

Barnack Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	260892
Inspection date	11 December 2007
Inspector	Katherine Powell
Setting Address	The Mobile, Barnack C of E Primary School, School Road, Barnack, Stamford, Lincolnshire, PE9 3DZ
Telephone number	01780 740265
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Registered person	The Trustees of Barnack Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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?

Barnack Pre-School has been running for more than 30 years and operates from a mobile building in the grounds of Barnack Primary School, near Stamford. A maximum of 16 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:00 to 12:00 during term-time. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 25 children on roll aged from two to under five years. Of these, 17 children receive funding for early education. Children attend from Barnack and the surrounding villages. There are no children currently attending who speak English as an additional language or who have been identified with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities.

The pre-school employs six members of staff. Of these, four staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a teacher advisor from the local authority. The setting is a registered charity and a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's physical, nutritional and health needs are met due to the highly effective procedures and practices which are in place. Staff provide high levels of support and guidance for children enabling them to gain a very good awareness of the importance of hygiene and to become increasingly independent in their personal care. For example, children have a clear awareness of why they need to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Children frequently help themselves to tissues to blow their noses and are gently reminded to cover their mouths when coughing. These procedures are extremely effective in helping to minimise the risk of cross-infection. Children are able to rest according to their individual needs as inviting and comfortable cushions are provided in the reading corner.

Children develop very positive attitudes to physical exercise and gain immense pleasure from using and exploring the excellent range of play resources in the outdoor area. They are keen to put on their coats and outdoor shoes and squeal with delight as they race outside and run around freely in the open spaces. Children are visibly excited by the range of activities they can access outside and which fully support their whole body movements. They confidently use wooden apparatus to climb and balance and delight in using sit-on rides and push along toys. They enjoy running games and have great fun engaging in imaginative games. For example, children took turns to dress up as Santa Claus and carefully placed presents on to the wooden sleigh whilst other children played the part of the reindeer and pulled the sleigh along. Children persevere with challenging activities which help to promote their small hand skills effectively. For example, they enjoy using play dough and cutters, they confidently handle scissors and make models using construction toys. Staff have a very secure knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and Foundation Stage curriculum which enables them to foster children's physical skills and good health very effectively.

Children have access to drinking water throughout the day which they confidently help themselves to. They skilfully pour their own drinks and less confident children can point to picture cards to make their needs known to staff. All children thoroughly enjoy an excellent range of healthy options at snack time. Staff have implemented highly effective procedures to ensure children benefit from a balanced and nutritious selection of snacks each day. Children have excellent opportunities to plant, grow and harvest their own produce in the designated garden area. This helps children to fully appreciate where food comes from and what conditions plants need to thrive. As part of the harvest festival celebrations children grew their own pumpkins, squash, potatoes, radish and runner beans. After tending their plants, children decided when the produce was ripe and took delight in washing, preparing and eating the vegetables at snack time. Staff further enhanced children's awareness by engaging them in discussions about the importance of eating daily portions of vegetables and fruit. Staff maintain excellent written records which enable them to fully meet children's individual dietary and medical requirements. There are very comprehensive health policies in place, which include procedures to be followed in the event of a child becoming ill whilst at the setting. Parents are very well informed about infectious diseases and staff provide very clear information about when children are not able to attend due to illness. Meticulous procedures are in place to record any accidents or when medicines are administered to children. Well-stocked first aid boxes are provided and staff have a very secure knowledge of appropriate first aid treatment. This ensures children receive excellent care and attention.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because staff are extremely vigilant and use thorough risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. Staff have an excellent awareness of how to organise play space, furniture and equipment effectively to enable children to move freely and independently between different activities and play areas. Consequently, children are confident and feel safe and secure. Children benefit from having sufficient space to engage in indoor or outdoor activities and have areas for active and quiet play. Children's safety is well promoted as staff carefully monitor access to the building and ensure children are not able to leave the premises unsupervised. Systems are in place to record the presence of any visitors to the setting. However, details regarding their hours of attendance are not always fully recorded which impacts on safety procedures within the setting.

Toys and equipment are regularly checked and maintained to a high standard. Children enthusiastically select their own play resources which are appropriate to their ages and stages of development. Staff are highly effective in helping children to learn about safety through, for example, learning safety rules for the use of equipment and helping to tidy away at the end of the session to prevent accidents occurring. They also practise road safety procedures with children in the outdoor play area before undertaking any outings. This is very effective in helping children to remember the things that they must do before crossing the road, such as looking and listening very carefully for traffic. Children are developing a very good awareness of fire safety as they have regular opportunities to practise emergency evacuation procedures.

All members of staff have developed a very good awareness of child protection policies and procedures. They are fully aware of their responsibilities and are able to recognise possible signs and symptoms. The supervisor has attended appropriate training which enables her to effectively support other members of staff. Consequently, children are very well protected by staff who give high priority to safeguarding children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the pre-school and gain immense pleasure and enjoyment from the highly stimulating range of activities that are on offer. Staff skilfully enable all children to reach their full potential as they plan exciting play opportunities which engage children's interests and help them to learn. They provide excellent support and guidance for children and are highly effective role models. They ask questions to extend and challenge children's thinking and learning and provide a warm and harmonious atmosphere where children flourish. Staff fully involve themselves in children's games and activities which heightens children's enjoyment. For example, children shrieked with delight when playing outside as a member of staff put on a pair of reindeer antlers and invited the children to help her decorate one of the plants with Christmas decorations. Children gained immense satisfaction from this activity as they stood back and admired their work.

