

# Longthorpe Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

---

**Unique Reference Number** 256784

**Inspection date** 26 September 2007

**Inspector** Lesley Barrett

**Setting Address** Memorial Hall, Thorpe Road, Longthorpe, Peterborough, Cambs, PE3 6LU

**Telephone number**

**E-mail**

**Registered person** Longthorpe Pre-School

**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](http://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?

Longthorpe Pre-School has been registered since July 1994. It is run by a voluntary committee and operates from the Memorial Hall, a community building, situated in Longthorpe close to Peterborough city centre. The Pre-school has use of the main hall and a secure enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of twenty-five children may attend the provision at any one time. Opening times are Tuesday to Friday between 09.00 - 12:00 hours, with a lunch club until 12:30 hours. On a Tuesday and Thursday an afternoon session operates from 12:00 hours to 15:00 hours. Sessions are term-time only.

There are currently 40 children on roll. Of these, 20 receive funding for nursery education. There are no children attending who have special educational needs, or who speak English as an additional language, although systems are in place to enable the Pre-School do so.

Five members of staff are employed to work with the children. Over half the staff have an appropriate childcare qualification. The setting receives support from a pedagogical teacher, and childcare adviser from the Peterborough Sure Start Strategic Partnership.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is satisfactorily promoted by staff who follow effective procedures to maintain a healthy environment and encourage children to develop good personal hygiene routines. For example, the premises are cleaned routinely and tables are sprayed with anti-bacterial fluid before children sit down to eat. Children are encouraged to wash their hand prior to snacks, lunches and after visiting the toilet. However, this process is not always sufficiently supported by staff to ensure that it minimises risks to children. For example, children do not use soap and the water is too hot to allow them to wash their hands safely. Staff encourage them not to take toys in to the bathroom although they do not always explain the reason why to help the children learn about the consequences of their actions. Effective procedures are in place for children who become ill during the session. Their needs are dealt with sensitively and they are kept separate from other children until their parent arrives to reduce the risk of cross-infection. Staff are trained in administering basic first aid and permission has been sought to obtain emergency medical treatment. Appropriate procedures are in place to record any accidents and parents are notified of when their child has sustained an injury.

Children's healthy eating is promoted as a range of healthy and nutritious snacks are provided which are changed daily to provide variety. Children are encouraged to pour their own drinks, select their own snacks and wash their own cups when they have finished. This develops their independence skills. Children who stay for packed lunches are encouraged to eat their sandwiches before their biscuits or crisps and parents are reminded of the importance of providing a healthy lunch box. Snack and lunch times provide a rich social occasion for children as staff sit with them and discuss news.

Children enjoy a range of physical activities that help them to develop their confidence and skills when using large and small apparatus, tools and equipment. Staff make best use of a small outdoor play area to provide children with access to fresh air. They also visit the park where they can use the static equipment and go on nature walks in the local area. Children are developing their physical skills as they run, jump, balance and pedal using a range of equipment within the setting which are age appropriate.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children play and learn in a spacious and secure environment which is warm and effectively laid out to enable them to move around safely. Children use a wide range of toys and resources that are of a good quality and safe. They are able to access resources, their own individual trays for their belongings and use child sized furniture. This enables them to exercise independence in their daily routines.

