

Paston Fundays Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	404999
Inspection date	21 February 2008
Inspector	Carly Mooney
Setting Address	Honeyhill Primary School, Paston, PETERBOROUGH, PE4 7DR
Telephone number	01733 892 858
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Registered person	Family Welfare Association (The)
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?

Paston Fundays is one of four pre-schools run by the Family Welfare Association. It opened in 2001 and operates from the hall of Honey Hill family centre. It is situated in the Paston district of Peterborough. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday morning from 09:00 to 12:00 term-time only. All children have access to a secure, enclosed, outdoor play area.

There are currently 26 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 21 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local community. The pre-school currently supports a small number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs four staff. All staff hold an appropriate early years qualification, including the manager. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment where they are learning the importance of good hygiene and personal care through routine activities. For example, most children instinctively wash their hands before eating their snack and after messy play. Staff are clear role models and ensure cross contamination is kept to a minimum as they wipe down surfaces using anti-bacterial spray and wash their hands before preparing food. Clear records are kept regarding accidents and medication, although accident records do not always maintain confidentiality. Parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment has not been obtained from all parents. As a consequence, children's medical welfare is not fully safeguarded. Sufficient staff have a first aid qualification which allows them to respond appropriately if an accident occurs.

Children are well nourished as they are offered a good range of healthy snacks, to promote their growth and development, such as fresh fruit and pitta bread. They develop their independent skills as they use a knife to spread butter on bread rolls and peel and cut bananas. A rolling snack programme enables children to decide for themselves when they are thirsty and hungry and does not interrupt their play and creativity.

Children's health benefits from the good opportunities they have to play and learn in the fresh air and in all weathers. They freely move between inside and outside play as they wish and good use is made of the outside space to provide a stimulating learning environment. Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities that helps develop their confidence and skills when using large and small apparatus, tools and equipment. They walk along balancing beams, jump from one log to another and engage in games such as swing ball to develop their balance and co-ordination skills. Opportunities to develop children's fine muscle skills are plentiful, as they freely cut with scissors, roll and press the dough and tightly squeeze bulldog clips on to paper.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed into their play room that is attractive and ready on arrival. Children settle quickly because the staff ensure a good range of appropriate resources are set out each morning. Children's work is attractively displayed and many low storage units enable children to make many of their own choices in their play. A child-centred environment has been created which helps to promote children's independence.

Children are adequately protected by staff who are safety conscious and have a clear understanding of safety issues. Risk assessments are conducted on a regular basis which ensures potential risks to children are minimised. This enables them to move safely within their environment. Daily checks of the premises and equipment further supports this. Children are well-supervised due to high staff to children ratios and routine procedures, such as practising fire drills that help staff and children become familiar with the routines to be followed in the event of an emergency. Children are able to take calculated risks because good adult supervision within the setting, is in place, such as using knives to cut up their snack.

Staff have a clear child protection policy in place that is shared with parents. This ensures children's safety and well-being is a priority. Staff are aware of their duty to safeguard children

and understand how to make a referral or seek advice. Children are cared for by suitable adults and are never left alone with un-vetted people. As a result children are safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and confident. They mostly settle well and are provided with good support when they leave their parents and carers. Children enjoy their time at the setting and eagerly access the freely accessible activities in the room and outside area. They show they are familiar with the routines of the group as they approach staff with ease for a cuddle. Children choose from a wide range of toys, books and games that are stimulating and of interest to them. They are presented with good opportunities to engage in messy and creative activities, such as sand and water play and making their own play dough. They mostly have freedom to explore their environment at their own pace and initiate their own learning, although staff stop play for register/talk time soon after children arrive so that children's play or creativity is sometimes interrupted. As a result they are often reluctant to join in with the others. Staff are familiar with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and provide suitable activities for younger children to develop their learning, although this is not always clearly identified in their planning.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff plan and provide a broad range of interesting and stimulating activities which provide a good balance across the six areas of learning, although not always clear how activities are adapted for younger or more able children. Planning is flexible and allows for child initiated activities. This ensures children are interested, willing and eager to participate. Staff know what children are interested in, for example, sand and the outside tap, together with a number of resources, are always accessible for particular children who love engaging in these activities. Staff are involved in children's play. They recognise opportunities to extend children's learning and ask questions to provide challenge. For example, 'what do you think might happen?' Children are able to move about freely and spend quality time outdoors, where they develop physical skills, such as balancing or engage in spontaneous learning whilst digging in the mud for worms.

Detailed records of assessments are in place which shows children's progress through the stepping stones. Thorough observations of children are carried out and the next steps for children's development identified. These are then successfully used to influence planning of future activities and set individual targets for children. Staff make good use of photographic evidence to support children's achievements.

Children are confident, and on the whole, leave their parents and carers with ease. Children socialise well with each other, for example, at snack time where they share their news about play group and their home life with adults and peers. They show kindness and consideration in their play, as they fasten each others dressing up outfits when children cannot reach and they work together to build a pyramid with different shapes. Children are beginning to understand about sharing and turn taking in their play as they wait for a place at the snack table or water tray, although some children struggle to listen to simple instructions. Staff support children by providing visual instructions for some activities, such as how to make play dough. Children are independent in their self-care, as they take themselves to the toilet and learn to put on and fasten their own coats.

