

Trinity Community Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	123600
Inspection date	09 October 2007
Inspector	Kim Wailling
Setting Address	Trinity United Reformed Church, Beaconsfield Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 3RD
Telephone number	07814 637710(session time to answerphone
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Registered person	Trinity Community 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 satisfactory. 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?

Trinity Community Pre-School is managed by a parent committee. It was registered in 1993 and operates from one room in a church hall with its associated facilities. It is situated in St Albans, Hertfordshire. A maximum of 24 children aged from two to five years may attend at any one time. The setting is open Monday to Thursday from 09.30 to 12.00 term time only. All children share access to an enclosed garden area.

There are currently 28 children on roll. Of these, 14 children receive funding for nursery education. Most children come from the local catchment area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

Trinity Community Pre-School employs five members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications, one is working towards a qualification and one working towards further qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is generally promoted. For example, staff members follow appropriate practices which prevent the spread of infection such as supervising children's hand washing before snack. However, the pre-school has not considered privacy in its current arrangements for toileting and when changing children's nappies. This carries an impact on children's well-being and self-esteem. Currently one member of staff holds an appropriate first aid qualification. However, update training has been booked for all staff members. This means that children's welfare, if they have an accident, is safeguarded.

Children are offered snacks that include fresh fruit. Drinks are offered at the group snack time which the children pour themselves. Drinking water is available for children to be able to satisfy their immediate thirst. Children's physical development is fostered. The pre-school focuses on developing children's physical skills in a planned and systematic way. It has a good range of sports equipment such as bats and balls, wheeled toys and a sturdy climbing frame which is very popular with the children. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area which is being developed to provide a gardening area. However, this area is not used during inclement weather. Children's needs for rest is acknowledged. The daily routine is structured so that time for quieter activities such as a group story session, is offered.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's general safety as they move around the premises is given attention. For example, daily visual checks on the fabric of the rooms that the pre-school uses are in place. However, it was noted during the inspection period that an outer perimeter gate was not closed on two occasions which impacts children's safety.

Children use furniture and toys which are clean, well-maintained and age-appropriate. The layout of the main playroom and good staff deployment means that children are in sight and supervised at all times. The main playroom is attractively set out each morning to promote children's play and learning. This is further promoted by the effective use of partitions that create designated areas for children to play. The role play area in particular, is attractively arranged and is both inviting and exciting for children to use.

Children's welfare is well safeguarded. Staff members have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities regarding child protection. This is underpinned by relevant recording procedures. In addition, children's awareness of children about how to keep them safe is promoted. For example, topics such as 'People Who Help Us' are introduced and successfully woven into activities such as story sessions and classroom displays. This reinforces and consolidates children's understanding and enables them to make links to everyday life. For example, children talk knowledgeably about 'stranger danger' and who to approach if they become separated from their parents when on outings.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle happily at the beginning of the session. Staff provide a good range of activities. These are of interest to the children and are based on themes and stories. Children become quickly familiar with the daily routine. They take part in whole group activities such as music sessions and adult-led planned activities, as well having time for free play. Staff rotate the selection of toys and resources available to children. The range includes art and mark making equipment, construction sets, jigsaws and a laptop. It also incorporates a sensory play area, consisting of materials such as sand, water and dry rice krispies which children delight in using.

Children's learning is very well supported. Planned activities are well-resourced and organised. For example, as part of the playgroup's current project the local fire brigand came to visit. Photographs were taken and stored on the pre-school's laptop which children during the inspection period were able to retrieve and share with the inspector.

Throughout the session staff members are available to support children's play. They sit and chat to children, demonstrate new skills such as showing children how build models and extend children's play by offering new ideas and suggestions. Children happily include staff in their play and warm and positive relationships quickly develop. All staff members have high expectations of children's conduct and behaviour. They set consistent and fair boundaries to help children distinguish right from wrong. As a result, children develop social skills such as sharing and turn taking and consequently play cooperatively. This means that children gain full benefit from participation in activities and make friends.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Staff members have a good understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. Planning grids are completed and followed by staff. They consistently show how staff adapt activities to meet children's individual learning needs and provide challenge for older and more able children. Assessment is based on what children can do and is used effectively to support children's learning. However, systems to share information about children's achievements with their parents are underdeveloped. Consequently, parents are not fully informed of their children's progress to enable them to play a full and active part in their children's learning.

Throughout the day there is a constantly high level of interaction between staff and children. This is particularly evident during everyday events such as snack time and child-initiated play sessions when all staff use every opportunity to reinforce children's learning. Children are confident, play contentedly on their own and with others. Their attitude to learning is good as they are regularly praised and encouraged by staff. As a result, children eagerly participate in activities such as art and craft sessions and are excited to learn new skills. Children enjoy using the outdoor area. Good staff deployment ensures there is sufficient staff to support children's learning both indoors and out.

