

North Drive Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	133727
Inspection date	13 February 2008
Inspector	Sheena Bankier
Setting Address	North Drive, Grove, Wantage, Oxfordshire, OX12 7PW
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Registered person	The Trustees of North Drive Pre-School
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?

North Drive Pre-school is run by voluntary committee made up of parents. It opened in 1969 and operates from its own premises within the grounds of Grove Primary School. The pre-school has its own enclosed outside area. The pre-school is situated in the village of Grove on the outskirts of Wantage. A maximum of 21 children may attend the setting at any one time aged from two years up to five. The pre-school is open during term-time only Monday to Friday 09.00 to 11.30 and Monday to Thursday 12.30 to 15.00 term time only. There is a parent and toddler group held on the premises on Fridays from 13.00 to 15.00.

There are currently 36 children on roll aged from two to four years. Of these 20 children receive funding for early education. Children come from local and surrounding area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs four members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications and three are working towards a qualification or further qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's understanding of a healthy lifestyle is promoted well. They benefit from healthy snacks, regular fresh air and physical activity. The outdoor area provides a large space for children to run around in and explore. The varied equipment provides challenge to the children's developing physical skills, such as throwing and catching, climbing, riding scooters and pedalling bikes. Staff involve themselves in play with the children which encourages children to practise their skills and to develop confidence in their abilities.

The pre-school provides a clean and hygienic environment. There are very good hygiene routines in place, such as separate mops and cleaning cloths allocated to different cleaning purposes. Staff promote children's understanding of good personal hygiene through discussions and explanations. Children benefit from regular hand washing routines and separate hand drying avoids cross-infection. Tissues are easily accessible to the children. This encourages them to keep their noses clean and as result reduces the spread of infection.

Children's health needs are known and understood well by staff, such as medical conditions, allergies and dietary needs. Information is accessible to staff but also confidentially stored. This enables staff to provide suitable care and attention to the children's health needs. Most of the staff hold first aid certificates. This enables staff to respond quickly to children's minor accidents and injuries requiring first aid. Information about the first aid trained staff and the location of the first aid kit are clearly displayed. This promotes children's good health and well-being.

Children are offered a wide variety of healthy snacks, for example, fruit, vegetables, plain biscuits and different types of bread. This encourages the children to try different foods and as a result extends their tastes and understanding about food. Children's social skills are developed as children sit together in small groups with staff. A jug of water and cups are available through-out the session. This enables children to meet their own needs for fluid intake as drinks are available at all times to them. Drinks of milk, water or diluted squash are offered at snack time which ensures healthy choices are available.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The pre-school provides a warm and welcoming environment to children and parents. Staff welcome children into the main room and are available to speak to parents. The entrance area and main room are made inviting as they are decorated with posters, photographs and children's art work which makes the premises bright and cheerful. A good range of toys and equipment are available. These are stored well at mostly a low level in labelled boxes with corresponding pictures. This makes them easy to identify to both adults and children. Resources are maintained through checks and cleaning to ensure they are safe and suitable for the children to use.

Most aspects of safety are good. The premises are kept secure with a door bell entry system in place. Safe collection procedures ensure children are only collected by authorised people. Staff are overall aware of potential hazards to children, such as trip hazards. However, in the outside area old tomato plants had been left out with short canes. This poses a potential danger to the children. The evacuation procedure is clearly displayed and evacuation practises are

regularly undertaken. This supports staff and children's confidence in the procedure. Appropriate fire safety equipment is in place, such as a fire blanket and smoke alarms. At the time of the inspection the pre-school had been recently visited by the Health and Safety Executive and were undertaking formal risk assessments for all areas of the premises. This promotes the children's safety.

Staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities to safeguard children in their care. Appropriate systems are in place to manage concerns about children. This ensures children's welfare is safeguarded. A child protection policy and procedure is in place. There are references within it as to how to manage allegations against staff although the procedures are not clearly set out.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled at the pre-school. They enter with enthusiasm and leave their parents and carers with confidence. Children benefit from warm, caring relationships with staff. There are good relationships between children and friendships are established. Children enjoy a wide range of activities to choose from and staff follow their interests and support them in their choices. This encourages the children's confidence and promotes their learning through play and experiences, such as counting as they flip dough pancakes in the home corner.