Children's safety is actively promoted by staff who supervise children well at all times. Daily risks assessments are carried out on the premises. Staff supervise children's arrival and departure and effective security systems are in place to prevent a child from being left unsupervised. The outdoor play space has safety tarmac laid to minimise the risks to children and safety mats are used under the climbing frame within the indoor area. Children are learning about keeping themselves safe as they practise emergency evacuation procedures to help them and staff become familiar with the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded, as parents complete paperwork which would allow staff to act quickly if a child becomes ill or there is a medical emergency. Children are never released to an adult unless staff have prior written consent from parents. Staff are familiar with the setting's child protection policy and they are aware of the procedures to be followed should they have any concerns about a child in their care.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy attending and happily settle as they arrive at the setting. They are keen to participate in the activities and play opportunities provided. They show good bonds with staff who are consistent and warm in their approach and sensitive to the needs of those who require extra reassurance when they first arrive. Children are familiar with the routines, for example, they sit quietly on the carpet at show and tell time and enjoy sharing their news with staff and children. Staff listen attentively and ensure each child is included helping to develop their sense of belonging and feelings of security. Children's development is effectively promoted as staff skilfully support their play, interacting and extending their learning. For example, a child is effectively supported when completing a jigsaw, they are allowed to discover for themselves where the pieces fit and are praised for their efforts.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from the staff's clear knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. They present a range of interesting activities to promote children's learning. Play is child initiated and staff support their learning effectively. They recognise opportunities for extending children's learning and ask questions to provide challenge, enabling children to think and predict for themselves. For example, as part of a theme about 'ourselves', children are asked to identify parts of their body and what they use this part of their body for. Planning is in place, it is linked to the six areas of learning and identifies the stepping stones, although these do not identify how activities can be adapted to meet children's individual learning requirements. Key worker systems are in place and staff know their children well. They use this knowledge and information from children's observations to identify children's next steps for learning. A system has recently been developed, but is not yet being used in practice to incorporate these next steps through a 'key activity planner' to ensure that all staff are aware of each child's learning needs. During their time at the setting children have regular observations recorded of their efforts and achievements which are used to inform staff of their progress. However, these are not clearly linked back to the stepping stones which is not completely effective in demonstrating the specific progress children are making towards the early learning goals.

Children relate well to each other and adults, confidently expressing their ideas. For example, a child tells a member of staff that he wants his picture put up on the wall. Their confidence and self-esteem is developing as staff listen attentively when they speak. Children are beginning to work well together as they persevere when building a marble run and they are all aware of their own roles at tidy-up time. Children are confident in their own self-care as they pour their own drinks at snack time and independently use the bathroom.

Children enjoy listening to stories in small groups and in a one to one situation. Their listening skills are developing as staff give simple instructions and ask questions to encourage them to think. For example, 'where would we find a tractor?'. Children are provided with various opportunities to link that print has meaning, as they self-register when they arrive and find

their name cards at snack time. Materials for mark making are provided in a defined area and children can take them to other areas if they choose to. Through spontaneous and planned activities, children are beginning to see connections in numbers, shape and size. For example, children confidently count how many ladybirds there are in the story book. However, there are some missed opportunities through practical activities such as, setting the tables for snack. Children are able to compare their height and experience weighing and measuring through regular cooking activities. Their early calculation skills are developing as they join in with simple songs.

Children are beginning to make sense of the world around them by investigating and exploring through first hand experiences in an interesting environment. They explore oxidation as they clean dirty coins with tomato ketchup. Older children enthusiastically recall when looking at photographs, how they had some tadpoles which turned into frogs. Staff are proactive in encouraging them to explore why something does not work, for example, why the marble will not run freely through the marble run. They support children successfully to ensure that they remain interested and find a solution. Children's understanding of information technology is being promoted as they use appropriate programmes on the computer and programmable toys. Children take part in seasonal walks within the local community and are learning to value and respect diversity as they celebrate festivals from around the world.

Children are able to be creative, generally expressing their own ideas and thoughts through craft, music and imaginative play. They freely explore paint, experimenting as they mix colours together using both brushes and their hands. Some opportunities are provided for them to experience materials, such as sand, water or dough although these are not provided regularly. Consequently, opportunities to increase children's learning through these resources are missed. Children are able to participate in music sessions freely and through organised activities, such as singing at circle time and listening to music on the computer. Older children enjoy listening to their music and making up dances.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed into the group, included in all activities and valued as individuals. For example, children's birthdays are celebrated with a pretend cake and singing. Their needs are effectively met as staff work closely with parents to ensure that they have relevant information enabling them to provide appropriate care for children. They learn to value and respect diversity through celebrating other festivals from around the world. They are encouraged to have positive attitudes and are developing an awareness of diversity through the play resources available. However, displays which promote positive images to further increase children's knowledge of the wider world are limited. Systems are in place for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to ensure that their needs are met. Staff are aware of the need to seek additional support and handle such situations in a sensitive and professional manner.