Excellent attention is given to promoting children's learning through outdoor play and experiences. Staff have worked very hard to develop a superb outdoor area that contains an excellent range of equipment and resources to support and develop children's skills. Children have immense fun running around freely and initiating their own imaginative games. They have excellent opportunities to explore and investigate using their senses and delight in cultivating their garden area. They talk with great enthusiasm about the wide range of produce they have

grown and compare the smell and texture of different herbs. Children's physical skills are extremely well developed as they confidently use the exiting range of equipment. For example, children skilfully negotiate their way across wooden bridges and along sturdy logs.

Staff give high priority to encouraging and promoting children's imaginative play. Children beam with delight as they put on dressing-up clothes and explore the excellent range of props provided in the role-play area. They thoroughly enjoy playing co-operatively with their peers and willingly take turns playing different roles. Children have time and space to fully develop their ideas and are actively encouraged to explore new concepts. For example, after spending time making cakes and food out of play dough a group of children left the home corner to find some more 'ingredients' they could use in their baking game. They discovered the sand tray and quickly collected some containers to fill with sand. Children had great pleasure mixing and stirring the sand, pouring it in and out of pots and saucepans and describing the meal they were preparing to others. Children clearly feel secure in making choices and greatly benefit from being able to follow their interests and own ideas. Staff always give children lots of praise and encouragement for their efforts and achievements which fully supports children in building trusting relationships.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They know that young children learn through play and provide a good variety of practical and first-hand experiences to support this. Long term planning covers all six areas of learning and ensures children make steady progress towards the early learning goals. Staff continually assess children's progress and development and assessment records are regularly updated by a child's key worker. Staff record good information about children's achievements and use assessment information effectively to plan for the next steps in children's learning. However, records do not clearly show the progress that individual children are making along the stepping stones in each area of learning. Staff have high expectations of achievement and ensure that adult-led activities provide appropriate challenge for children. All staff at the setting encourage children to think and demonstrate what they know. For example, staff skilfully support children to decide how they will join materials together when designing and making. Staff organise space and resources very effectively to fully encourage children to be independent learners. They operate a 'free-flow' system throughout the session which enables children to choose when they would like to go outside. This is highly effective and ensures all children benefit from getting fresh air and opportunities to be active. Staff manage children's behaviour very well, using positive language and clear explanations. They are attentive to the needs of children, listen to them, show them respect and help them respond to boundaries.

Children are motivated to learn and show enthusiasm and high levels of concentration. They settle quickly and have formed secure friendships, greeting each other warmly as they arrive. They enjoy talking to and interacting with staff and each other and are very welcoming to visitors, sharing their news and confidently asking questions. Children learn to share and negotiate with others during group activities. They demonstrate high levels of independence with personal care and help to serve snacks and pour drinks for each other. They show a strong sense of belonging to a community as they eagerly discuss events they are taking part in at pre-school, such as visiting the local church and performing their nativity play. Children are very well behaved and listen carefully to instructions and explanations given by staff.

Children confidently approach staff and will seek assistance when needed. They use a wide vocabulary to express their ideas and describe events to others. They enjoy listening to stories and use familiar phrases they have learnt from fairy stories when engaging in imaginative games. They have access to a stimulating range of books which they are keen to self-select and share with a friend. They have frequent opportunities to mark make in the creative and role-play areas and older children are beginning to write their names independently. Children show a good awareness of letter sounds and shapes and can identify the initial letter of their names and some familiar words. Children confidently count to 10 and beyond and have very good opportunities to see and read numerals in the play environment. For example, they talk about numbers when playing with calculators and tills in the home corner and play games with the wooden numbers displayed on the fence outside. Children learn to solve simple number problems at snack time, for example, when working out how many more plates or cups will be needed. They develop their awareness of addition and subtraction through singing a variety of number rhymes and playing finger games. Children show a keen interest in shape, space and measures. They can name familiar shapes and identify objects in the environment which are the same shape. They enjoy comparing the size and length of objects and show excitement when helping to use a tape measure to find out how long a piece of ribbon is.

