

The Manor Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	130503
Inspection date	23 November 2007
Inspector	Siobhan O'Callaghan
Setting Address	Bhaktivedanta Manor, Dharam Marg, Hilfield Lane,, Aldenham, Hertfordshire, WD25 8EZ
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Registered person	ISK CON
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?

The Manor Pre-School opened in 1990 and operates from a purpose built building within the Hare Krishna Temple site in Watford, Hertfordshire. The group have access to a classroom with an integral toilet for the children. All children have shared access to a secure, enclosed outside play area. The site also offers extensive grounds for children to explore, this includes a lake with ducks and geese, cows, and many different gardens. A maximum of 12 children may attend the setting at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:30 to 12:30 during school term times.

There are currently 15 children aged from two and a half years to under five years on roll. Of these, ten children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local and wider catchment area. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs three staff. All staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority, and they also receive support from a qualified teacher who is based in the Manor school.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn about healthy living through everyday practical experiences and through their participation in relevant topic work. They learn about their bodies and the importance of taking exercise, as they energetically play outside. Children run, climb and explore in their garden on a daily basis. They enjoy walks in the vast grounds. They are excited to visit the herb garden where they can explore their senses through smelling lavender, touching the earth and observing water and nature in their surrounding environment. Children learn about the importance of good hygiene practices as they wash the mint they have picked in the garden before tasting this. They are fully involved in cleaning the tables before their snack, this activity is supported by discussions about the importance of maintaining a clean environment. Children are developing a good understanding of personal hygiene as they wash their hands before and after eating food.

Children are nourished as they eat healthy snacks such as oranges, apples, strawberries and yoghurts. They help themselves to water or juice. Children with allergies or special dietary requirements have their needs met as staff work in close partnership with parents to ensure that they are appropriately cared for. The pre-school environment is clean and well maintained, resources are safe and suitable for their purpose. There are effective policies in place to support children's well-being, appropriate procedures are in place if they have an accident or become ill whilst they are at the setting. They are further protected as all practitioners hold a current paediatric first aid certificate. However, accident records are not consistently dated which may compromise children's welfare.

Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills, they confidently move around their classroom and their outside environment. Children develop their muscles and coordination as they climb challenging equipment and ride wheeled resources in the garden. They enjoy moving their bodies imaginatively to music as they create their own dances and pretend to be animals such as snakes. Children demonstrate their developing dexterity as they competently use a variety of resources, such as scissors, glue sticks and playdough utensils, with a purpose.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe environment. Daily risk assessments of both the outside and inside environment ensure that children's safety is given high priority. Practitioners record any concerns which are reported and given due attention so that action can be taken immediately to minimise risks to children. Clear fire drill procedures are displayed. Children practise emergency evacuation drills every half-term which supports their understanding of keeping safe. All required documentation and practices to support and maintain children's safety are in place. However, incident records are not consistently recorded in the appropriate place which may hinder the monitoring of children's welfare.

Children access a broad range of good quality resources. These are regularly cleaned and monitored to ensure that they are safe and appropriate for their purpose. Children learn to keep themselves safe as they walk around the grounds. They hold hands and listen out for traffic such as cars and tractors. Practitioners remind children of the importance to stay close and not to run off. Keeping safe is further promoted through topic work, children have

experienced visits from the emergency services to give them first hand opportunities to sit in fire engines and police cars and to find out about what they do to keep us safe. Parents are also involved in keeping their children safe whilst at pre-school as they are reminded of the importance of putting sun-cream on their children and wearing hats in hot weather.

Children's well-being is of paramount importance to the staff team. They have a good knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures. All practitioners have attended training in this area and are aware of the procedures to be implemented should they have any concerns. Effective vetting processes ensure that children are cared for by a suitable staff team who have the relevant experience and skills to do their job.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled within their environment. They are developing confidence and self-esteem as they are allowed to take the lead in their play and develop their own ideas. They confidently access their environment and ask for support when necessary, for example they request the key to the garden shed when they wish to access a further range of resources. Children demonstrate responsible behaviour as they are extremely pro-active at tidy-up time. They help to wash down the tables, sweep the floor and put resources away in their appropriate places. Practitioners are on hand to give lots of praise and encouragement which in turn spurs the children on to help. Children's independence is encouraged as they develop good self-care skills such as putting on their own indoor shoes when they arrive in the morning. They take part in the setting up of tables in preparation for snack time. They clearly enjoy this responsibility as they hand out plates, help themselves to food and pour their drinks.

