

Kenton Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	106148
Inspection date	30 October 2007
Inspector	Anne Legge
Setting Address	The Victory Hall, Kenton, Exeter, Devon, EX6 8JA
Telephone number	01626 891770
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Registered person	The Trustees of Kenton Pre-school
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Kenton Pre-School has been registered since 1992. The group operates in the Victory Hall in Kenton village on weekdays in term-time, from 09:30 to 12:00, with extended sessions on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. On Tuesdays in the Autumn and Summer terms, older children may stay for a packed lunch, then walk to school for the afternoon session, which lasts from 13:00 to 15:30. On Thursdays children have the option to bring a packed lunch and stay until 14:00 at the Victory Hall. On Fridays, they may stay until 13:00. From Monday to Thursday, children have use of the main hall, with adjoining toilet and kitchen facilities. On Fridays, they use the committee room on the lower ground floor.

The pre-school is registered to care for up to 24 children aged from three to five years in the Victory Hall, and for up to 10 children aged from four to five years at the school. There are currently 22 children on roll, including 18 funded three and four-year-olds. Children with learning difficulties are welcomed and supported. The pre-school employs four members of staff, all of whom have appropriate child care qualifications. Two volunteers also work regularly with the children, one of whom is a qualified teacher. The group is an accredited member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and receives the support of the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from eating healthy meals and snacks. They enjoy a varied menu for their snacks, including plenty of fresh fruit, raw vegetables and savoury biscuits or bread. The café system encourages children to become independent in taking their snack and adults help them to understand which foods are good for them and why, as they discuss the options available. Staff work with parents and children to promote well-balanced packed lunches, and children know that they must eat the healthiest part of their meal first. Fresh drinking water is always available in children's own bottles and they have water or milk at snack, ensuring that they take plenty of fluids. All special dietary needs and preferences are known and carefully met, including during cooking activities.

Children enjoy a wide variety of physical activities, both indoors and outside. They use the ample space in the hall for active play, such as riding wheeled toys or using the large climbing frame. They go outdoors daily, in all weathers, where they run around, climb and balance on large equipment or rake up the leaves for their compost bin. Older children walk from the hall to school each week and all children enjoy a whole week of physical activities each summer, including woodland walks, a wheels day and water play.

Children play in a clean and hygienic environment, where staff are meticulous in checking and cleaning all surfaces, to protect them from infection. Tables are covered and disinfected before children eat, cups are sterilised regularly and the kitchen and toilets are cleaned appropriately. Lunch boxes are stored in the refrigerator. Children learn good routines regarding hand washing. They use liquid soap and paper towels, to reduce the risk of cross-infection. Their care is consistent, when they are unwell or injured. All staff have current first aid qualifications and they deal sensitively and efficiently with children who have minor accidents. Records of accidents and medication are comprehensive and shared appropriately with parents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff and the committee have a good understanding of safety issues and have made children's protection a high priority within the group. Consequently, children play in a safe and very secure environment. Their security is assured, as doors are locked and alarmed, except when children are due to arrive or leave, when staff rigorously monitor the entrances. The outdoor play area is carefully supervised and fully enclosed. There are very good systems for checking that the shared premises are fully risk assessed and that all potential hazards are addressed. Committee members carry out a thorough risk assessment twice each year and parent helpers follow a daily checklist, making sure that all areas used by children are safe.

Children choose from a very good variety of toys and resources, which are thoughtfully displayed, for safe and easy access by children. Toys are checked regularly for cleanliness and maintained in a good condition. Children are safe in emergencies, as evacuation procedures are practised regularly, taking into account attendance patterns, so that all who attend are familiar with the routines. Good use is made of socket covers, heater guards and temperature controls on hot water taps, so that children are protected from harm. There are very good systems for walking with children near traffic, including excellent ratios and the choice of quiet routes. Children learn to be aware of their own safety, as staff talk to them about, for example, road safety or

the appropriate use of knives. Children are very well protected from abuse or neglect, as staff have undertaken recent training and have a thorough understanding of all safeguarding issues and procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide range of interesting activities, which effectively promote their development. They are eager to attend and keen to try all the available play opportunities. There is a good balance between free play and structured tasks during sessions, and children concentrate very well in both chosen and adult-led activities. They become confident and independent, as they choose how to organise their play or when to take their snack.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff plan interesting topics for children, ensuring that all areas of learning are covered. They have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and use questions and discussion very effectively, to challenge or support children's learning. Staff track children's progress towards the early learning goals and set targets for their future development, although the links between assessment information and planning lack rigour. Children make good progress overall, in all areas of learning, but there are occasions when their individual needs are not consistently met, such as when weaker areas in their development are not specifically targeted in planning.