The different sessions for the ages of the children ensure the two to three year olds benefit from appropriate care, toys and play activities. These include sensory play experiences with dough, outside play and mark making with chalks. They learn through play and experiences and staff provide good support to children, such as sharing and social skills. Children are introduced to counting as they count the number of children present with staff and their language skills are developed through singing rhymes and songs and listening to stories. Staff use discussion at activities to extend children's use of language, for example, discussing what has happened to the chocolate now it's melted and the differences. This ensures children's development is supported well and supports their progress.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage. They attend training and are supported and led well by the pre-school manager. Long, medium and short term plans are in place which all staff contribute to. The plans are flexible and staff meet on a weekly basis to discuss the children's progress and next steps in learning. Although they evaluate verbally no notes are kept which means they do not have information to refer to in the future. Children's progress is monitored and observed on an on-going basis. This information is recorded in children's individual development profiles which are well maintained. Good sources of evidence, such as photographs, written observations and examples of the children's work are used to provide a clear record of children's progress and development. Most aspects of the staff organisation of activities are good, although occasionally when the plans are changed at short notice there is a minor lack of organisation. This means that sometimes activities are occasionally not ready and staff's attention is taken away from the children to provide the necessary organisation.

Children make good progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. They benefit from a good range of activities which hold their interest well. Staff interact well with the children and overall offer good support to the children. This promotes and extends the

children's development. Staff ask appropriate questions to encourage children's thinking skills and through discussions and participation extend their learning. Staff use all activities and free-play to extend children's development, for example, encouraging children to count the cake cases during cooking and finding out how many more are needed or introducing new language as they discuss the ingredients used. Children who speak English as an additional language are appropriately supported. Staff learn key words in children's home language which helps to support them in the pre-school environment.

Children concentrate well at group and individual activities. At circle time children enjoy singing rhymes and songs. These encourage their understanding of number and calculation as they sing songs, such as 'Five little men' and 'Ten in the bed'. They enjoy listening to stories and confidently join in with the words and phrases of familiar and favourite books, for example, 'We're going on a bear hunt'. Print is used well in the setting with name labels on pegs and trays, and artwork is named and displays have both word captions sentences. This promotes children's understanding that print carries meaning. Children have access to a variety of reading materials and other forms of story telling. This includes fiction and factual books, children's magazines, puppets and story sacks. Children learn to recognise their names through using self-registration name cards which are also used at snack time. Resources, such as magnet letters, letter stencils and name cards are used to encourage children to form letters, such as the ones in their names. Staff discuss with children the names and sounds of letters on a one to one basis and during group activities. Children use their emergent writing for a purpose as writing materials are easily accessible and role play areas are set up, for example, an office with a clipboard, keyboard and telephones. Children develop pencil control through different activities, such as drawing round stencils and tracing.

Planned themes develop children's understanding of the world they live in. A theme about space introduced new language and understanding of the sky at night. Children used their creativity as they freely drew, cut out and painted moon's. This introduced mathematical language, such as quarter and half. Local outings are undertaken which promotes children's understanding of the community they live in and children collect seasonal items, for example, leaves and conkers on nature walks. Seeds and plants are grown which develops the children's understanding of caring for living things. Children are actively involved in recycling and composting fruit and vegetable waste. As a result they learn to care for the environment. A good range of festival and religious dates are celebrated which promotes their understanding about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people.

Children enjoy creating real and imagined experiences as they play in the home corner, they put play food in the toy microwave enabling them to use technology for a purpose. Children flip dough and play food and remember the activities they took part in on Shrove Tuesday. They make play dough pancakes with the dough which means they develop control as they mould, roll and cut out pancake shapes. This contributes to the development of small physical skills. The large outdoor areas provides a very good range of experiences and challenges to children, such as balancing, learning to pedal and catch. Staff involve themselves well during outdoor activities, such as throwing and catching games with children. Children develop some independence in the pre-school, such as putting their belongings in their named trays. However, at snack time and at some adult led activities they lack independence, such as pouring their own drinks or being restricted in their involvement.

The pre-school has a formal partnership with the school on the same site. Good relationships are in place between the pre-school and the school. Children at the pre-school have regular contact with the children and teaching staff at the school, for example, the reception class and

pre-school share the same outdoor area and regular visits are undertaken to each others premises. This benefits the children, particularly those children who move on to the school. This promotes a smooth transition from pre-school education to the school environment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a good range of activities, resources and celebrations about the wider world, such as making lanterns for Chinese New Year and resources which they freely play with, such as puzzles, books and play kitchen equipment and food. These promote children's understanding and acceptance of other people different to themselves. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff have good understanding and knowledge of the children as individuals. They spend time talking with them about their interests, ideas and home lives. Parents are asked to provide information about their children in the 'All about me' books which provides staff with understanding of the children's likes, dislikes and stage of development when starting. Staff exchange information with parents regularly which ensures they are kept up to date with the children's changing needs. The pre-school understands how to manage the care of children with learning difficulties and disabilities. They are aware of how to identify concerns about children's development and where to seek further advice and support from when necessary. Staff are able to support children's progress when needed through using individual play or education plans.