Children respond with huge enjoyment when listening to stories and singing rhymes. They are able to concentrate well during whole group times as the staff make these sessions fun and interesting. Children are encouraged to explore, discover and use their imaginations. For example, different role play resources are available on a daily basis. As a result, children create elaborate games which are satisfying and rewarding to them. There are many opportunities for children

to build and construct models using a wide range of equipment such as table-top construction kits. These activities are complemented by a range of interactive toys which further support children's learning.

There are many events throughout year which build on children's knowledge and experience of the wider community. These include visits from local emergency services. Children have free access to art, craft and drawing equipment. They happily produce individual drawings and also work together to create joint artwork which is used to form attractive classroom displays. Children are very proud of these displays and often make reference to them.

Children have experience of all six areas of learning. Large and small group times, alongside one-to-one support, take place throughout the session, so that children experience different teaching styles. The learning needs of older children are particularly well met. For example, early writing skills are systematically developed so that children gain confidence and are eager to write and read. Overall, children are busy, motivated and are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children quickly become part of the pre-school community. They receive a warm welcome from staff at the beginning of the session who take a genuine interest in the children's happiness. Features such as individual coat pegs and a homemade handiwork box which is used to bring and take home special items and drawings further enhances children's sense of belonging. Staff members take regard of children's family backgrounds when planning activities such as the celebration of festivals.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is satisfactory.

Parents receive ample information about the playgroup which informs them about the services it has to offer and aspects of nursery education. The pre-school has two parent notice boards and issues regular newsletters to keep parents informed of forthcoming events such as the date of a professional photographer's visit. In addition, displays inform parents and carers of daily group activities.

Prospective parents have the opportunity to talk through any issues, including ways of helping children settle and how the pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff are always available to chat to parents and carers at the start and end of sessions and deal with any worries or concerns. However, the group's complaints policy currently is not fully in line with National Standard requirements. Potentially, this means that parents and carers are not fully informed to enable all to work together. During the inspection period, parents were keen to share their positive views of the pre-school.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The organisation of the daily session ensures that children enjoy a balance of large and small group times as well as one-to-one support if required. Children's learning is promoted by the varied range of experiences of play offered by the group. Children are guided and supported in their learning by a team of staff who clearly enjoy working with the children. Staff work well

as a team. They ensure that their skills are updated by attending further training sessions, professional development courses and staff meetings.

Most policies and procedures work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievements. There is a friendly but professional relationship between the parents' management committee and playgroup staff which enhances the overall care of children. The management committee is pro-active and committed to building on the good local reputation that the pre-school currently holds.

Leadership and management of funded children is good.

Children are being offered a broad and balanced range of activities and experiences because the manager monitors the nursery curriculum very well. She has a very good understanding of the principles that underpin nursery education and has and continues to, make changes in response to the changing requirements of the early years curriculum and the learning needs of children. For example, the learning of older children, whose parents have chosen not to take up places in local nursery classes, has been considered and a very appropriate and worthwhile programme of activities is in place. The manager is ably supported by a named deputy and together form a strong management team who are experienced and well-qualified to ensure that learning outcomes for children who receive funding for nursery education remain at a good standard.

Consequently, the combination of these factors means that the needs of children, both as individuals and as a group, are met. Overall, the provision 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 was asked to take positive measures to ensure that risks to children's safety are minimised, particularly when equipment such as ladders, table and chairs are stored by other users of the premises. Immediately following inspection, this area was discussed with the church hall committee and steps were taken to facilitate safe storage. This measure is supplemented by a daily safety check to ensure that all rooms used by the group are child-friendly. In addition, staff have a good awareness of safety. For example, replacing socket covers when the laptop is unplugged. They are also vigilant particularly at the start and end of the session, to ensure that children do not leave the main hall unsupervised. However, the outer gate to the pre-school's premises requires further supervision to ensure that it is closed when parents and carers bring and collect children. This is an area which requires attention as it does pose a potential hazard to children's safety.

The pre-school was also asked to ensure that a comprehensive system was in place to record accidents and the administration of medicines to children. This has been fully addressed. Staff know of and use appropriate recording sheets which show an accurate record. This means that children's health is safeguarded.

At the last nursery education inspection the pre-school was asked to extend planning systems to include learning intentions and provide more opportunities to increase children's understanding of calculation. Both areas have been fully addressed. Current planning systems are effective in supporting children's learning and also show that children are given many opportunities to practice calculation skills. These changes promote good outcomes for children.

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):

- ensure that positive measures are in place to ensure that the premises are secure this refers to the closure of the outer perimeter gate
- consider the privacy of children when toileting and during nappy changing
- develop systems to inform parents about how complaints made in writing against National Standards are recorded and how to contact Ofsted directly

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):

- develop systems to share information with parents about their children's progress (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