

# Dunmore Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 133399   |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 11 February 2008   |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Jenny Scarlett   |
| <b>Setting Address</b>         | Farm Road, Off Austin Place, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX14 1NA |
| <b>Telephone number</b>        | 01235 202103   |
| <b>E-mail</b>                  |  |
| <b>Registered person</b>       | The Trustees of Dunmore Pre-School                           |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Integrated   |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | 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](http://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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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?

Dunmore Pre-School opened in 1982. The pre-school operates from a detached self contained modular building in a residential estate in Abingdon, Oxfordshire. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.15 to 15.30 during school term times. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 47 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. Of these 29 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide geographical area. The pre-school supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and a small number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs five staff. Of these staff, four staff including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. One staff member is working towards a recognised early years qualification. Three staff are further developing their qualifications. Staff receive support from a teacher from the Early Years Childcare Partnership (EYCP).

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children access good clean premises. Staff remind children to wash their hands after using the toilet and before meals. Staff follow good hygiene procedures, for example, they ensure work surfaces are clean and wash the tables before children's snack and lunch time. This good practice sustains the high levels of hygiene and helps to prevent the spread of infection. Parents receive clear information about when they must keep their children at home, owing to illness and are well informed of infectious diseases such as chickenpox when outbreaks occur. Children are cared for appropriately if unwell or in the event that they sustain an accident when at pre-school.

Children learn the importance of healthy eating when in this setting. They tuck in eagerly to foods such as fresh fruit, raisins and savoury biscuits at snack time. Snack and lunch times are a happy and sociable occasion where staff sit with children and chat about their day. Children learn to become independent as they open their own lunch boxes and packaging and choose what they will eat from the varied selections their parents provide. Children drink according to their needs, and staff actively encourage them to have water particularly after playing outside. Children benefit from regular fresh air and exercise. They make good progress in developing their physical skills, gaining a sense of space as they move around the room and play outside. Physical play is incorporated well into the session. Staff have begun to develop adaptable indoor/outdoor play opportunities making best use of children's learning styles and interests as well as the weather providing flexibility in the sessions.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is inadequate.

Children enjoy a safe and secure environment, monitored carefully by staff during the hours of operation. The room is welcoming, brightly decorated and visually appealing to children. They play with a variety of well-presented activities at tabletop and on floor level. Staff organise the room so that children can move around freely, making their own decisions about what to do from the wide range of appropriate activities on offer. Staff work hard to provide a suitable care and learning environment. Storage areas are well organised, therefore staff can provide other resources for children quickly when requested. Children use good quality equipment, although some technological resources are not in working order. Staff check resources regularly to make sure they are safe for children's use.

Registers record times children are contracted to attend, although times when children leave early are not always recorded, which means the historical record is inaccurate. Staff supervise children closely at all times and discuss safety issues well with children as they play. They help children become aware of how to keep themselves safe, such as encouraging them to tidy up at changes in the session times and to pick up items of equipment, giving clear explanations as to why they must do so.

Staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children's welfare because they demonstrate a sound understanding of the child protection policies and procedures. Staff:child ratios ensure that sufficient staff are on duty to meet the individual needs of the children throughout the day. However, the registered person and trustees of the pre-school have not notified Ofsted of the committee changes and as a result none of them have been vetted to determine their suitability. This puts children at serious risk.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children clearly enjoy the activities offered in this setting. They enter the pre-school happily, confidently and evidently feel 'at home'. Children have a voice and make suggestions for play and activities with staff who value their ideas and suggestions which allows their play to go to the next level. Relationships with staff are very good, with children approaching them readily for help, support or a comforting story. Staff cater for children's individual welfare needs appropriately, providing fresh air and exercise, quieter times and comfortable places to sit, together with suitable nourishment.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals of the Foundation Stage and undoubtedly enjoy the experiences offered. Staff plan a suitable programme of experiences, which cover all aspects of the stepping stones over a period. They receive good opportunities for ongoing training and development, which underpins their knowledge and skills effectively to support the children. Planning is clearly linked to the Early Learning Goals and identifies what the children are to learn from planned activities. As a result, children are making good progress. Staff use observations of children's progress to complete assessment records. These are linked to the stepping stones and used effectively to plan for each child's next stage. However, whilst some parents are informed of their children's progress there is no consistent formal system to ensure that all parents know about their child's progress and the next steps of their child's learning. This does not help to ensure that staff and parents continue to work together to teach and support their child.

Children have good opportunities to use their creativity. Good resources are available for the children, particularly in relation to the imaginary play area with the barbeque equipment and selection of tents. This enables them to use their imagination as they plan and prepare a barbeque feast both indoors and out, allowing them to take their play to the next level. Children excitedly help staff make a pretend camp fire using coloured paper they tear and screw up the paper to look like flames. They sit and sing songs around the imaginary camp fire.

