

Riverside Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	131573
Inspection date	03 December 2007
Inspector	Judith Reed
Setting Address	Bitterne Park Infant School, Manor Farm Road, Bitterne Park, Southampton, Hampshire, SO18 1NX
Telephone number	023 8036 3018
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Registered person	Riverside 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 outstanding. 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?

Riverside Pre-school operates from rooms within Bitterne Park Infant's school in Southampton. It is run by a voluntary parent committee. A maximum of 48 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday during term time from 09:00 to 11:30 and 12:30 to 15:00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 94 children aged two to under five years on roll. Of these, 60 children receive funding for early education. The pre-school is an inclusive centre and has two places each session specifically available for children with learning difficulties or disabilities. The pre-school also supports children who have English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 13 staff. Of these, 10 hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are healthy as they enjoy frequent opportunities for physical play throughout the session. They throw balls into a low level net or run around the outside play area manoeuvring around the equipment. Children use the outside play area for physical exercises. A member of staff leads the exercises and invites children to join in walking sideways, touching the ground, and performing star jumps. Children take turns on an obstacle course during two sessions a week. They take off their shoes and socks and go into the corridor in small groups. Children crawl through tunnels and balance across benches. They jump, hop and skip. Children have many opportunities for small scale physical activities. Children join in a present wrapping activity where they use scissors to cut paper to correct size. They use sticky tape to finish off the parcel and then place it under the tree. They also squeeze and roll play dough, helping to develop their fine motor skills.

Children use a café system for accessing drinks and snacks. They bring their name card to the table, with their snack, when they feel hungry or thirsty. Parents provide a healthy fruit or vegetable snack for children. Staff talk to children about feeling hungry, encouraging them to think about how they feel. Children confidently help themselves to drinks of water or milk and pour from jugs.

Children are well protected from germs and cross infection by excellent hygiene routines. Children ask to use the toilet or are gently reminded. Staff accompany children to the toilets which are situated through the office area. Staff ensure children wash their hands and they have individual paper towels for hand drying. Staff wear gloves for changing nappies and soiled clothing and also wash their hands. They carefully bag soiled items to be taken home by parents. Children are reminded they should clean their teeth after having sweet snacks. Children wash their hands under running water at low level sinks in the playroom. They use individual paper towels for drying. Staff ensure accident records are confidential and signed by parents. A suitable emergency first aid kit is available. Medication administration records are clear and staff ensure children are protected at all times. Staff have all updated their first aid training and also completed training to use emergency life saving medication.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Staff carry out frequent risk assessments to ensure children's safety at all times. Security of the premises is a high priority and staff ensure all gates into the outside play area are locked during the session. Parents enter through the outside play area and bring their children to the doors of the pre-school at the beginning of the session. Children are also collected from the doors of the pre-school rooms at the end of the session. All visitors sign in and out of the premises when they enter through the office area. Children enjoy free flow through two playrooms and the outside play area through most of the session. They take part in regular fire evacuation drills and notices about emergency evacuation are displayed in three languages. Staff ensure the whole environment is kept clean and safe at all times. They carefully clean tables with anti-bacterial spray before cooking activities or café snack.

Children use a wide choice of toys and equipment throughout the session. Several areas of the room are linked to areas of learning, for example, the mark making area has paper, pencils, rulers, envelopes and magnetic letters. Staff set out further equipment according to the planning and children help themselves to equipment from storage units and shelving. Staff encourage children to extend their play and provide further equipment as it is required, such as a box of dressing up clothes linked to Christmas. A toy washing rota is displayed and boxes are marked when they are cleaned.

