

Brockton Pre School 1

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	224052
Inspection date	10 December 2007
Inspector	Deborah Ball
Setting Address	Shipton Village Hall, Shipton, Much Wenlock, Shropshire, TF13 6JZ
Telephone number	mob 07817 134808
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Registered person	Brockton Pre School 1
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?

Brockton Pre-School opened in 1998. It operates from the village hall in Shipton, Shropshire. The setting serves the local and wider communities. A maximum of 16 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open each Monday from 09:00 to 12:30 and Thursday and Friday from 09:00 to 15:00 during school term times. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 16 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, nine children receive funding for early education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs three members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a clean, warm, comfortable and child friendly environment. Their good health is protected through well-planned daily routines and learning from example. Staff teach the children about good health and hygiene routines from an early age and as a result, children are learning to take responsibility for their own personal care. For example, they place their hands in front of their mouth if they cough or sneeze, they help themselves to tissues to blow their noses and they routinely wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating food. Although good quality hand washing facilities and resources are available, some of the children wash their hands in shared water prior to snack and meal times. This does not effectively promote their good health and exposes them to risks of cross infection. Staff encourage children's self-care skills by praising and congratulating them when they remember hygiene routines without being prompted. Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have attended first aid training and can administer treatment in the event of an accident. There are effective arrangements to care for children in the case of accidents, emergencies and for the administration of medicines. Parents are clearly informed that sick children cannot be admitted to the provision and information regarding infection control and the advised minimum exclusion periods is readily shared with parents.

Children have superb opportunities for fresh air and exercise because they make excellent use of a wide range of outdoor facilities as well as having regular exercise indoors. The children freely access the outdoor environment as part of their day. Children make decisions about when they wish to play outside and confidently dress themselves in their outdoor clothes, protecting them from the cooler weather. Staff make excellent use of the outside area as a stimulating learning environment to support all aspects of children's learning and development. For example, with the funding raised by the committee, staff have created a children's garden where they can enjoy planting seeds, listen to a story on the toadstool seating area and manoeuvre their cars and trikes around the cycle track. The children enjoy the sand pit using familiar toys, such as diggers and farm animals, to explore the properties of sand and engage in imaginative play. They practise balancing, crawling and climbing on large apparatus and show a keen sense of personal space as they play alongside each other, pedalling their bikes skilfully to avoid obstacles and controlling their speed so that they do not bump into their friends. Children enjoy role play in the outdoor playhouse, where they draw pictures to display on the walls and sit and have a chat to their friends. Through playing energetic games, children are developing their skills of throwing and catching, hopping, skipping and jumping. Children play co-operative games, developing their understanding of sharing and turn taking. If the weather is such that children cannot go outside, the children access the hall to play ring games and use the scogym. Movement and music sessions and action songs are enjoyed with joy and excitement. In addition, the children enjoy forest school visits, where they explore the natural environment in all weather conditions and have the opportunity to take risks within a controlled environment. For example, children enjoy the mud slide and balancing on logs. There is a vast range of different and interesting tools to use and this helps children to develop co-ordination and excellent hand and finger control. For example, they often plant, rake and water in the flowerbed and use scissors, paint brushes, rollers and pens freely throughout the session.

Children are well nourished and learn why some foods are better for our bodies than others through their discussions with staff and themed topic work. At snack time children are able to develop their independence as they skilfully use knives to prepare fruit such as grapes, satsumas

and bananas and create individual fruit kebabs and smoothies. The children grate cheese and chop vegetables to create healthy fillings for their baked potatoes. During preparation times, discussions are held about the types of food they eat, where it comes from, what makes them grow and what keeps them healthy. Children have a choice of milk or water to drink with their snacks and also have independent access to water throughout the session to ensure they are kept well hydrated. The children bring their own packed lunches and parents receive a leaflet encouraging them to include healthy options in the lunch box. The staff have a clear understanding of children's dietary needs and any food items provided by them are in accordance with parental wishes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children enter an environment that is highly stimulating, exciting and motivates all aspects of their development. It is a very welcoming environment which fully reflects the children's backgrounds and the wider community. Children develop a strong sense of belonging as their individuality is reflected throughout the setting in displays and photographs. The village hall has been extensively planned to facilitate children's independent learning, as resources, which are of an excellent quality are stored easily within their reach, promoting their independence and ability to make choices about what they want to do. The space is extremely well organised to promote children's natural curiosity as learners as they access areas that are dedicated to certain aspects of learning. Children are engrossed in a wide range of purposeful and developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor activities which provide high levels of challenge.

