

Billericay Methodist Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	650031
Inspection date	14 January 2008
Inspector	Lisa Paisley
Setting Address	Western Road, Billericay, Essex, CM12 9DT
Telephone number	01277 624533
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Registered person	Billericay Methodist Pre School Committee
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?

Billericay Methodist pre-school is run by a committee. It opened in 1960 and operates from two rooms within a local church in Billericay, Essex. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.30 to 12.00 term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 44 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 27 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre-school employs nine staff. Seven of the staff, including both managers, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two staff members are currently attending training. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in an environment where good hygiene practices are maintained and they learn about hygiene routines through washing their hands appropriately. For example, they wash their hands after creative activities, using the toilets and before snacks. Children have access to warm running water, liquid soap and paper hands towels, ensuring the risk of cross-infection is reduced. Pictorial notices in the toilet area provide further reminders for children. They are also reminded to use disposable tissues when wiping their nose. Staff consistently apply agreed health procedures which ensures the risk of cross-infection is minimised and children's health and well-being is effectively promoted. All the staff are first aid trained and the first aid box is located in the kitchen which is inaccessible to children at all times. This ensures that all children receive a good level of care if they become ill, have an accident or require prescribed medication.

Children enthusiastically enjoy a wide variety of activities that contribute to keeping them healthy. They have a range of suitable equipment for healthy exercise such as the climbing frame, ride-on cars, scooters and the slide. Children's finer manipulative hand skills are successfully promoted through the good range of tools such as scissors, pencils, paint brushes, threading and puzzles that children use well. Consequently children are progressing well in all areas of their physical development.

Children's awareness of the benefits of healthy eating is promoted at snack time. They enjoy a variety of healthy snacks such as apples, bananas, cheese and bread sticks. On occasions children help prepare the snack, for example, making vegetable soup, pizzas and biscuits. Snack times are a sociable occasion where children have the opportunity to talk about themselves and everyday experiences. Children learn why some foods are better for our bodies than others through planned activities and daily routines. Fresh drinking water is freely available throughout the session ensuring that they remain hydrated. Staff maintain good written records for each child to ensure their individual health and dietary requirements are met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from using toys and play equipment which are maintained to a good standard. They select their own play resources which are appropriate to their ages and stages of development. The walls are decorated with displays of both children's art work and posters. Children are able to freely select a range of resources and play equipment, fostering their independence and confidence in choosing their own activities. Children learn about keeping themselves safe through effective and gentle reminders from staff, for example, walking around different play areas sensibly, tidying away toys, using the climbing frame safely and waiting in a line sensibly. Effective and clear procedures are followed to ensure that children are escorted safely on trips and outings. Children are supervised appropriately for their age and stage of development. Children practise regular fire drills with adults, in order to develop their confidence and familiarity. This ensures that children and staff know how to evacuate the building quickly and safely in the event of an emergency or an incident. A clear record of these drills are kept. Appropriate fire safety equipment is in place and is regularly maintained.

Children's safety is effectively promoted as staff have good measures in place both indoors and outdoors to ensure risks to children are minimised. For example, the entrance and all exits and outdoor play areas are secure, all low-level electrical sockets are protected, fire extinguishers are securely mounted and protected and children do not have access to the kitchen area. Adults are vigilant and follow daily routines to assess the premises, toys and equipment visually. The pre-school is kept secure to ensure children cannot leave unsupervised. There are clear procedures in place to ensure all visitors are checked as they are required to show their identification badge and sign the visitors book. Consequently, children benefit from use of a safe and welcoming indoor environment.

Children are effectively safeguarded as staff demonstrate confidence in their ability to identify, record and report any child protection concerns in accordance with the local safeguarding procedures. A written policy is in place and this includes a statement with regard to an allegation being made against a staff member. There is a designated person responsible for safeguarding children. The pre-school have received details regarding the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Parents are informed of the pre-school's responsibility regarding child protection reassuring parents of their child's safety and well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a good range of interesting and age-appropriate toys, resources, tools and equipment which are made freely available to them at all times, free-flow play operates between designated play areas within the indoor environment. All children are busy and occupied in purposeful and worthwhile activities throughout the sessions. They have developed the ability to negotiate and cooperate well to maintain harmonious relationships. Adults interact with the children in a purposeful manner to maintain children's interest and to promote their learning. Young children are provided with a good range of activities, for example, sand, water, planting cress seeds, puzzles, books, construction and role play.

