of children's development and learning. Staff vary the toys and activities they set out each day to prevent children from becoming bored. Children can also access a range of toys to make their own choices in their play. Toys and equipment are clean and well maintained so children can play with confidence.

Appropriate measures are taken to ensure the environment is safe. Daily risk assessments are undertaken before the children arrive and good procedures are followed to ensure the building is secure. Children are kept safe from most accidents as staff are generally aware of potential risks. However, there are times when toys are left on the floor in the pathway between areas and this poses a risk of children stepping on the toys or tripping. A clear evacuation procedure is in place and this is practised with the children so they learn what to do in an emergency. Children are supervised at a level that is appropriate to their age and level of understanding so they can develop independence skills whilst being kept safe. Children are protected by the staff's understanding of safeguarding children procedures and their knowledge of how to put the procedures into practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle quickly when they arrive at the setting, separating confidently from their parents and going to explore what has been set out for them. Children have opportunities to play freely, making their own selections from the wide range of activities and toys set out for them by the staff. They also take part in a focused activity each day that is led by their key worker and designed to specifically promote an area of their development. Staff keep developmental records on the children, monitoring their progress and planning for their next steps in development. Children play creatively, developing their own imaginative games, playing independently and alongside each other as they develop friendships. They have positive relationships with staff and are secure in their care. Children receive good levels of individual support so they develop confidence and positive self-esteem whilst learning. Children show curiosity and are interested in what they do. Children learn new skills. For example, children learn to print using potatoes, developing skills in applying the paint and making effective prints. Children enjoy this process and explore the feel and texture of the paint, dipping the potato shapes in to experiment with alternative forms of applying the paint. Children's social and communications skills are well promoted through their interactions with staff and with each other. They chat freely together during their play and at snack time and many children develop the confidence to talk in a large group.

Nursery education.

The quality of nursery education is good. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage' and the principles of early learning. This knowledge is put into practice effectively to plan a balanced range of activities to promote all six areas of learning. All staff are involved in the planning and share responsibility for providing the activities. The learning outcomes are clearly planned for the group and for individual children. There is clear differentiation in the planning for children of different ages and abilities. Developmental records show that clear starting points are recorded and individual assessments are used to plan the next steps in children's learning. Children benefit from effective support from staff who ask questions that challenge children and help them to think. Children have many opportunities to develop new skills and to consolidate their learning. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children are well behaved and learn to share. They are eager to learn and enthusiastic and purposeful in their play. Children form secure friendships with other children and with staff and are confident talkers. Their independence skills are not consistently supported, for example, children do not have the opportunity to pour their own drinks at snack time or help to serve the food. Children develop confidence and positive self-esteem because they can make their

own choices and control their own play. Children can concentrate for periods of time and become engrossed in their play. However, there are some times when they are not able to complete tasks to their own satisfaction due to the routine and structure of the day.

Children enjoy a good variety of creative activities, exploring different textures and techniques. They are learning to sing simple songs from memory. They are good communicators and respond well to questions from staff that encourage them to think and to make connections between home and the pre-school. Children use language to interact with staff and with each other and are developing confidence in speaking in groups. They begin to develop confidence in early writing skills and have opportunities to practise these in their play, for example by writing appointments in the diary when playing in the role play area that is set up as a hairdressers. Children hold pencils correctly, learn to form letters correctly and to recognise and write their names. Children enjoy listening to stories and make up their own scenarios in their imaginary play.