Children are safeguarded by a knowledgeable and well trained staff team. Staff are aware of child protection procedures and would report concerns to the lead practitioner or deputy. They would make clear notes and keep all information confidential. Staff are very aware of their professional duty regarding child protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are settled, confident and extremely happy in the familiar environment. They eagerly enter the pre-school and join their friendly key worker at their table for a short group activity. This effectively helps children be more focussed and ready for learning. Parents are invited to help children settle into the pre-school routine when they first start. Children's work is displayed around the room and their efforts are valued. Children proudly ask for their work to be put up. This helps to improve children's self esteem. Staff ensure activities link into the Birth to three matter framework and are suitable for the younger children present. All children are offered an extensive range of activities throughout their time in the pre-school. This includes a good mixture of large group, small group and free play activities. Children are encouraged to be independent when putting on their coats, dressing up clothes or protective overalls. At the end of the session children join in the 'good bye song' and staff open the doors. They call the children to the door to meet their carers. Staff often have a brief word with parents about the activities or to show them displayed work.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are making excellent progress and their development is encouraged at all times. A continuous curriculum is in place offering children choice and variety. The continuous curriculum includes all six areas of learning of the Foundation Stage and the learning is child initiated. The continuous curriculum is supplemented by targeted, key worker activities which are planned to meet the needs of all children, including the more able child. Staff make frequent, incidental observations of children throughout their activities. These are added to their records of achievement alongside photographs and examples of children's work. The knowledgeable staff team question children effectively to make them think and contribute their own ideas. All staff have a thorough knowledge of the Foundation Stage, stepping stones and they ensure children develop and learn. The session planning has evolved and developed to include physical changes in the pre-school. All staff are fully involved in decision making regarding changes to planning. The daily session evaluation shows that the new planning is an improvement and meets the needs of the children more effectively. Management are continually seeking to improve and develop the practice and children's learning and development are their priority.

Children listen carefully to stories and contribute when invited. They sit quietly in awe as the staff act out the story of the First Christmas. Children join in acting out the story in preparation for showing their parents later in the week. Children look at books independently and understand

how to use books. They talk about the story and point out the rainbow and the angels in the pictures. Children have many opportunities to practice handwriting. They enthusiastically write their names on their work and put their names inside greetings cards. Children learn to recognise their names from their name cards.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is outstanding. They take turns to use the computer. A timer is available to time each child's session if necessary. Children confidently move the mouse to use the programme which plants seeds in the soil, where they appear to grow. Other children skilfully operate remote control cars and robots, successfully moving them around the outside play area. They explore the water in the tray and pour from jugs and bottles.

Children are offered many opportunities to practise counting and using number. Staff use all incidental opportunities to introduce counting and mathematical language. Children count during nursery rhymes and use their fingers. They discover how many more items are needed in a cooking activity. More able children describe the process for creating biscuits from play dough, naming shapes and positions. Children understand positional language as they make a circle and move sideways, backwards and forwards. Children begin to learn about quantity when using different containers in the water tray and filling bottle or jugs. They also learn about quantity during cooking activities by melting four pieces of chocolate to mix with shredded wheat.

Children have many exciting opportunities for creative development. They create greetings cards with glue, fabric and glitter, proudly preparing to give them to their parents. Children draw pictures of baby Jesus in a manger linking into the familiar story. A group of children go to the nearby music room for singing and movement. Children sing Row, Row, Row your boat. One child said he had rowed fast and he fell in the water. Staff skilfully included all children who further extended the activity and said they were crocodiles and that other children needed to jump over them. Staff are pleased to get out toys to extend games according to children's imagination. For example, children tell staff there is an accident in the outside play area after they visited the shops. A member of staff provided two boxes of hospital equipment and toys to extend the game. Children said they needed to listen to the casualties heart to ensure they were still alive.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents are invited to join the management committee or fundraising committee. They are also invited to be part of the session during Ladies Day and Big Boys Day. These successful occasions for parents or carers to join in and play with their children offer opportunities to learn about pre-school activities and the curriculum. Parents and carers receive an informative booklet about the pre-school when children start. This includes information about the curriculum as well as brief policies and procedures, and the complaints information. Parents can see full policies and procedures at any time. A regular newsletter is given to parents which includes information about topics, encouraging them to extend children's learning at home. Parents take home their child's record of achievement once a term and are invited to make written comments. Key workers chat informally with parents at the beginning and end of each session. A more formal meeting is held between parents and key workers each term. Parents take part in termly surveys to gain their views about the pre-school. They state that the pre-school is excellent and the children have plenty to do. Parents also state that their children are learning and developing very well and that all the paperwork is very professional. Parents are impressed with the dedication and

enthusiasm of the staff team, as well as their ability to create a genuinely caring and friendly learning environment for children.