Children show an interest in what they do as they play for long periods with resources and activities that inspire them. They enjoy making cakes and chapattis with the playdough and happily discuss how they make these at home. They are confident to express themselves and to ask meaningful questions as they listen to stories and want to find out more about the characters. It is evident that they have established secure relationships with the staff team. They are comfortable to approach practitioners to show off their completed work such as models they have built, or just to share some news from home. Children are learning positive social skills as they share popular resources and help one another with tasks, for example one child sweeps up the spilt sand whilst the other holds the pan to gather this up. Children have their individual needs met as staff value working in partnership with parents to ensure that each child is supported to be happy and settled in the setting.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Practitioners demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and plan a broad and interesting curriculum which supports children's progress towards the early learning goals. Planning gives due emphasis to all areas of learning, and clearly takes heed of individual children's starting points. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated play. However, the learning environment does not fully promote numbers as labels, and the availability of mark-making in all areas of the curriculum requires development. Practitioners maintain comprehensive assessment records to map children's progression. These are used effectively to inform planning and to share children's achievements with their parents and carers. A lot of work has been invested in these portfolios with attractive photographs of the children and copies of their work. These clearly demonstrate how well children are making progress.

Children are clearly motivated as the practitioners capture their interests and spend considerable time talking, playing and teaching them in an informal way. Children are excited to find the hidden animals in the sand tray as they play independently. Practitioners are on hand to sensitively intervene, and use this opportunity to further children's knowledge of mathematics as they discuss how many legs the creatures have and who is the largest, longest and smallest of them all. Practitioners have high expectations for children's behaviour, which is promoted through all aspects of the provision including the need to listen and respect others. Children are spoken to quietly but clearly to help them understand what is acceptable. Consequently, children's behaviour overall is very good and this aids their capacity to learn.

Children are becoming confident learners and take pride in what they do. For example, children seek out adults to share their achievements when they have completed puzzles, or when they have found an item for their nature pot whilst exploring the outside environment. They show an interest in numbers as they enthusiastically sing number songs and solve simple problems such as how many plates they will need for snack time. Practitioners are on hand to extend learning as they ask challenging questions to develop children's thinking. Children can compare objects as they observe who has made the largest cake with the sand and which container is too full to add any more. However, there are not so many opportunities for children to use numbers as labels in their play, which restricts their ability to recognise number symbols.

Children's communication and language skills are given due emphasis as they are consistently encouraged to express themselves. They are keen to share their singing skills as they individually take it in turns to sing a favourite song with the use of an electric microphone. Children are able to express what they are doing as they are making cakes with the sand. They enjoy adult intervention when they are asked how long it will take to bake the cakes. Children are developing an awareness of print as they recognise their own names and understand that print carries meaning within books. They have access to mark-making implements, however, there is no designated writing area to fully encourage children to access these resources consistently. The availability of making-marks in all areas of the curriculum requires development. Children explore and investigate resources and demonstrate their understanding of how things work. They are excited to go into the bathroom and turn the lights off to see how bright their torches shine. They competently use tape recorders to play music and listen to stories. Children are keen to explore wet sand in the garden, gradually adding more water to this, and then observing how this changes consistency. They are interested in exploring their natural environment as they have regular opportunities to visit the cows on site. They learn where milk comes from and how this is used to provide other foods such as cheese and yoghurts.