Children experience regular opportunities to develop their early maths skills and evidence shows they are progressing well in this area. However, staff do not routinely provide practical day to day opportunities for children to consolidate this area learning. Children have a good range of vocabulary. They use language confidently when talking to their peers and with staff. This has a positive effect on their growing social skills and self-assurance. Some children confidently recognise their own names and those of others. Most of the four year-olds demonstrate good handwriting skills. They confidently write their own names on pieces of work and attempt to write for a purpose. These children demonstrate how they can hold a pencil correctly. Children's love of books is nurtured by staff who read stories to the children individually and in groups. The book area is inviting with comfortable seating and soft toys for the children. There are plenty of books for the children to choose from, however, the display cases are too overcrowded which inhibits the children's choices.

Children are adept in their physical skills. They receive good opportunities for physical play through well-planned indoor and outdoor activities. This helps children develop the confidence to enjoy moving with control. Children explore growing their own vegetables and plants in pots and raised beds in the garden and investigate their surroundings to look at nature. They use their bodies in various ways as they learn to balance on one leg and have fun as they explore

different ways to move across the play area. They are helped to understand how exercise helps them to stay healthy. Children confidently run, climb and balance on the portable garden equipment. They have good co-ordination and an awareness of others, particularly when running and moving with toys outside. Children take part in a range of activities in all areas of learning, which help to develop both their fine and large physical skills. They are able to control pencils, scissors and paintbrushes with a good range of activities to develop their manipulative skills.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

There is a variety of activities and resources available to encourage a positive outlook on the wider world and raise children's knowledge of diversity and their understanding of others. The children have opportunities to find out about themselves and each other and gain knowledge of the wider world through well-chosen resources and activities, such as jigsaws, books, toys, discussion and role play. A range of cultural festivals are celebrated, such as Chinese New Year, Halloween, Christmas and Easter. Children are developing friendly relationships with staff and each other. Key staff have a sound awareness of children and their families and this helps to ensure that children are fully included and receive appropriate care. Children who speak English as an additional language are effectively supported and included in the pre-school. Staff are committed to ensuring that all children are able to integrate into the pre-school, regardless of individual needs while feeling valued.

Children behave well due to the consistent, positive strategies that staff employ to help them understand right from wrong and how to get along with others. Warm friendships are evident. Staff are calm, respectful and promote themselves as good role models. As a result, children are polite and considerate to their friends and carers. Children help to tidy up, listen attentively and follow instructions carefully. They receive lots of praise and encouragement to promote their self-esteem. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good. Parents are well informed about the curriculum and activities and experiences their child is involved in on a daily basis. Information is included in the prospectus, plans are displayed and newsletters are sent home regularly helping parents to understand how their child learns through play. These include full details of weekly topics, any visits or visitors to the pre-school. However, staff do not consistently profile the children before they arrive which means not all staff are aware of what their starting points are.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

Children are looked after by experienced staff, who are cleared as being suitable to work with them. They are caring in their approach to the children, providing good roles for the children to follow. Staff work well together as a united team, setting up a suitable environment for the children's use each session. Staff receive good opportunities for training through the Early Years Childcare Partnership (EYCP) and are committed to training and updating their skills and knowledge in childcare and current trends in early years.

Leadership and management for the provision of nursery education is good. The manager, deputy and staff work closely together to ensure the day to day running of the pre-school runs smoothly. The manager is open and responsive to new ideas and suggestions to improve the provision. Children benefit from clear induction procedures for new staff and existing staff

experience and qualifications. They are deployed suitably within the pre-school and good staffing ratios are maintained throughout the session ensuring children are well supervised and supported during activities. Staff have a clear understanding of child development and the importance of play. Consequently, children are cared for by a suitable staff team and benefit from the continuity of care.

All legally required documentation is in place and is kept with due regard to confidentiality. An appropriate range of policies underpin staff practice effectively. The accident book is monitored and risk assessments in place but there is no established programme of policy and procedures review, which means they are not re-visited to check for required changes. Children's care is not adequately supported by the secure organisation of the pre-school. All staff have been vetted by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), ensuring their suitability when looking after children. However, the registered person has failed to inform the registering body of the changes to the pre-school committee. This is a mandatory requirement. The trustees of the committee have not undertaken training for their roles with the pre-school as a result they do not thoroughly understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to the regulatory requirements of Full day care. As a result, the setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection two recommendations were made in relation to care. These were to ensure confidentiality when asking parents to sign the accident book and to obtain parents' consent before taking photographs of the children. The nursery education inspection identified two key issues to improve practice. These were to develop older children's writing skills by providing suitable challenges and provide opportunities for the younger children to have access to musical instruments. Staff have reviewed documentation relating to accidents and consents for taking photographs of the children. As a result, confidentiality is maintained and children's safety and welfare is given due consideration. Children receive good challenges to develop their handwriting skills. As a result, some children confidently recognise their own names and those of others. Most of the four year-olds demonstrate good handwriting skills. They confidently write their own names on pieces of work and attempt to write for a purpose. Children enjoy a variety of music within the setting. They enjoy singing and listening to different repertoires of music. In addition, evidence shows that staff have attended training in relation to providing musical instruments for young children to explore with and enjoy. Staff include these opportunities as illustrated in the medium and long term curriculum plans.

### **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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations and set in place a procedure to notify Ofsted of relevant matters.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

#### 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):

- explore methods to display books to enable children to choose and select easily
- formalise procedures for identifying children's starting points and ensure all parents receive consistent and up to date information regarding their child's progress.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)