

# Knutsford Community Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	130639
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Jane Mount
<b>Setting Address</b>	Knutsford JMI School, Knutsford Avenue, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD24 7ER
<b>Telephone number</b>	01923 466025
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees of Knutsford Community Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 outstanding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Knutsford Community Pre-School opened in 1974. It operates from a purpose built classroom within Knutsford JMI School in Watford, Hertfordshire. The group has sole use of a large classroom with toilets, storage facilities, an integral kitchen and a fully secure outside play area.

A maximum of 28 children may attend at any one time and there are currently 61 children on roll. Of these, there are 48 children who receive funding for nursery education. The group serves the local community.

Knutsford Community Pre-school opens Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 08:50 to 11:50 and 12:20 to 15:20. Children can attend a variety of sessions. The setting is able to support children who have English as an additional language and children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Eight staff work with the children and of these, two staff have NVQ level 4 childcare qualifications and four staff have NVQ level 3 childcare qualifications. One other member of staff is about to commence an early years childcare qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children participate in an extensive range of activities and play opportunities which positively contribute to their physical health and fitness. They develop self-confidence in their physical skills as they keenly participate in stimulating physical activities on a daily basis using both the indoor and outdoor environment to its full potential. When playing outside children show enjoyment and benefit from the fresh air. Their physical health is promoted by staff who challenge and support children as they confidently run, jump, climb and balance. For example, children show awareness of space as they skilfully negotiate around obstacles while pedalling on bikes. They enjoy the freedom of running energetically and show great hand to eye co-ordination as they throw balls through hoops. Children learn to follow instructions and to move with control and co-ordination as they delight in hopping on one leg or running like mice during a movement session. Children have regular opportunities to climb and enjoy the freedom of large scale movements as they confidently manoeuvre on the climbing frame. Children are learning about the effects physical exercise can have on their body and are beginning to recognise the changes that happen when they become more active. For example, they discuss why they feel hot after running and are aware if they feel their heart it will be beating faster. Children are able to rest and be more active according to their needs. For example, children enjoy quietly sitting in the book area looking at books.

Children's health is protected because staff consistently implement the settings robust health and hygiene policies and procedures. There are clear recording procedures for accidents and when administering medication. Also, highly effective routines are in place to ensure the risk of cross-infection is minimised and children remain healthy. For example, tables are thoroughly cleaned before children eat and staff wear aprons if preparing or handling food. The toilets are closely monitored by staff to ensure they remain clean and that soap, paper towels and toilet paper are always available to children. Children are cared for in a clean environment where they learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. Highly effective support and guidance from staff helps children gain an excellent understanding of good hygiene practises and promotes a real desire for children to become increasingly independent in their personal care. For example, staff help younger children to wipe their noses and dispose of tissues appropriately and they remind children to cover their mouths when they cough to prevent germs from spreading. Children are fully aware of the need to wash their hands before eating and after visiting the toilet and sensitive reminders from staff ensures this is always implemented. When asked older children are able to say it is important to wash their hands after visiting the toilet to wash away any germs that may be hiding on their hands so they don't become unwell. Children also remind each other to wash their hands, such as before they have their snack. Consequently, children's health is safeguarded.

Children benefit from a healthy, nutritious diet. They have a cafeteria style snack time and choose when they wish to have their snack and drink during the morning or afternoon session. Children enjoy a variety of healthy choices at snack time such as toasted organic wholemeal bread with butter and cucumber and carrots. Children take an active role in the preparation of their snacks such as confidently spreading the butter onto their toast and selecting and pouring their own drinks. The pre-school has a menu which provides a wide ranging variety of healthy snacks and takes account of individual and cultural needs. There are highly effective recording procedures in place for children with special dietary requirements which ensures all staff are fully aware of children who have specific food allergies. Consequently, children's individual

dietary needs are met well and children remain healthy. Snack time is used as a time for sharing and social interaction and good manners are encouraged by staff. Children enjoy eating their snack while talking to their peers and staff. Drinks are always available and water is encouraged. Children have regular opportunities to learn about healthy eating through planned activities, discussion and play. For example, they have enjoyed growing a varied selection of fruit and vegetables in the pre-school garden such as tomatoes, courgettes and potatoes. When asked, the children excitedly recall how they watered and cared for the plants and how they particularly enjoyed digging up the potatoes, washing them, cooking them and then eating the end product.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children flourish in a safe, stimulating, child-friendly environment where they are actively welcomed by staff and feel secure. They can move around safely and independently because staff have an excellent knowledge and understanding of health and safety procedures and know how to implement their knowledge in a consistent and highly effective manner. Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised because staff are vigilant and any potential risks or hazards are identified and immediately minimised. Comprehensive and informative risk assessments are maintained which are regularly reviewed and evaluated. Children remain safe because highly efficient safety precautions are taken. For example, excellent security systems are in place to ensure children are protected. Supervising entry to the pre-school is well managed by staff which ensures children cannot leave unsupervised and no unauthorised persons can enter and children are not put at risk.