Young children are confident and are making good progress. Developmental records are completed on the younger children, ensuring that their needs are being met and activities are appropriately planned. Staff have obtained 'Birth to three matters' framework which they use effectively to plan play and learning opportunities that support and encourage the development of the two year-olds who attend the pre-school.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, 'early childhood development' and 'how children play and learn'. An effective 'key person' system is used successfully to ensure that children's individual abilities are identified and respected. Children's observation and assessment records contain good levels of information. Planning records show that children receive regular opportunities to develop their learning in all areas, whilst the assessment procedures ensure the key person monitors development on a weekly basis. Staff successfully provide children with a good range of activities that are interesting and stimulating ensuring their interest is captured and successfully maintained. Activities and play experiences are varied providing children with effective play and learning experiences supporting their overall developmental progress. However, on occasions children's learning is limited as teaching methods used by staff are not always fully extended. The organisation of the session is free play with an emphasis on children's choice, planned

circle activities, for example, stories and registration times. The children clearly enjoy their time at the pre-school.

Children are developing good attitudes and dispositions towards their learning and the older and more able children are keen to complete tasks such as planting cress seeds and making train tracks. They enjoy participating in a good range of activities provided and are encouraged to independently select resources and initiate their own activities and games. Children show a secure sense of belonging as they greet staff and each other upon arrival. They work very well together in a purposeful manner and understand the importance of cooperation during group activities. For example, children sharing the water play and negotiating snack time. Children are confident speakers, using words effectively with a good range of vocabulary to convey their experiences both real and imaginary such as describing different textures. The book corner is warm, welcoming and comfortable for children to use. They are confident and enjoy looking at books with either their friends or the staff, for example, sharing the story 'The Owl Babies'. Children confidently use tools and resources to make marks and they have opportunities to recognise and write their own names independently through daily routines such as self-registration. Mark-making is regularly linked with the role play, providing further opportunities for meaningful writing. Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy is suitably promoted through daily routines, for example, discussing shapes and playing games such as 'What's the time Mr Wolf?' where children screeched with joy when running away. Older and more able children count up to ten and beyond confidently. They have good opportunities to sort objects and participate in matching games. Cooking, sand and water activities provide children with good experiences of weight, size and capacity.

Children have opportunities to find out about the natural world through topics such as autumn and growing sunflowers and cress seeds. They go on trips out into the community, for example, nature walks and trips to the local high street. People are also invited into the pre-school to talk about their work such as the road safety officer and the veterinary. Children are developing a good awareness of the uses of information technology in everyday life and are able to operate equipment, for example, domestic items, the computer and digital camera. Their imaginations and free expression are effectively promoted through the range of activities such as play dough, painting, soil, water, sand, role-play, craft activities and music and movement. Children particularly enjoyed the planned activity 'Don't put your finger in the jelly Nelly' as they felt a range of different food textures such as jelly and spaghetti. Role play is linked into current topics and themes such as the bank, restaurant and igloos for the Arctic. Children enjoy music and movement, using musical instruments freely to experiment with rhythm and sound patterns. Their physical skills are effectively promoted through a variety of mediums, for example, the climbing frame, tricycles, balancing beams and play tunnels. Children's finer manipulative skills are successfully promoted through the good range of activities such as threading, puzzles, building with small bricks and mark-making tools. As a result they are making good progress in all areas of their physical development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by staff who work closely with parents to meet individual children's needs. They enjoy good relationships with staff, building on their well-being and confidence. Each child is valued and respected as an individual as staff know the children's individual personalities well. A comprehensive policy is in place regarding children with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities which details how the service will be provided to children. The good

levels of support ensure that all children are included and receive a great deal of individual attention so that their needs are effectively met.