Children's behaviour is good as they are provided with a varied range of stimulating activities. They are well behaved and learning to use good manners. Staff set consistent boundaries and use positive practices for behaviour management that are calming to children. For example, distraction and gentle guidance. Clear explanation are given when asking a child not to do something helping them to understand the consequences of their actions. A tidy-up song helps children to prepare for a change in routine, they are given responsibility for tidying a particular activity away. This enables them to develop a sense of purpose and helps to prevent disruptive

behaviour. Staff use praise and encouragement effectively helping to promote children's self-esteem. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are encouraged to become involved with their child's learning at the setting. They have access to information on notice boards and in regular newsletters regarding the planning, current themes and activities happening within the setting. Parents are consulted before their child starts at the setting to find out what they can do at home and they have the opportunities to contribute written comments through their child's 'All about me book'. Parents are encouraged to take part in a rota duty within the setting, where they can help with the activities on offer and support children's play and learning. Parents speak positively about the setting, they feel able to discuss their child's progress with their key worker on a regular basis. This positive partnership with parents and carers has a beneficial impact on children's development and feeling of well-being.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Overall children's needs are met. The effective organisation of the setting promotes positive outcomes for children. Adults working with children show care and concern for their welfare and give them a strong sense of well-being and security. Effective recruitment procedures ensure that children are cared for by staff who have relevant qualifications and experience. Existing staff show a commitment to continuing their training. This enables them to kept up to date with current knowledge, teaching methods and child care practices to ensure that children's developing needs are effectively met. The staff are supported by a strong committee who have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. This has a positive impact on the care of the children as staff are able to remain focused on their care, learning and play.

The setting is suitably organised, the effective layout of the premises allows children to play in areas to maximise their play and learning opportunities. For example, there are separate areas for quieter activities, such as the book corner so that children can sit undisturbed. Play is child initiated with adults providing support as necessary. Staff deployment throughout the session is effective to meet children's individual needs, which is further promoted by the high staff to child ratios. The setting has a comprehensive range of appropriate policies and procedures to support the effective operation of the setting and staff are familiar with the range of required documentation that needs to be kept to support children's well-being.

Leadership and management is good. The supervisor is a good role model for staff, she has a clear vision about how to provide a quality service for children and parents. Questionnaires have been developed for staff and parents to monitor the quality of the provision provided. Regular appraisals ensure that staff have a clear understanding of their role and identifies their strengths, areas for development and training requirements. The supervisor ensures that all staff are involved in the provision and welcomes their input at regular staff meetings. This results in a committed staff team who work extremely well together to ensure there are positive outcomes for children.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Following the last inspection the setting were asked to ensure that the recording of medication was adhered to in accordance with the policy. These procedure are now followed and help to promote children's health and well-being.

They were also asked to increase staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and develop their ability to extend children and provide support for staff to fully implement and use the early learning goals in all activities. Staff have attended training in the six areas of learning, and have developed effective skills in questioning children to develop and extend their learning.

The setting were also asked to provide regular opportunities for children to use their imagination through music and movement. In addition to planned music and movement activities. Children are now able to access musical instruments on a daily basis and have access to music through the computer. These changes have a positive impact on children's development.

### **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):

- effectively support children during daily hand washing routines to ensure that water and soap is appropriately used and that they are learning about the reason for maintaining good hygiene practices
- consider how the promotion of equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice can be further developed.

#### **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 systems to show differentiation of activities to ensure that children's individual learning is effectively developed. Further develop assessment records to demonstrate how children are making progress towards the Early Learning Goals
- provide regular opportunities for children to express themselves through a varied range of media and materials.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)