Children behave very well. They understand the routine of the setting and share equipment fairly. Staff help children learn about sharing by using the timer to indicate when their turn is finished. For example, children relish the opportunity to dress up in red costumes reflecting Christmas. They are encouraged to let others have a go with the clothes and staff set the timer to indicate when a turn is over. Children say they will share and are praised for good sharing. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are also praised for good listening, as well as for their efforts throughout the session. Staff interact with the children all the time. They are involved with the children and keep them well occupied. Staff distract children with alternative activities if behaviour shows signs of disintegrating. For example, when a large group of children become rowdy in the book corner a member of staff quickly invents a role play activity of reindeers pulling Santa's sleigh. A behaviour management policy is in place and a few 'Spot rules' are displayed in the play rooms.

Children are treated as individuals and staff know them well. Contributions from families are welcomed and children join in celebrations for a number of festivals. Children are offered the opportunity to try different foods and dress up in a range of multi cultural clothing. Equality of opportunity is built-in throughout all activities and children use equipment which reflects diversity.

All children are valued and staff know and understand their individual needs very well. Staff work closely with other professionals to support all children. Specific staff are employed to care for children with disabilities or learning difficulties. Children with English as an additional language are supported by working in small groups and the special needs co-ordinator. Staff develop individual education plans and work in partnership with parents. Key workers learn useful words in children's home language. Makaton sign language is used daily by all present, during group times.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The leadership and management is outstanding. The lead practitioner and management team are very proud of their well trained, enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff team. The pre-school committee is responsible for recruitment of staff and they follow appropriate recruitment procedures. The whole team work together and support one another effectively. Staff are allocated duties according to a rota and also move around the pre-school supporting the children as necessary. Ongoing training is very much valued and encouraged. The whole staff team recently updated their first aid training together. Regular staff meetings are held and the whole team contribute to ongoing evaluation and planning. A brief evaluation is completed by all staff following each session and this is effectively used to make minor changes in activities, as well as to keep all staff informed about the session, particularly those who were not present. Most of the staff are key workers and ensure that the records of achievement are kept up to date. This is overseen by a member of the management team. Staff ensure all areas of learning of the Foundation Stage curriculum are covered appropriately. They use a continuous curriculum as well as target activities at key worker time to ensure that all children progress in all aspects, including extension activities for more able children. Staff development is encouraged and the management team has recently expanded to support the needs of the pre-school overall. All staff have annual appraisals and also take part in peer on peer appraisal. The lead practitioner is currently acting as a mentor to support another pre-school through the accreditation process

of the local authority. This involves going into the setting and working with management to develop their practice and improve outcomes for children.

The pre-school is very well organised and staff ensure children are marked in and out of the setting on the register. The register states normal times of arrival and departure and any varying times are clearly noted in a separate book. Staff sign in and out of the premises. Children are highly motivated and fully involved in activities throughout the session. They are comfortable with the routine of the pre-school and know their key workers, who sit with them at the beginning and end of the session. Children freely move around the wide range of activities gaining knowledge and skills as they go. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Documentation is stored confidentially in the office area. Records are securely locked in filing cabinets and are available when required. A full range of policies and procedures are available to staff and parents, including the complaints procedure.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was required to ensure Ofsted is notified of any child protection concerns, to obtain written consent for emergency medical treatment for each child and to ensure recording of accidents remains confidential. The pre-school was also asked to provide suitable private facilities for nappy changing.

The child protection policy has been changed to include information regarding keeping Ofsted informed and individual emergency medical consent is obtained when children register in the pre-school. Accident recording is confidential as each entry is on a separate page. The nappy changing area has been improved and there is a shielded area to provide privacy for children.

At the education inspection the setting was asked to ensure all staff are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals.

All current staff are knowledgeable regarding the Foundation Stage curriculum.

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.

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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

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

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