Priority is given to teaching children how to keep themselves and others safe. Staff skilfully explain safe practices to children. For example, when outside a member of staff explains to a child why it is important to ensure there is sufficient space around them when riding their bike so as not to bump into someone or hurt themselves. Inside, prompt cards are displayed in key areas of the pre-school and are visual reminders to children not to run or to throw items. Children learn how to stay safe in an emergency. For example, they take an active role in fire practises and know what to do when they hear the bell. Children show an excellent understanding and have a keen willingness to keep themselves and others safe. For example, during an art activity a child reminds another how to hold the scissors correctly and safely.

Children can independently access an extensive and varied range of safe resources and activities. Toys and equipment are developmentally appropriate for children's age and stage of development and sufficiently challenging so children are enthusiastic and highly motivated in their play. Areas are organised to create an accessible and exciting learning environment. Effective and well planned staff deployment ensures children have choice in an environment kept safe but where safe limits are set to allow children appropriate and well-managed freedom. For example, using both the indoor and outdoor facilities to their full potential through effective staff deployment which enables free-flow between the two environments. Children's independence skills are encouraged and promoted because furniture is child-height with low level storage units to encourage children to explore and select. Resources are well maintained and regularly checked by staff to ensure they are clean and safe and have no broken or missing pieces so children can use them to their full potential.

Utmost priority is given to ensuring children's welfare is protected because staff have an excellent knowledge and understanding of child protection and know how to safeguard children. They are pro-active at ensuring they keep up-to-date with any related changes and have the required child protection documentation in place. An informative child protection policy is in

place which all staff and parents are fully aware of. There is a designated person responsible for child protection who ensures staff understand their responsibilities. All staff are fully aware of the correct recording and reporting procedures if they had a concern. Consequently, children are safeguarded and not at risk from harm.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Outcomes for children are excellent. Younger children's learning is positively promoted through the staff's expert knowledge of child development, the 'Birth to three matters' framework and a full understanding of how young children learn and progress. The framework is used to plan and organise exciting and varied play opportunities and activities for children under three years which are stimulating, imaginative and meet the needs of individual children extremely well. Planning is evaluated to ensure it is effective and is used to inform children's assessment records. Younger children's progress is carefully monitored through regular observations of individual children's play and achievements to see how they are progressing. Assessment records clearly show how younger children are progressing and what their next stages of learning are. Informative assessment records are then used to inform future planning. This ensures planned activities are developmentally appropriate for the younger children who attend the pre-school and help them make progress in their learning and development.

Children are making excellent progress in their learning and personal development because of a highly effective keyworker system which is in place and ensures staff know their key children and their families extremely well. Children are happy and settled and develop confidence and self-esteem because they receive consistent levels of support from staff. Subsequently, children are eager to attend and relish their time at the setting because they feel at ease in the pre-school environment. Close and caring relationships with staff increase children's sense of trust and helps them to develop a strong sense of self. Staff support children well in their play and give praise and encouragement as appropriate. Younger children happily separate from their parents and carers at the beginning of the session, they are motivated in their play and enthusiastically explore and investigate the environment.

Younger children are fully involved and engrossed in an exciting range of activities and play experiences. These provide a balance of free play and more structured play opportunities and positively contribute to their overall development. A flexible daily routine enables children to experience a balance of adult-led and child-initiated play. Children's independence is encouraged as they are able to move around freely and safely and make independent choices about their chosen activity. They have daily opportunities to experience creative play such as paint, water and sand. For example, they enjoy exploring the texture of the sand as they look for hidden objects or mixing colours together when painting. Children expertly roll and cut play dough making different shapes and patterns and talk with friends about what they are doing. Children actively engage in using their imaginations and delight in playing in the home corner and making 'lunch'. Children's communication skills are supported well by staff as they listen and respond to children's questions such as when looking at books together.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Teaching is consistently inspiring and challenging to all children and the activities and experiences provided are exceptionally well matched to children's needs and interests. Staff have a very secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. Consequently, teaching highly motivates children so they are engrossed

in their activities and make very rapid progress in all areas of their learning. Resources support children's learning and are organised to allow children to make choices and gain independence. Effective use is made of time and children are encouraged to persist in tasks with excellent support from staff who are skilled at asking open-ended questions that make children think. Staff build trusting relationships with children and talk about safety and behaviour within routines. Children's behaviour is managed in a positive manner which promotes their confidence and self-esteem.

