

Hopscotch Pre - School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY218161
Inspection date	31 October 2007
Inspector	Lisa Jeffries
Setting Address	St Francis Centre, Bournville, Birmingham, B30 2AA
Telephone number	0121 472 7215
E-mail	
Registered person	Melanie Jane Gardner
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 satisfactory. 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?

The pre-school was registered in 1997. It operates from a community centre in the Bournville area of Birmingham. The group operates from one main large hall. A maximum of 25 children may attend the group at any one time. The pre-school is open from 09:30 - 14:30 during term-time. Children who stay for the full day are required to bring a packed lunch.

There are currently 33 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 11 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs five members of staff, three of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two members of staff are currently working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing a good understanding of the importance of basic hygiene as they follow the daily routines in place at the setting. Staff encourage children to wash their hands thoroughly after using the toilet and before eating. A clear rota for general daily tasks ensures that the premises are consistently well-maintained.

Children are kept safe from illness as the setting has developed a sickness policy, which is shared with parents, identifying exclusion times for common illnesses. This helps to ensure cross-infection is minimised if children develop infectious diseases. Two members of staff, qualified in first aid are on duty at any one time. This, along with a fully-stocked first aid box, helps to ensure children are well cared for in the event of a medical emergency.

Children are acquiring habits that promote a healthy lifestyle as they share a daily snack of fruit and water or fruit juice. Staff are aware of children's allergies and ensure individual needs with reference to food and drink are met. Mealtimes are happy, social occasions where children and staff sit together around the table. Children have access to drinks throughout the session to ensure they are well hydrated. Children eat lunches provided by their parents and they gain a sense of responsibility through pouring drinks from a jug, scraping their plates into the bin and washing up.

Children benefit from daily opportunities to extend their physical skills. They develop coordination as they play with the parachute and they enjoy a range of action rhymes and ring games. Children take pleasure in using the large apparatus at the local park and they benefit from regular walks in the surrounding area. Children move confidently and safely, and show an awareness of space as they play with the wheeled toys.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a light and welcoming environment where they can access necessary facilities to promote their development safely. Children are kept safe as security is given priority and staff take positive steps to minimise risks, for example, by monitoring arrival and departure times. Visitors are vetted on arrival at the setting and identification is checked. There is a written fire procedure to follow, which is sensitively rehearsed with the children to ensure that they act promptly in the event of an emergency.

Toys and resources conform to safety standards and are regularly cleaned and checked for signs of damage, ensuring that children play with suitable equipment to support their overall development. Children are beginning to understand how to keep themselves safe as staff use outings as a valuable opportunity to teach children about road safety. Children learn about the importance of safety as they respond to clear guidance from staff during both indoor and outdoor activities.

Although some members of staff have a good understanding of child protection and know how to implement local procedures, other members of staff have limited knowledge of their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children. This may compromise children's safety. However, staff are knowledgeable about the children in their care and intuitive of their needs.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy to come into pre-school and settle quickly. The setting implements effective use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework in their practice, supporting younger children and ensuring they can access the range of activities provided. Staff listen to children and value their responses, encouraging their confidence and self-esteem. Interaction is supportive and children benefit from praise and encouragement.

Children are sufficiently confident to work in small groups or independently. Staff act as positive role models and children behave well, play constructively and are familiar with routines. Children are developing an awareness of others and know they may have differing beliefs, cultures and traditions. The organisation of activities enables children to initiate their own play and participate in activities of interest to them.

Nursery Education

The staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. However this could be developed further to ensure that children's individual learning needs are consistently met. Support is provided during activities such as asking open ended questions, which generally extends children's learning to make satisfactory progress. Effective use of space creates defined areas in which resources are well laid out to appeal to children.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The planned provision of activities and resources enable children to make adequate progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. Some members of staff demonstrate a clear understanding of how children progress through the stepping stones, however, evaluation and observation procedures are not consistently used to inform planning, potentially hindering children's development.

Children benefit from opportunities to explore words, letters and pictures as they access the mark-making resources available to them. For example, children write 'shopping lists' during imaginary play. Staff use topic time to introduce new vocabulary and children are currently learning well-known phrases in German, French and Portuguese. Children are developing an understanding that print carries meaning as they share a range of fiction and non-fiction books with staff.