Children use their imagination in a range of situations and delight in engaging in stimulating role play games both indoors and outside. They explore their creativity in arts and crafts and enjoy using and experimenting with a wide variety of tools and resources. For example, they make patterns by rolling pine cones in paint and swirling their fingers through sand. They make cards using hole punches, scissors, tape and glue and enjoy designing their own Christmas tree decorations using coloured card and paper. Children talk with interest about their own lives and can recount past and present events, such as a trip to hospital or a birthday party. They are developing a good understanding of the uses of technology as they play with calculators and old telephones and create firework pictures on the computer. Children enjoy singing songs together and joining in with action rhymes. They freely explore musical instruments and delight in making sounds using everyday objects such as metal tins and flower pots. Children have good opportunities to explore and investigate materials such as soil, play dough and shredded paper. They enjoy using their senses to explore and make sense of the world around them. For example, children had great fun wrapping up a variety of objects in Christmas paper and then asking their friends and staff to try to guess what was inside. They learn about the work of others in the community as they welcome visitors to the pre-school such as the local police officer.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Very effective relationships with parents ensure that staff know the children very well. Children receive excellent care appropriate to their needs because meticulous arrangements ensure their individual needs are discussed and recorded. Systematic methods ensure both parties are fully informed. For example, through precise documentation, a comprehensive parents information pack and regular meetings. A clear and concise written policy works effectively in practice to promote equal opportunities for all children. Children build warm and trusting relationships with the staff which significantly contributes to their sense of belonging. Children with additional needs are cared for extremely well as staff liaise closely with parents and take appropriate action to seek advice and support from other professionals. Staff give high priority to ensuring all children are fully included and have equal access to the range of learning opportunities provided. Staff are fully aware of current legislation including information relating to the

Disability Discrimination Act and a detailed written policy reflects a strong commitment to ensure the provision of quality care for all children.

Children make active decisions about their play, making choices to develop their confidence and self-esteem. They are very well supported by staff to respect the needs of others and they willingly help each other and learn to share and take turns. They play confidently alone and socially and ask for appropriate help if required. Children are learning about the community in which they live as they engage in local walks and various outdoor activities. Staff work in very close partnership with the school which helps children to have a smooth transition into the reception class. An excellent range of appropriate play resources provide opportunities for children to develop an awareness of other cultures, disability and the wider world in which they live. For example, dressing up clothes reflect different cultures and a superb range of reference books enable children to extend their knowledge and understanding. Staff plan a wide range of exciting activities to support children's awareness of other faiths, cultures and festivals. For example, children have recently enjoyed learning about the Japanese celebration of Shichi-Go-San. Staff planned a range of interesting and meaningful activities to enable children to appreciate how young children in another country take part in a national celebration. Children's behaviour is exemplary. A very strong emphasis is placed on promoting positive behaviour and successful methods are adapted effectively to meet the ages and developmental stages of all children. Children listen intently to the staff and respond positively to consistent use of praise and encouragement. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parent's views are actively sought to identify clear starting points to plan for children's progress. Staff use this information very well to build on children's previous knowledge and skills. Information is regularly shared through a variety of methods including planned meetings with children's key workers where progress is discussed and the next steps in learning are identified. An excellent range of methods including children bringing items from home to support activities fully encourages parental involvement in their child's learning. Staff provide parents with excellent information about how they can support their child's learning at home and planning documents are clearly displayed within the setting. A highly effective system has been implemented to provide all parents with an opportunity to come in to the setting to observe how the session is organised and to assist with some of the play activities provided.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the good organisation at the setting. Indoor play space is used effectively ensuring that children are able to move around freely and independently access a good range of activities to support their play and learning. Staff fully utilise the outdoor play area to provide children with an excellent range of play activities which support their learning in all areas. All legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and is very well maintained. Leadership and management are good. This contributes positively to ensuring children access good quality early education provision. The supervisor has a clear vision for the setting which leads to improvements in the organisation and outcomes for children. She is very well supported by a hard-working and dedicated staff team. The setting values the support of other professionals, such as a mentor teacher, to help to continually evaluate and monitor the educational provision.

Children benefit from being cared for by well qualified and skilled staff who undergo a sound induction procedure. All adults who come into contact with children are appropriately vetted to ensure their suitability. Staff work very well as a team and are deployed effectively within the setting. High staffing ratios are maintained so, consequently, children are very well supported and supervised at all times. Staff have a sound awareness of the written policies and procedures which are in place and they are actively encouraged to undertake further training to increase their awareness of relevant issues. As a result, children are cared for by knowledgeable staff and benefit from continuity of care. Effective systems are in place for managing staff, such as staff appraisal and regular team meetings. All staff are involved in monitoring and assessing the provision and some systems have been implemented to identify areas for future development. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection one recommendation was made with regard to staff continuing to update the knowledge of childcare issues through regular training.

All staff benefit from having on-going opportunities to attend professional courses to further enhance their knowledge and skills. Staff undertake a range of roles and responsibilities within the setting and the supervisor ensures that appropriate training is accessed to support staff in undertaking their duties. This ensures that staff are able to effectively support children and provide good quality care and early education.

At the last nursery education inspection one recommendation was raised with regard to continuing to develop opportunities for children to climb and balance.

Children have access to an excellent range of equipment both indoors and outside to support and develop their climbing and balancing skills and consequently all children make very good progress in the area of physical 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):

- review information recorded in the visitors book, with regard to recording times of arrival and departure.

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):

- review assessment systems to ensure records clearly show the progress each child is making along the stepping stones
- continue to develop systems to monitor and evaluate the provision and identify areas for further development (also applies to care.)

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