Children move around the vibrant environment freely and confidently. The children's safety is assured through the vigilance of conscientious staff, who complete daily visual checks and comprehensive annual risk assessments to identify and reduce risks to children. Staff take responsibility for identifying any safety issues and report without delay to the management team. There are good arrangements concerning the arrival and collection of children and passwords are used when necessary for extra protection. Any visitors to the setting are vetted at the reception area and staff are vigilant in confirming identities of unfamiliar faces. Children actively contribute in developing an awareness of their own safety. For example, the children learn how to cross the road safely when they go out for walks around the local community. Children take part in regular fire evacuation drills which helps to develop their understanding of the action that they should take in the event of a fire and staff keep a record of the drills including detailed comments about the effectiveness of the practice. All policies and procedures are consistently applied by diligent staff in regard to supporting children's safety and welfare.

Children's welfare is extremely well promoted by a team of staff who have an excellent understanding of the issues surrounding child protection and recognise that this is their first priority. Procedures for reporting concerns are implemented consistently by the management team and all staff complete training in identifying possible signs of abuse. The child protection policy is clearly displayed for parents so that they know what action will be taken if staff have any concerns about their children. Staff maintain a record of injuries that children sustain before arriving at the group and ensure that parents sign the record. This means that the procedure for managing allegations against staff is effective. The children are cared for by adults who are vetted appropriately and suitable systems are in place to ensure that children are protected from staff awaiting their clearance.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a stimulating, colourful and exciting care and learning environment where they make good developmental progress. The children are confident, happy and secure in the care of trusted staff. Children are forming positive relationships with their peers, playing co-operatively and involving each other in their play. They have excellent relationships with the staff who help them to develop their confidence through sensitive interactions and warm praise and encouragement. The children access meaningful and exciting play opportunities that support and develop their physical, social, emotional and intellectual development and are enthusiastic to take part. Staff have high expectations about what each individual child can achieve and support them well to achieve their full potential, given their capabilities and starting points.

The learning and development of younger children is enhanced through the effective implementation of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Knowledgeable, trained and experienced staff plan very carefully to meet the learning needs of all children. The children relish well resourced free play periods when they begin to make choices about their own learning and take part in more structured activities, adapted to meet their individual level of development. The key worker system has successfully achieved strong and trusting relationships between children and staff. Key workers carefully record observations and assessments of children's progress which are readily shared with parents. The staff give lots of praise and reassurance whilst interacting and communicating with all children which helps them to feel happy and secure. The children enjoy sensory play, using materials such as corn flour silk, mashed potato, jelly, play dough, pasta, shaving foam, sand and water and are encouraged to think about how objects feel, smell and taste through first hand experiences.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff have a secure knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and fully understand the breadth of learning that children gain from each activity. They are skilled in providing different learning environments and use a variety of exciting and varied teaching methods to ensure children remain motivated and eager to learn. Children are well supported and grouped appropriately, enabling older children to work in small groups on focused activities. There are effective systems in place for establishing children's developmental starting points and individual interests on entering the setting and for using ongoing information provided by parents. The planning is shared by all staff and clearly shows the intended learning outcomes for children of different ages and abilities. The key worker system in operation works very well to ensure that planning is specific for individual children and based on their own stage of learning. Both formal and informal observations are made and are used to inform the planning and identify clear learning goals for individual children. Staff can be seen making notes during the session about children's achievements and these are then transferred into children's assessment files and verbally communicated with parents at the end of the session. Parents and key worker staff meet regularly to discuss children's development and learning. These meetings are used to identify the next stage in children's learning and how both the parents and staff can support the children and move them forward. Children benefit from excellent interaction with staff as they play because staff manage their time extremely well and are actively involved in children's play and learning throughout the session.

Children's personal, social and emotional development underpins the rest of their learning and this helps to build self-esteem and gives children the confidence to try new things. Staff are attentive and supportive, listen and respond well to what children say and use effective open-ended questioning to help children think. Children's self-care and independence is supported extremely well and the children show skill in dressing themselves for outside play and managing their own personal care. The children behave very well, responding positively to the clear instructions, praise and carefully planned activities that encourage them to work together harmoniously.

Children are active communicators and listeners. They express themselves well when playing with their friends and show developing confidence in talking in larger groups. All children are interested in books and listen intently to stories read to them by enthusiastic staff. The children value books, holding them carefully and correctly and often choose to sit quietly in the book corner to read a book alone. They also enjoy exploring the contents of story sacks and readily join in with action rhymes and songs. Children link individual sounds to letters well and show increasing confidence in recognising familiar words, such as their names. Children have easy access to writing resources and often ascribe meanings to the marks that they have made. Some of the children are able to write their names whilst others are well supported as they begin to form recognisable letters. Activities such as role play are used to introduce children to writing in a variety of situations, for example, Santa's workshop has writing pads and envelopes for letter writing.