Children communicate effectively and use a wide range of vocabulary to express their ideas. Staff offer good support as a result in activities it initiates conversations to help develop

children's communication and thinking skills. Children are given good opportunities for name recognition, such as on coat pegs, name cards and individual drawers, because they are encouraged to find for themselves. A comfy book corner encourages children to look at books independently. They have a good selection to choose from. A weekly book club further supports children's development in early literacy skills and provides parental involvement in their learning. Children confidently use tools and resources to make marks, such as water and paintbrushes and begin to understand that marks make meaning, as they attempt to write their own name on their work and see clear labelling on displays and resources in their environment.

Children are able to count accurately to at least ten and sometimes further. Numbers displayed in their environment and on resources helps children with their number recognition. Staff engage children in lots of counting in routine activities, such as the number of boys and girls present at register time and the resources needed for the amount of children at the snack table. They are developing their awareness of addition and subtraction through practical activities and number rhymes and use a wide range of vocabulary to describe size, shape and position, such as big, medium and small during a topic on Goldilocks.

Children use a range of toys and equipment to explore their surroundings. For example, they dig in the soil with spades and use magnifying glasses to look at natural materials, such as fir cones and shells more closely. Children make good use of their senses to explore and describe experiences, such as tasting and smelling porridge. Children are provided with daily opportunities to express their creativity through art, messy play and in role play, such as dressing up as princesses. They freely access the water tray pouring water from one container to another and enjoy making sounds with pasta shakers they have made.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are warmly welcomed into the pre-school where they are treated as individuals. Staff greet children personally, which helps them feel secure and provides reassurance for those new to the setting. Children's needs are successfully met because staff work closely with their parents. Children are cared for appropriately through staff working with parents who provide them with all the necessary information about their child. Staff take the time to get to know the children and they support their individual needs well through a key worker system. Displays of children's work and photographs of themselves in the pre-school enable children to gain a sense of belonging and pride in what they create. Children who speak English as a second language are supported well by staff one of whom has attended language course. This enables staff to communicate more effectively with children, in their own language. As a result children settle more easily. Children learn to value and respect diversity through the celebration of different festivals, such as Chinese New Year. Positive attitudes are encouraged by staff therefore they are developing an awareness of living in a multi-cultural society. For example, through play materials, such as books, display tables to support their learning about festivals. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children on the whole behave well throughout the nursery. Staff's calm, sensitive and consistent approach where they give clear explanations to children about why their behaviour is inappropriate enables children to understand standards expected. For example, 'shall we keep the pasta on the table or it will go crunch, crunch'. Children are occupied at all times which ensures they are not bored or frustrated. Staff gently remind and reinforce sharing at every opportunity, when children struggle and give praise and encouragement when they do well. This promotes their self esteem and confidence.

Staff have a good understanding of how to work with parents for the benefit of the children. Parents are warmly welcomed into the setting and all policies and procedures are shared with them. A detailed parents notice board provides them with clear day to day information about the setting. This, includes the settings complaints policy and procedure if they wish to make a complaint. A parent representative and suggestion box gives parents the opportunity to provide their point of view about the pre-school and how it is run. Staff are pro-active acting upon parents suggestions to further improve the care provided for their child.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. There are good systems in place to ensure parents are kept informed about children's individual progress and development, in consultation, following their child's focus week. Parents opinions are valued as they work together with their child's key worker to agree the next steps in their child's learning, and how to encourage them at home. Staff provide activities for them to do at home with their child, such as a weekly book loan to further develop their learning. Planning of activities are clearly displayed for parents to view and a regular newsletter that informs them what their child will be learning each half term.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall, children's needs are met. The organisation of the pre-school promotes positive outcomes for children. They are happy, have settled well and enjoy the activities on offer. Staff working with the children show genuine care and concern for their welfare to encourage a sense of well-being. The room and outside area are set out attractively and organised effectively so that children and staff can move around safely and easily to access the resources. Children receive a good level of care from staff who are adequately qualified and have been subject to a robust vetting procedure to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded.

Clear policies and procedures are in place to support children's well-being, safety and care. Mandatory records and documentation is generally well-maintained, although the registers, on odd occasions do not consistently record children's arrival and departure times and a few parents signatures are missing on registration forms that give parental consent for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. Therefore, this does not always protect children's welfare.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. Staff are guided by an effective leader who ensures staff work together as a team and are clear in their roles and responsibilities. She has a clear understanding of the Foundation stage curriculum and is effective, with her staff, in ensuring that children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Clear systems are in place to monitor the provision, such as being part of the effective early learning programme, discussion at regular planning meetings and accessing support from a teacher advisor. Staff are motivated to attend training on a regular basis in order to keep up to date with current knowledge, teaching methods and child care practices.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection two recommendations were raised regarding care. These related to training in behaviour management and child protection and ensuring that a trained staff member in first aid was on the premises at all times. Staff have now attended training and three staff are now first aid trained. As a result children's welfare and safety is maintained.

Two recommendations were raised relating to nursery education. These were to provide sufficient adult support at all times and ensure all opportunities were used to develop children's counting skills. The pre-school has now doubled the amount of staff working with the children to four so that there is now sufficient support for children during activities. Children are now given good opportunities to develop their counting skills in routines activities, such as register and snack time. These have all been addressed positively and this has an effective impact on the care, learning and welfare of the 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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- improve procedures to ensure records show children's actual hours of attendance
- ensure written parental permission for children to receive emergency medical treatment or advice is obtained from all parents and that accident records maintain confidentiality at all times

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):

- continue to develop planning to show how activities are differentiated between younger and older/more able children
- improve daily routines, with regard to large group times so they are beneficial to the children and meet their individual needs (this also relates 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