

# YMCA Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	142856
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 July 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Carol Cox
<b>Setting Address</b>	Lisieux Way, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 2LB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01823 283899
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<b>Registered person</b>	YMCA Board of Management
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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?

The YMCA Pre-School opened in 1978. It operates from a dedicated room at the rear of the YMCA building, in the Blackbrook area of Taunton and serves the local area. The group opens five days a week during school term times. The pre-school is open from 08:00 to 16:00 each week day during school terms. Children may attend for a variety of sessions. All children share access to a secure enclosed play area.

There are currently 63 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 50 children are in receipt of funding for early education. The setting has experience of supporting children with learning difficulties and disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs seven staff work with the children. The YMCA board of management oversees the running of the group. All the staff have appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is very effectively promoted by knowledgeable staff who help children learn to take good care of themselves. For example, older children competently take themselves to the toilet, diligently wash their hands before snack time and confidently explain that if germs get into your tummy you might get sick. Younger children are well supported and staff ensure that toilet training is always consistent with home routines. Staff are vigilant about stopping the spread of infection through sensible exclusion periods when children are ill and sharing information with parents, for example, displaying a notice about cases of chicken pox. There are excellent records of medication administered to children and any accidents are carefully recorded, staff and parents sign and date all records to confirm their accuracy. Staff hold current paediatric first aid certificates, therefore children may be treated appropriately in event of an accident.

Children thrive on opportunities to enjoy fresh air in their large and secure garden. They show off their excellent physical skills when climbing, sliding and pedalling on a range of well maintained and challenging equipment. During inclement weather they benefit from access to a large sports hall which offers exciting possibilities for noisy and energetic inside exercise.

Children enjoy healthy and nutritious snacks and drinks provided by the staff. They taste different foods linked to topic work and at snack time. Water is made freely available and older children recognise when they are thirsty and need to drink. Staff offer good guidance to parents about healthy lunch boxes and children enjoy sitting down to a sociable meal with staff. All specific allergies and food needs are carefully recorded and staff are vigilant in ensuring children do not consume inappropriate foods, they use a photographic list to make sure children are safe.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Staff are vigilant in ensuring children's safety whilst in their care. There are rigorous procedures to record the actual times of children's attendance and clear records are maintained at all times of all those present in the building. There are strict practices in place to ensure that children are never left unsupervised with people who have not been checked, all students and helpers receive clear guidance and are supervised by a member of staff. The names and addresses of those people authorised to collect children are clearly noted on children's records and a password system is used for emergencies. Staff ensure the premises and garden are safe and secure at all times with regular risk assessments and daily checks. Toys and resources are made easily available to children, thus they learn to make independent decisions about the materials they need to support their play. All storage boxes are clearly labelled with script and pictures to help children's independence and encourage their understanding of the meaning of writing.

Children are protected from abuse because staff have a very good knowledge about the signs and symptoms of abuse and they closely adhere to robust child protection policies, which meet the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Some staff have previous experience of working with other agencies to support children about whom there are concerns.

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

The provision is good.

Children make good progress because staff are confident in their knowledge of how children learn. Staff plan a wide range of interesting activities to stimulate children's learning. They are aware of how to provide an appropriate selection of thoughtful resources which children can freely access to support their own activities. Staff record observations of younger children's achievements linked to the Birth to three matters framework. However, all planning relates to the Foundation Stage curriculum therefore planning for children's learning is not always appropriate or sufficiently detailed to meet the needs of younger children. However, staff use their good knowledge of each child to adapt activities and generally children make good progress. At the time of inspection most children were three years old.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress in all areas through carefully planned play activities. Children enjoy a supportive environment where they are free to choose their own activities and access resources independently, thus they become confident to make choices about their own learning. Planning covers all areas of learning and offers opportunities for children to explore and experiment with different resources and materials. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum, however, assessments of children's progress are only linked to the curriculum in the year before they start school. Thus, at times children may lack challenge and opportunity to make best progress. For example, three-year-old children who can skilfully write their own names freely are not routinely encouraged to label their own work. Children's assessment records are shared with parents and include examples of children's own work and photographs of activities.