Children have many opportunities to develop their creative skills. They enjoy exploring a variety of textures as they play independently with sand, water and playdough. They enthusiastically participate in singing and dancing sessions. Children are keen to re-enact the story of Ram and Sita which they have recently been celebrating as part of their Diwali celebrations. They play purposefully with role play resources as they organise a large number of dolls to create a tea party. Each doll has a plate and a cup. The children are keen for their peers to get involved in the imaginary scenario so they actively invite them to join in and have some tea. Children use a variety of tools and equipment to develop good motor skills and coordination. For example, children competently use scissors, paint brushes and glue spreaders to create desired pictures and models. They have good access to climbing equipment and balancing beams in the garden, along with a broad range of wheeled resources to further develop their physical agility.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by a staff team who clearly value working with their parents to meet their individual needs. Where necessary, home visits are arranged to support children's settling-in process within the setting. There are excellent records in place to find out about children's personal requirements, as well as their likes and dislikes, before they start at the pre-school. This process has a positive impact on children's ability to settle quickly and become a part of the setting. Children feel a sense of belonging as their work and achievements are valued. This is demonstrated as photographs that they have taken with the pre-schools digital camera have been attractively displayed in a folder for them to observe and share with their peers and family members. The environment effectively promotes equal opportunities as this is fully accessible to all the children, thus enabling them to make their own choices and take decisions about their play.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They become aware of our wider society as they access a good range of multi-cultural resources which positively promotes diversity. They can observe positive displays in their environment representing other cultures and traditions. Dual language books further acknowledge that a variety of languages are spoken within our communities and these are just as important as our own mother tongues. Children are becoming aware of their own needs as they access the bathrooms independently and help themselves to a drink when they are thirsty. Older children are also aware of the needs of younger children as they openly help them to put on their shoes and coats as they get ready to play out in the garden. Children understand responsible behaviour as they work cooperatively in their play. They also demonstrate how they work together to clean the environment in readiness for snack time. Children share resources and take turns when participating in group activities such as singing and story sessions.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. Parents receive good quality information about the pre-school, how it operates, its staffing and its ethos. There is comprehensive information available about the education provided. Parents are informed about the Foundation Stage, how this is promoted in the setting and how they can support this at home. They are given a copy of the long term plans so they are well informed of schemes of work and how they can be involved. Regular newsletters keep parents updated about various topics as well as providing useful information to support their children's learning at home. For example, parents are given website addresses which support early reading through the use of phonics. Parents are invited to come into the setting and spend time with all the children and where possible share any skills they may have with them. Parents value the involvement they have in the setting and how they can take part in contributing to their children's individual assessments. They are happy with the care and education their children receive, which is demonstrated in their positive feedback responses within the parental questionnaires.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Practitioners have a high regard for the well-being of all children. Effective recruitment, vetting and induction procedures ensure staff are suitable to be working with children. The staff team all have early years qualifications and experience. They are fully committed to improving their practice through attending on-going relevant training opportunities. As a team they embarked on the Hertfordshire accreditation scheme which they completed in May of this year, receiving

an award for providing quality early years childcare and education. Children benefit from being cared for by a consistent staff team, all staff have been working within the pre-school for many years. The adult to child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play as they receive high levels of attention. All necessary documentation for the safe and efficient management of the setting is in place and record keeping systems are generally well maintained. The pre-school has comprehensive policies and procedures in place which are managed well to promote positive outcomes for children.

The leadership and management of early education is good. The manager has a clear vision for the future development of the pre-school. This is demonstrated through her commitment to encourage and support all staff to attend on-going personal training and development. This commitment is further demonstrated through the excellent progress in dealing with the recommendations made at their last inspection. The manager and her team where possible take every opportunity to visit a range of early years settings to gain insight into how other provisions promote their early education, whilst also discussing and sharing good practice issues. An open invitation is also in place for providers to come and see this provision in action, where again feedback is welcomed. The manager monitors the setting through regular observations of staff and through self-evaluation. Liaison with parents to gather their opinions and suggestions is an on-going process to develop and improve all aspects of the provision. The staff team meet regularly to discuss, evaluate and reflect on their work so that improvements can be discussed and implemented.

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 provider was asked to include the regulators number in their complaints procedure and to ensure that their registration system showed the hours of attendance for both staff and children. Both these issues have been addressed, therefore parents are now more informed about the complaints process and how they can raise concerns. Attendance registers now clearly show when staff and children are present, thus improving overall safety. The setting were also asked to improve children's involvement in snack times. This aspect has greatly improved as children's independence is now fully promoted. Children enjoy this social occasion where they help to give out plates, help themselves to food and pour their own drinks.

At the last education inspection the provider was asked to provide opportunities for children to explore mathematical concepts, such as calculation and simple problem solving, through practical activities. This is clearly happening as children are offered mathematical challenges in both adult-led and free play scenarios, therefore their development in this area is good. The setting was also asked to improve opportunities for children to explore and investigate. There has been excellent progress in this area as children have access to many resources and experiences to develop this area of learning. Children confidently access tape recorders, microphones, torches and a computer. They have excellent opportunities to explore their natural environment and investigate why and how things happen, for example as they observe water that has collected in the sand tray cover, they confidently explain that the water that has collected has come from the rain. Lastly they were asked to develop their planning and assessment systems to show how children's next steps in their learning are planned for. Staff have worked extremely hard in this area to ensure that all children are monitored and challenged within the setting. Planning and assessment procedures clearly show where children are with

regards to their level of learning and staff are clear as to where children are going next. The impact is that all children are making good progress at their level.

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):

- ensure all accidents are consistently dated
- ensure all incidents are recorded in a confidential log.

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 further children's awareness of numbers through visual aids and good labelling in their environment
- extend children's opportunities to make-marks in all areas of the curriculum.

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