Children are making progress in their mathematical development. Appealing resources such as puzzle cubes, interlocking shapes and scales are provided to encourage children's mathematical skills, and there are opportunities for children to use maths in context. Children enjoy playing with the water tray and plastic jugs, helping them to develop an understanding of measure. They confidently recall a repertoire of counting rhymes and songs and staff encourage children to discuss shape and colour through their play.

The outside area and immediate local environment are often used by children to identify features of the natural world and help develop a sense of place. Staff encourage children to look at the world around them and identify changes in the environment, for example, seasonal changes such as leaves falling from trees. This gives opportunities for children to explore using all their senses and consider how things work and why things happen. Children are beginning to understand the uses of everyday technology as they play with programmable toys. They learn early concepts of science through making jelly and learn about living things through planting watercress.

Children enjoy being creative; they access a range of materials and resources to make pictures, collages and models. Children are developing dexterity as they use scissors effectively during cutting and sticking activities. They experiment with musical instruments and explore texture through a range of media including paint, sand, water and dough. Children participate in group stories and singing sessions and use drama resources, including dressing-up clothes, to express themselves imaginatively.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are relaxed and confident at the pre-school, due to the supportive staff and welcoming atmosphere. They develop a strong sense of belonging as they identify their own space, for example, their coat pegs are clearly labelled with their names. Familiar routines such as finding their own name cards on arrival and posting them into a post box, help children to feel included and settled.

Staff listen attentively to children and value their responses, helping them to develop good self-esteem. Children are cared for in an environment that values children's differences and similarities as they celebrate festivals such as Chinese New Year, Diwali and Christmas. Resources including colourful posters, dressing-up clothes and small world play are provided, increasing children's understanding of diversity. The provision has effective arrangements for supporting children with a range of abilities to ensure inclusion and maintains close working relationships with outside agencies to ensure individual needs are fully met.

Children are beginning to manage their own behaviour as staff gently remind them of the rules and consistently use positive behaviour strategies with them. For instance, children receive certificates to celebrate their achievements. Children are also taking responsibility and playing an active part in the setting as they help to clear away activities before starting something new. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. There are effective systems in place and relationships are relaxed and friendly. Parents receive a prospectus at the beginning of their time at the pre-school which informs them of the setting's policies and procedures, and includes a explanation of the educational programme. Parents evenings are held annually and staff prepare progress reports for children to ensure parents are kept informed and included in their children's learning. Daily discussions ensure that parents and carers are aware of important issues or achievements. At inspection, parents are positive and complimentary about the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by adults who have been checked and vetted to ensure that they are suitable to be in contact with children. Staff are suitably qualified and experienced and are willing to undertake further training to improve their knowledge and skills. Correct ratios are always maintained and children have a designated key worker who reports to parents and compiles the developmental records.

The organisation of the day is designed to meet children's needs and help them to make progress emotionally, physically, intellectually and socially. Children are cared for in one group, with attention to their individual needs in relation to eating and personal care. All required policies and procedures are in place, however, staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection

requires updating to ensure children are effectively safeguarded. Children's details are taken on the registration forms and updated as required. All consents are in place allowing children to take part in outings, have their photograph taken and receive emergency medical care, helping to promote their well-being.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff have a suitable understanding of their roles and responsibilities which are implemented well. They are deployed effectively within the setting, ensuring children are supervised and supported during activities. Some sound systems are in place to monitor the educational provision for three and four-year-olds, however, evaluation and observation are not always used to plan for the next steps in children's learning. In addition, some staff have limited knowledge of the Foundation Stage and as a result children's individual needs may not always be effectively met. Staff welcome suggestions for improvement positively and are committed and enthusiastic about their role in children's learning. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the provider was asked to ensure that the complaints policy incorporates the name and contact details of the regulator. A clear, written complaints procedure is in place, including full details of Ofsted. This is shared with parents and displayed on the notice board. Parents are fully aware of the procedure should they wish to raise a complaint.

In addition, the provider was asked to ensure that parents are aware of the designated person for equal opportunities, behaviour management and child protection. Members of staff have clear, individual responsibilities. Details of these are included on the relevant policy and are attached to the notice board. Parents were also informed by means of a newsletter.

These improvements had had a positive impact upon the quality of care as parents are now able to easily access important information with regard to their children's welfare.

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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. 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 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 that all staff are able to put local child protection procedures into practice

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 staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage to ensure that children's individual learning needs are effectively met
- ensure evaluation, observation and assessment procedures that are in place effectively monitor children's progress through the stepping stones and that this information is used to plan for the next steps in children's 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