

Christchurch Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	227269
Inspection date	07 February 2008
Inspector	Adelaide Griffith
Setting Address	Quinton Church Parish Hall, 773 Hagley Road West, Birmingham, West Midlands, B32 1AJ
Telephone number	07956 053513
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Registered person	Christchurch Pre-School Committee
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Christchurch Pre-School opened in 1987. It operates from premises belonging to Christchurch Parish Church within the Quinton area of Birmingham. It has the use of a large hall and a small room. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open from 09:10 to 12:00 on Monday and Wednesday and from 09:10 to 15:10 on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday during term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 44 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 37 children receive funding for early education. The pre-school serves the local area and children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six members of staff all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are clearly learning about personal hygiene as part of their daily routine and they wash their hands in relation to activities. Children are generally protected against infection. For example, tables are wiped with anti-bacterial spray before snacks and staff hold current basic food hygiene qualifications. Children's health is appropriately promoted due to policies. Procedures are implemented as required for the administration of inhalers and the accident record is signed. However, parental permission is not obtained for seeking emergency medical treatment or advice. This means that children's good health may be compromised.

Children are gaining a reasonable understanding of healthy eating through the serving of fresh fruit daily. Packed lunches provided by parents include a selection of foods and staff help children to learn about healthy options by discussing the benefits of the contents of lunch boxes. Children's individual dietary requirements are met and water is accessible throughout the day.

Children participate in daily physical exercise. They run around in the spacious play ground and their large muscle skills are suitably promoted through the provision of equipment including balls. Children are developing skills in balancing whilst kicking these and they hold hands together to develop skills in catching.

Children receiving early education are beginning to hop and jump from one hoop to another. Children's large muscle skills are appropriately promoted through riding on bikes and in bubble cars. A fair range of equipment such as parachutes is provided. Children are gaining a clear understanding of spatial awareness as they avoid others whilst moving around. All children participate in quiet activities such as story time. Children benefit from a balance between vigorous play and restful activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. The hall is cheerful with displays of their work and resources are set out within reach. Owing to the spaciousness of the hall children move around freely. Children play outdoor safely due to a bolted gate. Children access toilets that are free from potential hazards, for example, the water temperature is controlled and they play with suitable toys which are checked and cleaned regularly.

Children's safety is generally ensured due to several measures such as socket covers that are installed. Staff check premises daily before children's arrival to ensure that potential risks are addressed. Owing to controlled entry to the premises their security is adequately maintained. Children are supervised appropriately during activities and they are basically supported in learning about personal safety, for example, when crossing the road between the building and the play ground. Adequate fire precautions are taken and regular fire drills are carried out. This means that children are gaining an understanding of leaving the premises in the event of an emergency.

Children are taken on outings with parental permission and some procedures are implemented. However, a detailed policy is not available. Similarly, a current liability insurance certificate is

not available for inspection. Consequently, children's may be at risk and their welfare may be compromised.

Staff have sound knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. They are predominately informed about procedures for the reporting and recording of concerns. There is also a fair awareness about procedures relating to allegations about members of staff. This means that children have some protection to safeguard their welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff have a clear understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and they use this effectively to plan activities for younger children. Frequent observations of children's development indicate their attainment. Younger children's confidence is competently promoted due to the accessibility of a broad range of resources. Their independence is growing through opportunities to develop play unhindered or with minimal assistance. Children are clearly forming relationships with their peers and often engage in activities with others without adult prompting. For example, during imaginative role play children sit together whilst exploring a wide selection of ethnic foods.

Children's play is competently supported by staff who are participate in activities and offer praise consistently. Consequently, children' self-esteem is effectively raised. Children are beginning to express their creativity through painting and they sing along lustily to nursery rhymes and songs. Younger children benefit from enjoyable play experiences.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and the planning of activities includes all areas of learning. Staff carry out frequent observations but the information gained is not used to plan for the next stage in learning. Furthermore, the information is compiled into a summary at the end of the year but does not indicate children's progress systematically. This means that children's individual learning is not always effectively promoted. For children who speak English as an additional language staff include pictures of familiar objects and some words used in the home are incorporated in activities. Consequently, children's learning is suitably encouraged.

Staff use a variety of methods that help children to learn. They trace first letters and make associations with the pictures on a sheet and this creates a context for association. However, staff often hold children's hands in order to encourage writing and they do not model how letters can be formed. This means that the scope for children to use their initiative is not sufficiently explored. Staff demonstrate how to group items when counting to ensure that children are not confused and they copy this appropriately. They are offered some challenge to try new experiences. For instance, children are encouraged to develop their play by rolling two or more marbles instead of one in the tray during painting and this supports their exploration of colour and design reasonably.

Children's sense of self is effectively promoted through themed activities and illustrations of the body. They listen attentively to stories and at times are given opportunities to predict what might happen. Children count to twenty with adult support and they are learning problem-solving through concepts of adding or taking away items. They have access to programmable toys including tills. They are adequately supported in gaining an understanding of concepts about transport, the environment and recycling through themed activities. Through cooking activities

children are gaining skills in stirring and during creative activities glue spreaders encourage a more refined movement as they use one-handed tools.

