

Cross Park Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	102799
Inspection date	11 March 2008
Inspector	Leoarna Mathias
Setting Address	Long Park Road, Saltash, Cornwall, PL12 4AQ
Telephone number	01752 841591
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Registered person	Cross Park Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Cross Park Pre-school occupies premises within the grounds of St. Stephens School in Saltash and has access to two outside play areas. The group has been operating at these premises for more than 20 years. The building is owned by Cornwall County Council.

There are two sessions each day, with children over three being able to attend from 9:00 to 15:00 hours on two days a week. There are 72 children on roll, 44 of whom are in receipt of nursery education funding. Children with learning difficulties and / or disabilities are supported.

13 members of staff work with the children, all of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification. They are employed by the voluntary parental committee. The group receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children learn about how to manage their own health through meaningful and interesting activities within the pre-school. They grow their own vegetables each year, learn about healthy eating through interesting topics, and access a particularly healthy range of items at snack times. They also readily access drinking water throughout the session. Hygiene and food safety is a strong priority throughout the setting, as fridge temperatures and contents are monitored daily and surfaces kept meticulously clean. Furthermore, children are learning to manage their own hygiene through very consistent encouragement to wash their hands before eating and after toileting. They are learning to manage their own safety in the sun, as the pre-school employs effective systems for ensuring sun cream and hats are available to all, as children use outside spaces freely during many of the sessions. Support for children with medical conditions, such as asthma, is thorough, and medical issues for all are very well managed. Documentation systems which support the administration of medicines, the recording of accidents, incidents and prior injuries are particularly well maintained.

Children's physical development is very well supported. They have ample opportunities to use outside areas for physical play and other learning experiences, such as gardening. Each session has a range of physical activity built into the planning, and children delight in music and movement sessions or whole group games. As a result of these measures, children move with confidence and safety around the setting. They are aware of their bodies, describing what happens to us when we exercise accurately. Similarly, they have many opportunities to develop their manipulative skills, using a range of tools, from pens and paint brushes to trowels.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

A detailed and thoughtful approach to the management of children's safety and security is implemented by all staff. For example, emergency evacuation procedures are promptly shared with all visitors, and access to the provision by adults is very closely monitored. Children are cared for in delightfully spacious and well maintained rooms, and access a broad and plentiful range of resources and toys, at all times, both indoors and out. Checks for ensuring that all resources remain in good order are thorough and regular. Fire safety is well promoted for all, through routine and properly documented equipment checks, regular, evaluated fire drills, training for staff, and close working with the local fire safety officer. Staff also demonstrate a high level of ongoing risk awareness, supervising children very closely, and being at all times mindful of potential hazards. This is underpinned by constantly available risk assessment documentation, to which all contribute, and a good working relationship with the neighbouring school, who as landlords, assist the pre-school in the managing the safety of the premises. As a result of all these measures, children are kept safe throughout their attendance. Furthermore, the whole staff group adopts a particularly thorough approach to their child protection responsibilities. The majority have completed extensive training in this area, and awareness of any ongoing issues is raised at each staff meeting. When action has needed to be taken, staff have behaved in a prompt and professional manner, resulting in the welfare of all children attending the setting being very well promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Warm and enthusiastic relationships between children and the staff team are very much in evidence. Children are particularly keen to gravitate towards staff in order to share their achievements, seek help and guidance, or receive comfort. Staff remain focused on the needs of children at all times, deploying themselves in order to support every activity on offer, and to be available to children throughout the session. Staff's understanding of how all children learn and develop is excellent, and for younger children, dedicated practitioners with detailed knowledge of the Birth to three matters guidance ensure that planning is devised to meet their particular needs. As a result, children are cared for in a truly child-centred environment, where every measure is taken to promote their development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children very much enjoy opportunities to make choices about what activities to participate in, and are genuinely enthusiastic about their learning. They maintain their focus and concentration on activities for significant periods of time, demonstrating curiosity through their exploration and expression of thoughts and ideas. They are proud of their achievements, which they are quick to share with adults. Children are also learning to form relationships with each other and with staff; for example, they remind each other of the need to share and to be kind. They are increasingly able to manage their own behaviour, understanding their emotions as a result of activities such as moving to the 'Angry Song'. Finally, children delight in tasks which help them to develop a sense of group belonging, such as helping to tidy up, to get ready for snack, or to devise the role-play wedding ceremony.

Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. Children are particularly communicative during activities, using their strong vocabularies, and asking many questions. They listen attentively at story times, and then respond well to questions about the story from staff. A daily programme of supporting children's understanding phonics is working very well, as they are quickly learning to identify and correctly use a broad range of sounds. Children learn in a very print rich environment, where books are pleasingly displayed, so that children make good independent use of them. Similarly, writing and mark making implements are readily available, and children respond positively to challenges to extend their writing skills, for example, when making Easter Cards. Children use numbers spontaneously and frequently throughout the session, as well as making good use of the maths table throughout the session, and participating in activities that promote their understanding of number, shape and size. Children have many opportunities to make use of the local environment, enjoying trips to local places of interest, as well as accessing a range of visitors, such as the police, the fire service and the navy. Children are developing a clear appreciation of the natural world through their regular gardening and growing activities, and their participation in activities that develop their sense of the seasons, the passage of time, and local farming communities. An emphasis on using recycled materials brings an added dimension to children's enjoyment of designing and making activities, as well helping them to understand the importance of looking after their environment. Effective one to one support for information technology use means that children are developing strong skills in this area. There are many resources for children to access that help them to appreciate the wider world and the diverse communities which it contains, and a thoughtful approach in planning, through the use of such resources as 'African Home Bear', further emphasises this teaching for children. Children access a broad range of craft activities, and are enabled to make choices and express their ideas fully. They make good use of role play areas, giving full flight to their imaginations. Finally, children

enjoy opportunities to make music and sing songs, both regular features in the activity programme.

Children's progress is ably encouraged by the skilled staff team, all of whom possess a detailed knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum, and of successful strategies for encouraging children's development. Staff facilitate activities in such a way as to be consistent in their encouragement of children's 'doing for themselves', enabling them to be presenting children with challenge throughout the session. Plans are devised by the whole team, and give rise to a rich range of experiences on offer at all times, with resources pleasingly presented and time well used. Staff take every opportunity to offer children further challenge through effective teaching strategies, and staff's careful deployment means that every child receives ample small group and one to one support for their learning. Systematic, detailed and purposeful observation and assessment of each child is a regular feature of the session, so that every child's current level of attainment is known to all. This allows staff to tailor planning to meet the learning needs of each child particularly successfully.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The setting works very hard to meet the individual needs of the children attending. Through an effective key worker programme, each child benefits from the consistent support of one adult who is familiar with their preferences, achievements and challenges. Through regular team meetings, key workers bring forth the needs of their charges, ensuring that at all times the programme is being tailored to meet every child's needs. Appropriate equal opportunities and special educational needs policies are well implemented, so that children have genuine opportunities to access resources and support. Children with learning difficulties and / or disabilities are ably supported by the Special Educational Needs Officer, who ensures that outside agency support is accessed promptly, and that liaison with other bodies, such as the child's next setting, are successful. Staff employ effective behaviour management strategies which pay clear dividends; at all times children can be observed being willing to give of their best, responding positively to the encouragement staff give them. Children's social, moral, cultural and spiritual development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is outstanding. Parents are given every opportunity to be involved in their child's learning. A successful parental rota gives them first hand experience of how children approach learning. Regular parent / key worker meetings give them insight into their child's achievements, and enables parents to gain valuable insight into areas to consolidate at home. This is extended through a home reading scheme, and 'visiting bear' scheme, both of which support emerging literacy skills. Notice boards are informative, and regular questionnaires give parents ample opportunity to contribute their comments, which are then incorporated into the group's future planning of improvements.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The whole staff team adopt a responsible and systematic approach to the organisation of the setting. Thorough appointment, vetting and induction procedures ensures that high calibre staff are employed; as a staff team their level of qualification is exemplary. Deployment plans are very effective, allowing every member of the team to be clear as to their responsibilities at all times. Many of them have special areas of responsibility, allowing for an equitable division

of complex or regulatory-required tasks. Ratios of staff to children are maintained above the requirements of the National Standards, giving children ample support for their learning and play. Documentation systems, including the reviewing of policies and procedures, and the maintenance of good records, all work particularly well in practice, with proper consideration of data protection requirements. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management is outstanding. The coherent, experienced and proactive team are particularly ably led by a manager who is skilled in getting the very best out of her team for the benefit of children. Her support for the professional development pays real dividends, as they regularly access training and take on new responsibilities. Regular team meetings allow all to be involved in the evaluation of the provision, the planning of activities, and the management of children with particular needs. Appraisal and practice evaluation is a clear priority, and self-evaluation for the purposes of inspection is used as a tool to promote ever better outcomes for all. Finally, the team work with other local groups and schools to promote the sharing of best practice across the community, and have been instrumental in the establishment of these relationships.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the group were asked to improve toilet facilities for children, and to extend children's opportunities to recognise numbers. They were also asked to detail the learning intentions for each activity within documented planning. Toilet facilities have been updated, with children now accessing a clean and cheerful environment in which to learn how to manage their personal hygiene. Children now learn in a number-rich environment where staff take many opportunities to consolidate their understanding. Finally, staff have improved planning documentation, so that the focus of each activity is clear for all staff. As such, children now enjoy higher quality educational provision.

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 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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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