Children benefit from having access to a range of play resources which promote positive images of diversity and they participate in activities which promote their awareness of different festivals and cultures, for example, Australia Day, Mother's day, Harvest Festival and planned topics on Poland, Italy and Grandparents Day. Children work harmoniously with others as staff create an environment that values positive behaviour. They are able to take digital photographs of their own work, for example, creating 'dinosaur land' and the photographs are displayed, further valuing children's individual achievements. Children's understanding of right and wrong are developed as they respond to gentle reminders to care for their environment, resources and each other. Staff provide good role models for children by being calm and polite. Praise and encouragement are given freely to children, ensuring that they develop confidence and self-esteem and understand that they have done well. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are fully informed about the provision the pre-school offers, the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and how their children are progressing. Parents are welcomed into the pre-school to help their children to settle or to talk to staff about any concerns they may have. Parents also receive regular newsletters which keep them up to date with activities and events. Children's learning is encouraged in the home through children bringing in objects, however, this could be further developed to ensure continued support for children's learning in the home. Regular meetings are arranged with parents to discuss their child's developmental progress, ensuring that parents are fully informed about all aspects of their child's care and development.

Parents are aware of how to make complaints about the provision and these are dealt with in a prompt and professional way. Staff listen to parents' concerns and, where appropriate, adapt their policies and procedures accordingly.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are provided with a good level of care, supported and enhanced by the clear policies developed and implemented by the pre-school. These ensure that staff are consistent in their interactions with children and in their regard for safety and security. Records and details relating to staff and children are obtained, recorded and stored appropriately, ensuring that the pre-school is meeting legal requirements relating to the National Standards.

Children are cared for by staff who have been checked through the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and who have undergone a recruitment and induction programme. However, health declaration procedures for new staff has not yet been implemented which may compromise children's welfare. Overall, staff working with children are suitable and have relevant training and experience.

The use of available space within the pre-school is effectively organised, with clear designated areas for play, storage, food preparation, changing and eating. These areas are effectively managed by staff to allow children to play, eat and rest safely and securely.

The leadership and management of the nursery is good. The manager has recently taken over the role and she has been successful in managing a smooth transition for all children, families

and staff. All the staff, including the manager and deputy are enthusiastic, motivated and professional in their approach to providing children with positive early years play experiences and learning. They have a good understanding of the importance of early childhood development, respecting children as individuals and they work hard to consistently provide good care for all children. Staff have clearly identified roles and responsibilities such as health and safety, safeguarding children and Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and they carry out their roles effectively. Staff induction and appraisals are in place and this ensures that new and existing staff feel fully supported and valued in their role. They are deployed successfully within the pre-school and staffing ratios are maintained during the session ensuring children are well supervised and supported at all times. Staff have a good understanding of the policies and procedures which are in place. Consequently, children are cared for by knowledgeable, experienced staff and they benefit from good continuity of care.

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 group agreed, to devise a system for recording any medicines administered to children ensure children access an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice update records in accordance to the National Standards and Guidance, this refers to the operational plan, fire log book, complaints, behaviour management and child protection policies. A formal system is now in place with regard to the recording of any medicines administered, resources and play equipment has been updated to ensure children have access to range of resources and activities that promote diversity and inclusion, an operational plan is in place and all relevant policies have been updated to ensure that they meet the National Standards. Overall, good secure improvements have been made with regard to the quality of care.

At the last education inspection the group agreed, to develop the curriculum planning to show how less able children will be supported and more able children challenged to ensure that the children continue to make progress across all the areas of learning, review the recording system for children's progress to ensure that they are more clearly linked to the stepping stones of learning. Clear links will enable all staff to see quickly what the child already knows so that future curriculum planning builds on this and helps the children take the next steps in their learning and develop more formal systems to share this information with parents. Curriculum planning has been updated to show differentiation between the younger, older and more able children and how they are all supported within activities, children's progress is recorded through children's developmental profiles which are linked to the stepping stones and formal systems are in place in which staff share children's developmental progress with parents. Overall, good improvements have been secured with regard to the quality of nursery education.

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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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):

- update recruitment procedures by devising health declaration forms for new staff.

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 the range of teaching methods to extend and consolidate children's learning
- develop further children's learning within the home.

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