Children are highly motivated and making exceptionally good progress towards the early learning goals because staff have a full understanding of how children learn and progress. An effective keyworker system is used and children's progress is closely monitored through continual and rigorous observation and assessment. Children's assessment records are systematic, informative and closely linked to the six areas of learning and the stepping stones. Information gained from children's assessment records is then used to guide future planning and teaching. Curriculum planning includes long, medium and short term plans and is closely linked to the six areas of learning and the stepping stones. Plans show what children are intended to learn and includes how activities will be adapted for children who learn at different rates. This includes providing sufficient challenge and extension for older or more able children. Activities are always evaluated and this information is used to inform future planning. Consequently, the planned curriculum promotes progress towards the early learning goals and the inclusion of all children who attend the setting.

Children arrive happy, quickly settle and immediately engage in activities. They are aware of boundaries and behavioural expectations such as sharing and taking turns when playing. Children show excellent independence skills through being able to access all areas of the environment. They confidently go to the toilet on their own or put on their coat and shoes to play outside or put on an apron for painting. Children keenly help to tidy away toys such as spontaneously sweeping up spilt sand at the sand tray. They are praised by staff for doing so and this develops children's confidence and self-esteem. Children eagerly participate in activities and are keen and motivated to learn. They have regular opportunities to experience music, imaginative play and explore varied materials and media on a daily basis. For example, they use their imaginations when playing outside and delight in putting 'petrol' in their cars and ensuring they pay the correct money before driving off. Children's creative skills are promoted as they can freely access an excellent range of art and craft materials and are given the freedom to explore their own ideas. They regularly enjoy art and craft activities. For example, they enjoy making stars and expertly cut out the shape before applying the glue and sticking on a variety of chosen shiny materials.

Children have opportunities to learn about and understand the world about them. For example, they learn about the environment and enjoy gardening and have successfully grown a variety of fruits and vegetables. Children learn about past and present, such as talking about their families and looking at photographs. Children have access to an excellent range of resources that develop their knowledge of technology. For example, developing their computer skills using the computer mouse and keyboard or using a range of programmable and interactive toys such as making a remote control duck move in the correct direction to find numbers. Mathematical concepts are reinforced through books, singing and counting during the daily routine. For example, children know when singing 'three little animals' that if one goes away there are two animals left. Children show confidence and understanding in their mathematical learning through varied activities which involve shape, numbers patterns and problem solving. Children have opportunities to explore concepts such as quantity and volume through sand and water play.

Children listen and respond with enjoyment when listening to stories, songs and rhymes. For example, they listen with great intent to the story of the princess in the tower and delight in joining in with the actions when singing the song. They are beginning to understand that print carries meaning and have many opportunities to become familiar with the written word. For example, the 'open' and 'closed' signs when snacks are being served in the cafeteria, labelling on toy boxes and recognising their names on coat pegs and trays. Children link sounds to letters through activities. Children are freely able to access writing and drawing materials and enjoy writing for a purpose. For example, writing their names on pictures or making shopping lists in the home corner. Children's physical skills are fostered with regular opportunities to exercise incorporated within the daily routine. Children are able to move with control as they run and jump in the outside play area and can skilfully negotiate around obstacles as they ride bikes. They demonstrate balance and co-ordination as they kick, throw and catch balls or hoops. Children learn about health and bodily awareness. For example, staff discuss changes to their bodies such as being hot after running.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children gain a well-developed respect for others and their beliefs, cultures and traditions. Their awareness of diversity is promoted through the varied range of resources and stimulating activities they take part in. This includes regular opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them. Children have exciting opportunities to learn about and appreciate the customs and cultures of others through learning about some of the festivals such as Eid or Chinese New Year. For example, children recently enjoyed listening to stories and songs about the festival, Divali and enjoyed making clay pots to put candle lights into. They delighted in watching classical Indian dances when a parent was invited in and staff and children learnt how to put a sari on. Children are encouraged to share their experiences of the Divali celebration from home. For example, talking at circle time about the fireworks and the sweets they enjoyed eating at family parties to celebrate the festival. Children develop positive attitudes to others as they are able to select from resources which reflect diversity such as role play clothes and play food. Displays and posters throughout the pre-school reflect positive images and help children become aware of the wider world. Children have regular opportunities to learn about the local community. Visitors have been invited in to talk about their work such as a police officer, a nurse and a soldier. Children enjoy outings into the local community. For example, to post a letter or to go for a nature walk in the school grounds and children excitedly recall when they went onto the school playing fields to watch some 'diggers' at work.