Staff help children develop maths skills through well loved number songs and favourite games, such as magnetic fishing. Children confidently count and compare size, shape and position when building with different construction resources. They learn about their environment through speaking to people working in the community and visiting local amenities, such as the fire station. Staff help children learn to value differences through topics, such as 'all about me' when children identified the colours of hair and eyes of themselves and their friends. Children have many opportunities to explore and experiment with different materials and resources; they celebrate festivals from different cultures and enjoy growing vegetables and flowers in their garden.

The environment offers good opportunities for children to learn that print has meaning, children use mark making in their play and clear labels help them realise that marks have meanings. They enjoy reading books and story time. Children recreate favourite stories and familiar scenarios when dressing up or in the role play corner; they have good imagination and are able to express themselves clearly.

Children develop good small and large motor skills through the use of tools and construction kits which involve threading, screwing and fitting pieces together. They learn about identifying physical needs and how to address them, for example, children take off their own sweatshirts when they get too hot from running around and know they must wear sun cream on sunny days.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are known and valued as individuals by staff who are closely linked with the local community. Many families send successive siblings to the group and parents often say they chose the group because of excellent recommendations made by other parents. Staff are skilled at identifying and meeting the needs of each child. They build close relationships with parents and offer daily verbal feedback about children's achievements. Staff have received training in Somerset Total Communication and help all children learn to sign through daily routines, such as register time. Staff are proactive in meeting children's individual needs, for example, arrangements have already been made to make the pre-school accessible to children with mobility difficulties. Children learn about diversity through good resources and thoughtful activities, such as comparing physical characteristics with each other. They learn about the festivals of other cultures and have links with others in the community, for example, the local Chinese restaurant provided resources to help children learn about Chinese New Year.

Children behave exceptionally well, they are lively and engrossed in their play and staff help them learn how to manage their own behaviour through thoughtful and sensitive interventions. There is a purposeful atmosphere and staff offer calm role models. Parents are closely involved in daily events and benefit from the comprehensive notice boards which display details of planning for activities, information about forthcoming events and contact details for other services.

Partnership with parents is good. Staff have close relationships with parents who enjoy informal opportunities to talk about their children's daily progress as well as formal parents' evenings annually. They are given very well documented information about the pre-school and their children's progress. Staff maintain a weekly diary of events in the pre-school which is beautifully illustrated with photographs; a copy is given to parents when their children leave. Parents are very impressed with the help which is offered when their children have particular needs and appreciate support from staff when working with other agencies, such as the speech and language therapy service. Through good relationships with staff and other children, and well planned activities, children learn to consider the needs of others and value differences between people. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The pre-school is well managed by staff who meet regularly with the management committee. The staff group are well qualified and have a good knowledge of how children learn. They ensure that children are well supported by high ratios of staff to children. The manager checks that children's safety is assured by closely supervising all those who visit the pre-school and students and volunteers are offered clear guidance. There are good policies and procedures in place when recruiting staff and there is an induction programme in place for new staff. All staff are supported by an annual appraisal which helps identify development and training needs. The appraisal also offers opportunities to check staff's continuing suitability to work with children. All necessary records and documentation are in place and are very well detailed and securely stored.

Leadership and management are good. Staff are knowledgeable about how children learn and record children's achievements. They are clear about their aims in providing nursery education, however, the system to assess children's progress and to use this for planning next learning is

not yet fully developed to provide for all children in receipt of nursery education. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the setting was asked to keep detailed records of significant issues and share these with parents. Although no such issues have since arisen staff are aware of the need to share records with parents and inform Ofsted of significant events. At the last education inspection the group was asked to consider how to develop activity evaluations to ensure activities are evaluated against the stepping stones within each area of learning, rather than the early learning goal. Evaluations of children's learning are recorded and linked to stepping stones within the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff also maintain a weekly evaluation of all activities enjoyed by children.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made Ofsted that have 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):

- ensure records of children's achievements are used to plan next steps in learning for younger children in line with the Birth to three matters framework

#### **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):

- ensure assessments of children's achievements are used effectively to plan for their next learning within the Foundation Stage curriculum for all the time when they receive funding for early education

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)