Children are confident in their recognition of numbers and count confidently and spontaneously during their play. They use mathematical language such as 'bigger and smaller' and 'full and empty' and understand what these terms mean in relation to their play. Children count by rote to at least 10 and some children count confidently to 20. Children are able to sequence numbers correctly and enjoy recognising and repeating patterns and shapes. Children learn basic calculation skills through questions asked by staff during their play and through singing songs such as the 'speckled frog' song. Children's knowledge and understanding of the wider world is promoted through their access to a variety of resources that reflect diversity and through learning about different cultural and religious festivals. They have a strong sense of community. Children have many opportunities to investigate objects and are involved in topics that enable them to explore their environment. For example, they plant seeds and watch them grow, recording their evidence in pictures and diagrams. They learn about the life-cycle of a frog by looking in a book after they have had a good look at a young frog brought in by a child who has found it in their garden. Children develop a sense of time and place, talking about present and past events in their lives and making links between what happens at home and at the pre-school.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are well catered for. Staff liaise closely with parents to ensure they have all the relevant information to meet children's needs. Parents and staff exchange information on a regular basis to ensure they are up-to-date and can provide continuity of care. This is particularly pertinent in the army community as it is important for staff to know about children's home circumstances and how they are responding to being separated from their parents. The staff can then offer appropriate support. Children's experience of living in an army community is sometimes reflected in their play and this is supported by staff. Children are helped to explore their own experiences and to learn about the wider world as well. Activities are arranged to reflect cultural and religious events in the calendar and children play with a good range of resources that reflect positive images of diversity. Consequently, they learn about wider society and where they fit in, exploring aspects of their identity. There are good systems in place to support the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and supportive systems in place for children who speak English as an additional language.

Children behave very well. They are clear about what is expected of them and respond well to calm, gentle reminders from staff. Any undesirable behaviour is addressed sensitively by staff

who use strategies that are appropriate to the age, stage of development and level of understanding of individual children. Staff take into account any knowledge they have of children's individual needs or home circumstances and liaise closely with parents to ensure consistency in their approach. Children learn to take turns, play co-operatively and to share. Positive behaviour is encouraged through a system of praise and encouragement. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. They receive clear information about the foundation stage curriculum and are therefore informed about what their children are learning. They work together with staff to complete their child's profile when they start at the setting and are invited to share the ongoing developmental records so they know how their children are progressing. Parents have access to a parents' notice board and to newsletters that keep them informed about the daily planning and topics the children are following. Good links are established between home and the setting through the effective key worker system and parents are encouraged to support their children's learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Space and resources are well organised to meet the needs of the children both as a group and as individuals. Staff have the relevant qualifications, knowledge and experience to plan and provide a good range of play and learning opportunities for children. The premises are secure and the system of risk-assessments ensures the premises are safe for the children to play in, although the toys left out by the children created a potential hazard during the inspection. All essential information is recorded to promote the safety and welfare of the children. Records are well maintained, kept up-to-date and shared with parents. Thorough policies and procedures underpin the good practice and inform parents about the care provided for their children and about the setting's business practices. Overall children's needs are met.

The leadership and management of funded children is good. The manager of the setting is able to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and to put plans into action to make any required improvements. She has a clear vision for the setting and provides a good role model for the dedicated team of staff. Support is given by the local authority and the setting put advice they are given into practice to improve outcomes for the children. The setting holds regular staff meetings and all staff contribute to the planning. Staff are appraised regularly during the year and their training needs are fully supported.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to develop and implement an action plan that sets out how the supervisor will achieve a level 3 qualification. There is now a new supervisor in place who has the required qualification and experience to provide care and education for the children and to lead the team of staff. The setting were also asked to ensure that all new staff receive induction training that includes health and safety training and child protection training in their first week of employment. The procedures for induction have been improved to ensure this takes place so that the safety and welfare of children is not compromised. In response to a further requirement to increase the resources that positively reflect disabilities the setting have purchased more resources so that children have access to a full range of positive images that reflect diversity to support their learning about the wider society.

At the last education inspection the provider was asked to increase the opportunities for children to make marks and practise their writing skills spontaneously. Children now have regular opportunities within their imaginary play to make marks and write, for example by making shopping lists and writing down appointments. Paper and notebooks are always available for children to use during their play and a literacy trolley is set out with a variety of pencils and pens for them to choose from. The provider was also asked to increase the range of programmable toys and musical instruments available for children and provide more opportunities for children to access them. Children now use musical instruments regularly, for example to accompany singing at circle time which promotes their creativity. They use a range of programmable toys such as an electronic till during their play. This increases their confidence in information technology.

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):

- take reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to children on the premises are minimised with regard to toys left out on the carpet.

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):

- increase the opportunities for children to develop their independence skills at snack time
- develop the opportunities for children to complete tasks to their own satisfaction.

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