Children play well together and have an excellent awareness of right and wrong. Children are learning to manage their behaviour through working and playing in an environment that sets, explains and maintains clear and consistent limits. Behaviour is dealt with in positive ways with staff talking with children about helping each other in their play, sharing, taking turns and behaving considerately towards others. For example, staff praise a child who helps another to find a favourite book. Staff explain the implications negative behaviour can have on others and how some behaviours may be inappropriate. They talk about feelings and children learn how to cope with their feelings. The setting have some 'golden rules' which teach children to be self-disciplined. Visual prompts are used around the pre-school to remind children of these rules such as 'be friendly' or 'be happy'. Children are taught to be polite to others and staff are excellent role models. Children can be regularly heard saying 'please' and 'thank you'. Staff have highly effective systems in place to provide appropriate care and support to children who have English as an additional language. They work in close partnership with parents to ensure

children's individual needs are met. Excellent strategies are in place for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their families. The settings special needs co-ordinator is proactive in ensuring that the appropriate action is taken when a child is identified with or admitted with a particular need. Children are treated with equal concern and all children have equal access to resources and activities. Staff ensure they are fully aware of and able to meet the specific needs a child may have through close discussion with parents and then any agencies that may be appropriate. All children are highly valued and fully included and their families supported. The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Relationships between staff and parents and carers is excellent which significantly contributes to children's well-being, care and learning. A clear settling-in programme ensures children settle well and become secure in their surroundings. Children's individual needs are very effectively met as staff obtain information from parents prior to their child starting in the pre-school. Information is then exchanged on a daily basis between parents and staff to ensure children receive appropriate care and support. A keyworker system is used and priority is given to ensure parents are fully aware of who their child's keyworker is. Informative notice boards, newsletters, up-to-date and comprehensive policies and procedures and a prospectus are also used to keep parents fully informed about the provision. Parents are encouraged to share information and achievements from home and one way this is achieved is through a home link book. Information about the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage are shared with parents. Consequently, parents are fully informed and able to actively help their children make progress in their learning. Parents are welcomed into the setting and children's achievements are verbally shared on a daily basis. More formal parents meetings are also held on a regular basis and are another way of sharing children's development and progress. The pre-school closely monitor the quality of care and education including seeking feedback from parents. Parents spoken to at inspection praised the pre-school. They felt the environment is welcoming and inviting and spoke positively of staff and felt fully informed of the progress their children are making.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a setting where their needs are effectively met because staff, time and resources are organised well. Staff work extremely well together as a team. They are very supportive of each other and focus on supporting and interacting with the children to ensure children's care, learning and play needs are met. Recruitment procedures ensure children are cared for by staff who have relevant experience and qualifications to do their job and all staff working with children are suitable to do so. Children's safety and well-being are overall promoted because appropriate checks are completed on all staff and records are maintained although recording procedures are to be reviewed. Any persons such as visitors who have not been vetted would not have unsupervised access to children and all staff are fully aware of this.

Effective induction systems ensure staff are fully informed of the settings policies and procedures which they implement in a clear and consistent manner. Staff are very clear on their roles and responsibilities and staff appraisals are used as a way to discuss their strengths and weaknesses. Any future improvements or training needs that are identified are given high priority and addressed as soon as possible. Children are cared for by staff who have an excellent knowledge and understanding of child development. Staff have a strong commitment to professional development and keep up-to-date with current child care practices through regular staff training.



All required documentation for the efficient and safe management of the setting is in place and generally well organised. However, some staff information is poorly organised and not easily accessible including staff checks and potentially children's welfare may not be fully safeguarded. Staff are well deployed with a highly effective keyworker system in place which ensures children's care, learning and play are promoted by staff who know the children well. Registers are maintained and accurately record children and staff attendance. Visitors and parent helpers are also recorded and this information is generally informative.

Leadership and management of nursery education is outstanding. Staff are guided by the very effective and efficient leadership of the manager. She has a clear vision to provide high quality care and education and is committed to ensuring children are making excellent progress in their learning. This is achieved through continual and rigorous monitoring procedures which enable staff to achieve high standards of teaching. She leads by example and is a positive role model. The manager values her staff team and knows and utilises their skills well. Staff are supported through regular staff meetings and information gained is used as a way of monitoring and evaluating the quality of care and education provided within the setting. Overall children's needs are met.

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

At the last care inspection the setting received a good judgement and was given one recommendation to ensure accident records are kept confidential. Children's health and well-being are protected because accident recording systems have been reviewed and further improved. Each entry is now recorded on a separate page and therefore confidentiality is maintained.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting received a very good judgement with two points of consideration. They were to expand learning opportunities to challenge more physically able children and to develop information given to parents about the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. Older more physically able children have extensive learning opportunities which are stimulating and provide challenge. Consequently, children make very good progress in their physical development. Parents receive good quality information about the Foundation Stage and consequently are fully informed and able to help their children make progress in their learning in full partnership with the setting.

### **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 outstanding.

## 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 the organisation of staff documentation to ensure it is easily accessible and clearly shows staff suitability.

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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)