

Tring Mothers Union Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	129403
Inspection date	09 January 2008
Inspector	Sheila Harrison
Setting Address	Anglican Methodist Church Hall, Sutton Court, Tring, Herts, HP23 2AY
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Registered person	The Trustees of Tring Mothers Union Pre-School 1034714
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?

Tring Mothers Union Pre-School was formed in 1963 and is a charity run by a committee consisting of parents. The pre-school is situated in the centre of a small town on the north-western edge of Hertfordshire. The premises available to the pre-school consists of a hall, kitchen, toilets, lobby and an outdoor space. They operate Tuesday to Friday, 09:20-11:50 term time only. There is occasionally a lunch club for the older children.

The pre-school is registered for 24 children aged two years to under five years and there are 20 children on roll, six of which are funded three-year-olds. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and is willing to support children with English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six staff to work with the children, two of which have an appropriate early years qualification. The pre-school receives support from the local authority and are members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are well nourished, There is a wide range of healthy and interesting snacks including fruit, biscuits, pitta bread with some dips. They have adequate access to drinking water during the session. However, staff miss chances for children to develop their independence skills as the snack is pre-prepared away from the children and staff pour the drinks. Children learn about healthy eating, when they choose milk as staff express pleasure and explain it will make them grow strong. They recently worked on a theme of healthy foods. Staff work well with the parents to ensure children's dietary needs are met. All allergies are recorded and made known to all staff.

Children's health is protected as the setting has suitable policies and procedures for accidents, medication and sickness. Most staff have an appropriate first aid qualification and the rest of the staff have imminent courses booked to ensure they are well qualified to deal with any accidents. Children understand simple hygiene practices through washing their hands after using the toilet, before snack and after messy activities. Children's dignity is adequately maintained when staff change soiled clothing. They are suitably supported as they progress with toilet training. Appropriate equipment such as steps, disposable towels and soap is easily accessible.

Children make good progress in their physical development. They develop self-confidence in their physical skills as they move with control and coordination in the hall and when moving to the outside area. Children choose when to play outside and this is encouraged by staff in most weather conditions. They enjoy a range of sit and ride toys, hoops and balls. Staff ensure there is an interesting range of physical play equipment available indoors for example, by organising an obstacle course or providing a slide or balancing beam. Children have some chances to exercise vigorously, for example, during the end of term party in the summer children enjoyed a nature treasure hunt, races and parachute games. There is a broad range of construction and mark-making equipment to develop competent fine motor control. Children's learning is well supported as stencils are secured to the paper to ensure children can succeed.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well-maintained, comfortable and welcoming environment. Staff check the premises daily and they have an efficient procedure for dealing with any maintenance problems. Children's safety is well promoted as the accident book is correctly completed and regularly reviewed, the manager is proactive by recording and reviewing any near miss incidents. There is a secure procedure for the safety of the children when they are using the outside area. Staff take the children's contact numbers, some first aid equipment and walkie talkies outside to ensure they can quickly get help from extra staff. During the session the front doors are locked to ensure children cannot leave the premises unsupervised. Children benefit from the organisation of the premises as they have the space they need for varied activities.

Children use a broad range of equipment that is suitable and safe. There is a large range of toys that are arranged invitingly to encourage children to be occupied with some chances to make their own choices. Posters and pictures are suitably displayed.

Children are learning to be safe as they are familiar with the fire evacuation procedures. Staff evaluate and record the drills to ensure children are confident to participate. Children enjoy visits from 'people who help us' including the local school crossing patrol lady and paramedics.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff are aware of the child protection policy and know who to contact if there are any concerns. Most staff have completed some child protection training and comprehensive information on the signs and symptoms and the procedure to follow is readily available.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and eager to participate. They quickly become involved with the staff and the toys to help them confidently leave their parents and carers. The routine of the setting is evaluated and changed to meet the needs of the younger children. Close and caring relationships increase the children's sense of trust with their early communication skills being well supported through the key-worker scheme. Staff gently question children to check their understanding of colour by using the toys that interest them.

Nursery Education.

Children flourish as staff have an effective knowledge of the areas of learning and stepping stones within the Foundation Stage and use this knowledge to plan a balanced and purposeful routine. Children select activities from a mainly adult determined range with some opportunities for them to actively choose which toys to get out. Teaching motivates children so they are keen to learn as staff spend most of their time relating closely to the children as they enjoy a cooperative game of sound lotto.

Children's learning is promoted through the staff's helpful record keeping. The medium and daily plans ensure there is a balanced curriculum covering the six areas of learning. Short term plans have clear learning intentions which are generally linked to individual children's development. However, these are not always fully linked to children's interest which potentially limits some individual learning requirements. The assessment records provide useful evidence to support referrals, for example, for children with learning disabilities and/or disabilities.