Children are making good progress in the area of mathematical development. They practise and refine their counting skills with a wealth of enjoyable first-hand experiences, and these help them to develop strong and positive attitudes to numbers. Puzzles, games and number rhymes are used creatively to help them predict, recognise numbers and count in sequence and some older children can count reliably to ten or more. Purposeful, first-hand experiences help them to solve simple number problems such as working out how many cups are needed at snack time or how to share out the dough between their friends. Children often hear staff using mathematical language and learn about shape and size as they make Christmas decorations, use chalk to create Rangoli patterns from triangles and squares in the playground and work out which is the tallest sunflower. The children show a developing awareness of weights and measures through well considered practical activities, such as weighing out ingredients during cooking activities.

Staff support children's learning in the area of knowledge and understanding of the world exceptionally well, providing a wealth of exploration activities that encourage children to observe, question and explore with natural curiosity. The children learn about the local environment and living world through digging and planting in the pre-school garden, visiting the nearby stream and investigating the trees in the woods and animals they see there. For example, children showed fascination and great excitement when they paddled in the stream and found creatures living under the rocks and observed frog spawn. Children question and investigate why things happen as they plant sunflower seeds and watch them grow and stimulate their senses as they look at how quickly ice melts, play with water and sand or mix ingredients together to make bread and Christmas cakes. Exciting trips and outings, such as taking a leisurely steam-hauled train journey along the Severn Valley, help children to extend their experiences and learn about the world around them. Strong community links are made through visits to the local village church or the library. People who work in the area, such as, the vicar and police officers visit the pre-school and there is a very good relationship with the nearby primary school. Children have access to some replica technology, but have limited opportunities to experience using real programmable items, such as computers.

Children express themselves freely through paint, drawing, music and movement. Their creativity is valued and they are widely encouraged to make up their own games and act out familiar roles through their imaginary play. For example, children use their imaginations to cook each other meals in the role play kitchen, which leads to lovely conversations about healthy and less healthy foods. The children explore colour and texture as they use a variety of painting techniques and collage materials and often help to make the colourful displays which decorate their learning room. For example, they paint the back drop for the Christmas display board and create an Advent calendar using paint, old Christmas cards and glue. There is lots of time for singing and moving expressively to music and they regularly enjoy experimenting with sounds and rhythm as they play musical instruments or enthusiastically join in with action songs. Regular music sessions are provided by an outside teacher and these allow children to experiment with the different sounds and rhythms made by various musical instruments and to play along to songs and nursery rhymes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children develop a strong sense of belonging within the setting as they form excellent relationships with their peers and the staff who value and respect their individuality. Parents are encouraged to share their knowledge and views of their children's development and this ensures that staff can provide the most appropriate care for their child, based on their individual needs. Children have excellent opportunities to improve their understanding of our wider society as they use an extensive range of dressing up clothes, small world figures, puzzles and books that reflect positive images of other cultures. The children learn more about other cultures and religions as they celebrate an interesting variety of different festivals in ways that are meaningful to children of pre-school age. For example, during the Hindu festival of Diwali, the children re-enact the story of Rama and Sita, use clay to create diva lamps and make vegetable curry, naan bread and dips. Children benefit greatly from the very close links with the primary school because this makes their transition to school very easy. They are invited to school events such as the Christmas concert and get to know the school and the teachers well.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive excellent care because the pre-school staff liaise closely with their parents and, if appropriate, with outside agencies. Staff are alert to identify children who are not making the progress they would expect and they encourage parents to seek advice from their health visitor. When a referral has been made staff work closely with outside agencies such as speech and language therapists to support the child's learning and development. They share individual education plans with parents and monitor and review them regularly. Staff have attended additional training in 'Makaton' to improve their support for children with language delay.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children thrive in the pre-school's caring environment, where they are constantly praised for their efforts, and for showing kindness to each other. The children's behaviour is exemplary due to the staff's consistent and skilled approach in promoting positive behaviour in a manner which is proportionate to the child's level of understanding and maturity. Children respond very well to the excellent role models being offered by the staff, who demonstrate respect for other members of staff and children. The children learn to share toys and to take turns and staff use appropriate strategies such as the use of an egg timer to help them manage their turns with favourite toys. They develop very good manners because staff reinforce the use of 'please' and 'thank you' at snack time. Furthermore, children's understanding of right and wrong is developed through gentle reminders to care for their environment, the resources and each other.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. The relationship developed with parents is quite exceptional and they make many positive comments about the level of care and involvement offered. This results in parents and staff working together to provide the best possible outcomes for children. The staff are very proactive in involving parents in their children's learning and in the life of the pre-school. Parents are provided with excellent information about the pre-school through the attractively presented prospectus, regular newsletters, photographic displays and information displayed on the notice boards. Staff initially seek information from parents concerning their children's developmental stages and their particular interests, which is used as a starting point for planning and assessment. This information can be added to through formal and informal discussions on a regular or daily basis. The staff know the children well and are able to provide for their individual needs because the key worker system works effectively to enable the staff to provide appropriate care and learning opportunities for all children and to support parents with information and advice. Parents are provided with comprehensive information about nursery education and how children work through the Foundation Stage of their education. The parents are extremely well informed about their child's progress through regular communication and access to their child's personal assessment records which include detailed observations, photographs and samples of work. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in the life of the pre-school. They receive regular newsletters which details the range of activities the children are involved in and ideas to continue at home. Children and parents are then encouraged to bring appropriate items or artefacts into the pre-school from home, therefore supporting these learning experiences and opportunities. The parents take part on the volunteer rota and share their skills with the children. For example, parents have enjoyed Christmas baking with the children and taught them Scottish dancing. Parents and carers are also able to help develop their children's love of books and reading at home because children take a book home each day to share with an adult, who is able to record any comments in the children's reading record. Children are able to borrow their favourite toys and resources and take them home to share with their families. The parents are given clear and meaningful information on all aspects of the care and education provided. Parents are regularly invited to comment on the provision for their children and their views and wishes are used to identify areas for improvement in the settings action plan. There are effective systems in place for ensuring any complaints are handled in a timely and efficient manner. All the required documentation and consents are in place to ensure children are looked after according to their parents' wishes.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced due to the good organisation of the setting. They benefit from a committed, enthusiastic and motivated staff team, who work together very well and support children in their play and learning. The staff actively engage in children's play, asking them questions to encourage their thinking and implementing new and enjoyable ideas. Throughout the pre-school, space and resources are very well-organised and children benefit from this. They have easy access to their playthings and can freely flow between the indoor and outdoor areas as part of their play, making decisions about how they would like to spend their time, whilst being closely supervised by staff. Detailed recruitment, vetting and induction procedures are in place, ensuring that children are cared for by suitable and well-informed members of staff. An effective key-worker system is in operation throughout the pre-school and as a result, children have strong relationships with familiar and trusted members of staff.