Children's behaviour is good. They learn about being responsible as they help care for the pre-school environment, for example, they tidy up and take their cups to the kitchen area after snack time. Resources are in place, such as short brooms to enable children to participate in keeping the pre-school clean and tidy. Staff have good knowledge and understanding of how to manage children's behaviour, such as explanations and distraction. Staff encourage good manners, such as please, thank you and polite behaviour whilst eating. Children develop good levels self-esteem and confidence as they are regularly praised and are given encouragement from staff.

The partnerships with parents is good. Parents have readily accessible information, for example, staff and committee names and photographs are displayed and the full pre-school policies and procedures are freely available. Parents are kept well informed about the pre-school through newsletters and the information displayed about the Foundation Stage. Parents are given good feedback about their children through regular discussions with staff. Parents are able to access their children's development files at any time on request and staff promote this at least once a term. Parents are encouraged to be involved with the pre-school, for example, by joining the committee, fund raising and being parent helpers. They are involved with their child's education through bringing in items and receive information about the curriculum and what they can do at home to support their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management is good. Staff have good working relationships with each other. They share ideas, skills and information and have effective team work. Staff attend regular training which promotes and develops practice at the pre-school. Good communication is established with the committee and there is regular contact between them and the staff.

Formal meetings are routinely held and information is distributed. This ensures staff and committee members are well informed. A good level of qualified staff is in place and a high ratio of staff to children is maintained. These are above the requirements of the National Standards. This benefits children at the pre-school as they have individual time and attention.

The environment and general running of the pre-school is overall good, although some aspects are at times overlooked, such as a potential hazard to children outdoors and occasional minor lack of organisation of activities. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities well. Children benefit from the good range of activities and play experiences which enable them to make choices. However, at times their independence is not fully encouraged. Staff support children well which promotes their development and progress.

All paperwork required by the National Standards is in place although some lack the necessary detail. The child protection policy does not have a clear procedure to follow in the event of allegations against staff although there are some references to it. Staff verbally evaluate the curriculum together, however, no records are kept as a reference.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the pre-school was given two actions and three recommendations. The actions were in respect of implementing policies and procedures. These are in place, although the child protection policy lacks clear information about the procedures to follow in the event of allegations against staff.

The recommendations asked the pre-school to obtain parental consent to seek

emergency medical treatment, to ensure accidents are recorded confidentially, develop daily health and safety checks and to ensure the register is marked in pen and any differences to the session times are recorded. The pre-school have obtained written consent from parents to seek emergency treatment for children. This promotes their good health and well-being. Children's accidents are recorded on separate pages. This ensures confidentiality is maintained. At the time of the inspection there had been recent staff changes and the pre-school were reviewing and undertaking formal written risk assessments. This promotes children's health and safety.

Four key issues were set at the last Nursery Education inspection. These were to improve aims of planned activities and evaluations to aid learning and future planning, provide support for new staff, provide activities to develop children's understanding of calculation and use counting in every day opportunities and ensure access to everyday technology and learn about other people's cultures and beliefs. The pre-school has addressed these key issues. Planning is undertaken as a team on a weekly basis which enables them to evaluate and plan for children's individual learning. New staff are supported well through mentoring and attendance at relevant training. This encourages them to develop their practice which benefits the children. Staff encourage children to count and use calculation at formal and informal activities, such as at cooking activities where they count the cake cases out and add them up. Children have good access to technology equipment which promotes their understanding of how things work. Children celebrate a range of festival and religious dates and have access to resources which promote positive images of society. This extends their understanding of the wider world.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 Ofsted has received one complaint which resulted in the provider being required to take appropriate action in order to meet the National Standards. The complaint related to National Standard 1: Suitable Person and National Standard 2: Organisation. Concerns were raised that staffing ratios were not being met and that unvetted people were being allowed to look after children. A visit was undertaken by an Inspector to investigate whether the National Standards were being met. As a result of the visit, two actions were raised under National Standard 1 and National Standard 12: Working in partnership with parents and carers. The provider wrote to Ofsted demonstrating that they had taken appropriate action to meet the National Standards. As a result the provider remains qualified for registration.

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):

- ensure the outside area is regularly assessed for potential hazards and dangers to the children
- update the child protection policy to ensure it contains clear procedures to follow in the event of allegations against 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):

- promote children's independence through-out the session, such as pouring their own drinks and ensuring they are actively involved in adult led activities
- evaluate the curriculum and make records to effectively identify children's progress and next steps in learning.

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