Children develop their creativity in a very good variety of art and craft activities. They paint and draw freely, make cards or collages, and use dough to make models. They enjoy excellent musical activities, such as clapping rhythms, singing with a guitar and moving to music. They develop lively imaginations, as they engage in role play, making meals or keeping house, with very good support from staff. Children enjoy designing and making models with recycled materials and they learn about the natural world, through topics about caring for the environment. They develop very good control of their physical movements, as they use a wide range of small equipment, including brushes, pencils and scissors. They use large play equipment, such as wheeled toys and climbing frames with very good co-ordination.

Children count in daily routines and practical tasks, such as counting children in a line. They recognise numerals and older children attempt to write them. They sometimes extend their understanding of number patterns, by comparing groups of objects or discussing one more or less, but this is not consistent. Children use mathematical language, such as when comparing the sizes of bears, and they learn about shapes, through working with a 'shape of the week'. Children enjoy sharing stories and discussing characters and the plot, as staff use skilful questioning to develop their understanding. They recognise and begin to write their names and they enjoy using mark-making in a variety of contexts, such as when writing orders in the café.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They share resources, take turns in daily routines and demonstrate care and concern for each other, throughout sessions. For example, they wait patiently for their turn to eat snack and readily pass plates and jugs to others, before taking their own food and drink. Staff are very warm, positive and consistent in their management of

behaviour, and children enjoy plenty of praise and encouragement. The group's clear routines help children to feel settled and secure. For example, they recognise the music which signals time to tidy up and they understand the need to line up and wait at doors before moving between rooms.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They learn to care for their environment, through topic work about recycling and conservation. Their understanding of cultural and religious differences is enhanced, as they play with appropriate resources, such as dolls with disabilities or books which reflect diversity, and when they celebrate a range of festivals. They make good use of the local area, enjoying walks in the woods or visits from a recycling officer. The pre-school has excellent links with the school, enabling children to move confidently to the next stage. Children with learning difficulties are effectively supported and included, as staff work closely with parents and other agencies, to meet their additional needs. New children are helped to settle in the group, using effective procedures, such as a pictorial time line, to teach them the daily routine.

Children benefit from the pre-school's clear commitment to involving parents in their child's care and development. Parents regularly serve on a helpers' rota, which enables them to feel part of the group. They receive good information in the welcome pack and in regular newsletters, about all aspects of the pre-school's work. Staff issue an annual questionnaire, seeking parents' views about the quality of care provided, and they take action to address any issues raised. Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents have termly meetings with their child's key worker, when progress records are shared and targets for future learning are agreed. Newsletters provide details of current topics and letters or shapes of the week, and there is good information in the prospectus about the Foundation Stage curriculum. Consequently, parents are able to fully support their child's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by very well qualified staff, who are committed to the continued development of their skills, by attending relevant training. Staff are ably supported by volunteers, parent helpers and an enthusiastic committee. Ratios are very good and adults are effectively deployed, to meet the needs of children. Staff work as a successful team, providing a safe, clean and attractive environment for children. Space is used very thoughtfully, with different areas of the hall set up for different types of activity. Resources and activities are carefully planned and organised, so that all children enjoy a very good range of appropriate play experiences.

Leadership and management are good. Staff are reflective in their practice and keen to constantly develop the quality of the nursery education. They regularly evaluate provision and draw on the expertise of each staff member, as well as seeking advice from the school. Staff appraisal systems are in place and training needs are identified. Children's care is securely supported by all the required documentation. This is mainly well organised and regularly updated, although the safeguarding policy lacks some details and complaints procedures contain some inaccuracies. The provider meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the pre-school agreed to develop staff's understanding of safeguarding issues and procedures. Since then, all staff have undertaken appropriate training

and they now have a good understanding of safeguarding matters. However, the policy lacks details of procedures to be followed if an allegation is made against a staff member or volunteer.

At the last nursery education inspection, the group was asked to increase children's opportunities for mark-making in role play and to involve them in the planning process. Children now have very good opportunities to make marks, including during their role play. They are very involved in planning their play, as they constantly choose from the good variety of activities and resources available to them.

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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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):

- make sure that children's care is always underpinned with current and comprehensive documentation, including accurate complaints procedures and an appropriately detailed safeguarding policy.

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):

- improve systems for linking assessment information and planning, so that children are always challenged or supported appropriately in all aspects of their learning.

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