Children have useful chances to learn on a larger and more active scale. They can draw and paint outside on large pieces of paper. They paint the blackboard with water and large paintbrushes. Children increase their understanding of mathematics outside as they recognise the size of small, medium and large hoops.

There are valuable opportunities within the environment for children to recognise their own names. They are beginning to recognise the link to sounds and letters as they complete puzzles with the support of a member of staff. Non-fiction books are well displayed and linked to the current theme. Children have suitable chances to learn the purpose of print as they use the menu card during the role play café and take away restaurant. They thoroughly enjoyed counting and recording the numbers of vehicles observed as they undertook a traffic survey as part of the theme of road safety.

Staff provide resources that inspire children to freely investigate the properties of colour and different materials through an interesting range of sticking and printing activities. Staff help children extend their experiences as they suggest using glue to fix material to the paper. Children

are growing in confidence and keen to express their wishes. They express their preferences for the music played during tidy up time. Children's natural curiosity is well supported with a range of technological toys. They enjoy using play binoculars and cash registers. Children are shown how to use the walkie talkies on request.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel valued and are developing secure relationships as staff are readily available to welcome children and parents on an individual basis. Staff talk positively about the things children have brought in for show and tell time. There is an effective keyworker scheme and the settling procedure is individualised for the needs of each family.

Children behave well and staff use helpful strategies to help children to manage their own behaviour to take turns and share. Staff use a range of sand timers to give children time to prepare to let another have their turn of the favourite dolls pram and buggy. Staff provide consistent and useful role models for children. Praise is freely given to the children ensuring they understand when they have done well. Good manners are encouraged and children respond suitably with 'please' and 'thank you' without prompting. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported as staff are strongly committed to inclusion. There is a good system to identify children's needs and to ensure they receive appropriate support strategies. Staff work closely with the family and other professionals and where appropriate, children receive one-to-one assistance. Staff consider additional ways to help children who speak little or no English. They build on what children already know by learning a few words of children's home language and use photographs and articles on home to help children feel secure and value their home life. Staff attend suitable training and make detailed observations to ensure they can contribute relevant information to other professionals.

Children have valuable opportunities to learn about the wider world. They acknowledge important events in their lives and some festivals. They visit the adjacent church for a Christmas service. They become familiar with the local environment as they walk to the post box to post their Christmas cards and sit at the bus shelter to undertake a traffic survey. Children are encouraged to feel valued and free from discrimination as the play materials reflect diversity. They enthusiastically take part in the theme of other countries. Parents contribute interesting artefacts of other cultures including Chinese soup bowls and spoons for the role play take away restaurant, lanterns and paper dragons when the children were discussing China. Children are fully involved when trying tastes specific to the country, for example, croissants when the theme is France.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are well informed of their child's development as they are invited to frequent parents' evenings and this has encouraged parents to have more informal discussions with the child's keyworker. The setting gives useful information on how children learn and during the AGM a qualified teacher gives a talk on 'Letters and Sounds' part of the Primary National Strategy. Closer links are developed as, after a recent parental questionnaire, the setting initiated a scheme to ensure all letters are readily available and a home-school notebook is completed. This is found especially useful for parents that do not regularly take or collect their children from pre-school. There is clear information on the setting for example, there are valuable frequent newsletters which detail the current theme, the areas of learning and stepping stones. Parents can be involved in their child's

learning through taking part in the parental rota. They are encouraged to take an active role in the running of the setting by being on the committee.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the quality of the organisation. The high adult:child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play. The registered person generally uses effective recruitment and induction procedures. However, some details are not fully recorded which potentially limits the safe management of the children. The pre-school has developed a range of valuable policies which the staff use well on a day-to-day basis.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The setting has a clear vision of the needs of the children. The leader builds a committed team and is a good role model. Staff review and monitor the strengths and weakness of the setting. Children benefit from the highly skilled staff who are committed to continuous improvement. Staff attend training bringing new skills, giving opportunities for the children to extend their learning. All practitioners discuss the planning and delivery of the curriculum. Overall the needs of the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting agreed to develop a comprehensive information system, expand the opportunities for children to access the resources and to develop children's experiences of different foods.

Children's welfare is promoted as the setting has developed and reviewed a useful range of policies and information which is adequately displayed. Children are initiating activities from a range of resources prepared by the staff and there are times during the session children are encouraged to choose the activities themselves. Staff take turns in organising the menu for snack time and this allows children a range of different tastes.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting agreed to improve the planning system to extend the learning opportunities for the older or more able children and to extend the experiences for children outside.

Children's learning is expanded as the setting has reviewed the outside area and they provide many interesting toys to interest children and encourage them to explore in a different environment. Older and more able children's learning is suitably encouraged as staff detail expansion in the planning of some activities.

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):

- enhance opportunities for children to develop their independence (also for nursery education)
- enhance the recruitment and complaints procedures.

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):

- link the planning and assessment systems to the children's interests.

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