All of the required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place, carefully stored and well-organised. They are frequently reviewed and are only accessed by staff to ensure that confidentiality is maintained. The range of policies and procedures work very well in practice and are frequently reviewed to ensure that they continue to reflect current good practice and professional advice. They are fully understood by staff and are openly shared with parents to ensure that they are aware of the organisation of the setting. Children's observation and assessment records are detailed and are continuously updated to ensure that a true picture of children's progress is maintained.

The leadership and management is good. The setting is led by a parent committee who have a suitable understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They support the staff in their work with children and are actively involved in working within the pre-school and alongside staff to carefully monitor their progress. Staff are very knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage curriculum and are experienced in working with pre-school children, which impacts successfully on the achievements children make. The committee, pre-school leader and staff team work in partnership to monitor and evaluate the nursery education curriculum, identify the strengths and weaknesses of the setting and areas for further improvement. For example, children have flourished through the establishment of an excellent outdoor play area and the considerable expansion of the range of outdoor equipment. The management committee is supportive of staff, using discussions and annual appraisals to identify professional training needs with them. For example, staff have attended 'Makaton' workshops to enable them to provide better support to children with language and communication delay and some staff have attended the presentation on the new Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff are committed to improving their knowledge and understanding, as their self-development is supported and valued by the management committee. This in turn helps to maintain a loyal, well-motivated staff group, thus helping to ensure consistent care for the children. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, to improve the standards of care, the pre-school was required to ensure the risk assessment format used includes all elements as outlined in the National Standards and guidance. Following advice from the Local Authority, the management team have fully reviewed the risk assessments used and they are now appropriate. As a result of addressing the recommendation, children's safety and well-being is safeguarded.

There were no significant weaknesses to report at the last nursery education inspection, but the pre-school were asked to extend children's skills in independence during snack time. This has been addressed by staff allowing children to be actively involved in the preparation of their snack as they cut up fruit and vegetables, spread toppings on toast, hand out beakers and pour drinks. Adults encourage children's independence, but sensitively give help where needed.

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):

- review and improve hand washing arrangements prior to snack and meal times.

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 opportunities for children to become familiar with information communication technology.

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