Children are generally well behaved. They remain focussed during most of the story reading activity. However, some children have not learned the conventions of talking in a large group. For example, staff consistently remind children about the importance of allowing others to talk and why they should listen. Accordingly, children are beginning to gain an understanding for the need for self-discipline. When children sit for a considerable period they are praised. This means that children's self-esteem is raised appropriately. Children are learning about acceptable behaviour through reminders, for example, to refrain from running indoors although they are not consistently given reasons for requests. Nevertheless, children are beginning to learn the boundaries of behaviour.

Staff work with children much of the time. During free play children use their initiative to develop their play. For structured activity this is not consistently implemented, for example, children are not always allowed sufficient time to develop aspects of the activity. This means that staff do not always form a clear picture of children's preferences. Staff provide an environment that is organised to help children to be independent due to the varied selection of accessible resources and toys. Staff make effective use of the accommodation. Indoors the room is divided into areas of learning. However, writing materials are not freely available and this limits their opportunities to write spontaneously. Generally, children are making progress towards the early learning goals.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and their individual needs met as agreed with parents. They are clearly learning about other cultures due to activities such as the celebration of festivals. A wide range of resources including dressing up clothes, books and dolls is available. Children are gaining a suitable understanding of the wider community through visits to farms and other places of interest. Staff have experience of working with children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A special needs coordinator advises on aspects of care. This means that procedures are in place to ensure that children's additional needs are met effectively.

Children are well behaved due to positive strategies such as consistent praise and the generous use of rewards including stickers. Children are clearly learning to share as they play together and negotiate turns. Children's social skills are developing as they sit around tables at lunch time and are encouraged to talk to others. All children take responsibility for putting away their lunch boxes afterwards. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

There is a well established relationship with parents and this is underpinned by the supportive attitude of staff. There is a settling-in period to enable children to feel comfortable in the pre-school. A handbook with copies of policies is available for parents and staff share information daily about children's activities. Staff have agreed firm procedures for the collection of children in the event of emergencies. Children's welfare is effectively promoted in this respect.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Information about the curriculum is clearly displayed. Entry profiles are available for all children. Parents are encouraged to make a contribution to their child's learning, for example, by using the library facility to loan books for reading. Progress reports about children's achievement is available. Children's learning benefits from the partnership with parents and carers.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are adequately protected due to suitability procedures which ensure that all staff are vetted. Most staff have worked in the setting for a considerable period and this means that children benefit from continuity of care. Children's care is appropriately promoted. New staff undergo an induction programme that includes mandatory components such as health and safety. All staff have an annual appraisal to note performance and they have attended recent training. Consequently, children's care is underpinned by some up to date knowledge.

Minimum adult to child ratios are maintained and staff are effectively deployed to work with children in small groups. Suitable contingency arrangements are in place in the event of emergencies. For instance, additional staff are available for cover as required.

Most documentation is available but the policies relating to outings and lost children lack detail. Furthermore, a public liability insurance certificate and documentation relating to checks including fire safety are not available for inspection. Although the daily record of attendance is consistently maintained for children times of departure are not included and the record is not maintained for staff. This may compromise the welfare of children.

The leadership and management of funded children is satisfactory. The manager has a vision to provide a happy atmosphere in which children's play is consistently promoted and staff use this approach in their work. Although all staff make a contribution to the long-term planning it is devised mainly by senior staff. This means that children's learning is not always supported by staff who have a clear appreciation of the issues to be addressed including the amending of plans to promote opportunistic learning if appropriate.

In addition to training staff's professional development is addressed through opportunities to learn whilst working with the children. However, a system is not in place to note aspects of practice primarily and guidance on improving teaching is not consistently available. Consequently, children's learning is not always underpinned by best practice. The strengths of the setting include a friendly atmosphere and positive relationships with parents. Moreover, there is a broad range of interesting resources to support children's learning. Sound management and leadership supports children in their progress towards the early learning goals. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to implement an action plan that sets out how staff will obtain qualifications. All staff hold appropriate qualifications and this ensures that children are cared for by staff with the required level of understanding to meet their needs. Improvements with regard to drinking water are met and water is accessible to children at all times. Induction training is addressed to include mandatory components of health and safety, child protection and procedures. This means that children's welfare is maintained. Staff now carry out daily checks of the premises and structural checks are carried out by the care taker. Also, fire drills are carried out according to recommendations from the Fire Safety Officer as requested. These procedures ensure that children's welfare is maintained.

At the last inspection the provider was asked to improve staff knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals. Staff now make a contribution to the long-term planning. The request to use information gained from observations to plan for the next stage in learning is not sufficiently addressed. This means that children's individual learning is not always effectively

promoted. Improvements to provide more opportunities for children to recognise rhythm in stories and to implement procedures relating to reading stories have been made. Children participate actively and are gaining an understanding of this activity.

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- obtain written parental permission for seeking any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future
- improve the system for registering children and staff attendance on a daily basis, showing hours of attendance
- review the operational plan to include statements relating to outings and procedures to be followed in the event that a child is lost
- ensure that all required documentation including a copy of the public liability insurance certificate and checks carried out with regard to safety are always available for inspection.

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 procedures relating to observations and use information gained to plan for the next step in children's learning and use assessments to indicate children's progress
- improve teaching methods in order to help children to write independently and provide opportunities and time for children to develop their learning
- provide a range of writing materials which children can access spontaneously at all times

- support all staff in gaining a clear understanding of the planning process and provide consistent guidance to review practice in order to help children in their progress towards the early learning goals.

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