

# South Petherwin Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102856
<b>Inspection date</b>	30 January 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Michael Collins
<b>Setting Address</b>	South Petherwin CPS, South Petherwin, Launceston, Cornwall, PL15 7LE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01566 779476
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<b>Registered person</b>	South Petherwin Pre School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 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?

South Petherwin Pre-school has been registered since 1995. It operates from its own separate building in the grounds of the village school. The premises consist of a large playroom, entrance hall, kitchen, toilets and enclosed outside play area. The school playing field and playground are also used by the Pre-school. The setting is managed by a board of trustees, made up of parents and interested others, and is a registered charity.

There are currently 27 children from two-and-a-half to four-years on roll. This includes 19 children who receive funding for nursery education. The setting is able to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The group opens Monday to Friday from 09.00 to 12.30 during term-time only.

Three members of staff work with the children. Two of the staff hold a relevant level three childcare qualification and the third member of staff is currently studying for a level two qualification. The person in charge is also in the second year of an appropriate degree course. The setting 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.

A good variety of activities which promote the children's physical development are planned and organised by the staff team. All adults gently encourage and support all children to be independent in their self-care and physical skills. This combined and planned approach ensures that children have ample opportunities to enjoy their physical play, try new experiences, and practise learned skills. This, along with the staff's good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, assists children's developing confidence and physical coordination. Regular physical play and, when possible, open access to an enclosed outside play area, assist greatly in the development of early physical skills. Activities organised range from obstacle courses, to group games such as 'What's the time Mr Wolf?' Children particularly enjoy riding, pushing or scooting on a variety of wheeled toys. The children also take part in regular relaxation and breathing exercises, during which they mainly concentrate very well, all join in, and thoroughly enjoy. These combined factors contribute to children's growing understanding that physical activity is fun and exercise helps them in being healthy.

The records of children's medical needs are well maintained and good systems are in place to ensure that all staff are aware of individual needs. Children who become ill whilst at the setting are sensitively cared for as staff follow clearly understood procedures and swiftly contact their carers to come and take them home. This reduces the risk of them passing on germs to their friends. Children are well cared for in an emergency as staff are qualified in first aid. However, accident records are not consistently signed by parents. Children learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care through example and discussion. Their clear and growing understanding of why they must wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet helps reduce the risk of cross contamination.

Children have good opportunities to learn about healthy eating. They discuss healthy foods while engaging in topics about food types or when exploring different smells and tastes. Staff have attended basic food hygiene courses and ensure that all food is stored and prepared correctly. The setting provides healthy food and drinks at snack times, such as fruit and vegetables, and milk or water. These appeal to children and meet their dietary needs. Information about children's dietary needs is obtained from parents prior to placement and staff ensure that they act upon this. For example, by avoiding certain foods because of allergies or preference, and promoting others to support and encourage healthy eating. Children take part in café style snack times, eating in pairs or small groups, when they are ready and want to. This allows for good discussions with their friends and the adult supervisor, making snack time a less hurried or distracting experience and provides opportunities to discuss healthy foods. Children access drinking water whenever they wish from water jugs placed at child height. This ensures they remain well hydrated.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a warm and welcoming environment, where their art-work and other endeavours are appropriately displayed. They have a good amount of space to move around in and clearly feel 'at home' in the setting. This is further enhanced by provision of free-flow access to an enclosed outside play area. The children play in a mainly safe environment that is regularly risk assessed and is carefully monitored by staff. However, although a clear record of all visitors is

maintained, procedures for ensuring that the entrance to the building remains secure are lacking, thereby compromising children's safety.

The staff team's consistent supervision and thoughtful actions reduces potential hazards throughout the setting. By organising the children's environment carefully, they achieve a good balance between allowing the children their freedom and establishing safe limits. It also ensures the children are able to move around their environment with safety and growing confidence. Children have access to a good range of toys and resources, which they are able to select and retrieve independently from appropriate storage. Staff also ensure that a selection of interesting items, or other activities linked to the children's learning, are prepared and available before the children's arrival.

The children begin to learn about safety through a variety of resources, activities and discussions. For example: regular fire drills are held and recorded; children respond positively as staff gently remind them to care for the resources and friends around them; and they become aware of wearing safety equipment during their role play and are able to explain why when being 'Bob the Builder' they wear a hard hat and goggles when using equipment.

The setting promotes and safeguards children's welfare by maintaining all the required procedures and documents. Children's safety and welfare is further supported by the staff's secure knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures. However, the setting's current policy refers to the Area Child Protection Committee and this has been replaced by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, thus making the policy out of date.

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

The provision is good.

The children arrive happily and are pleased and eager to take part in the good variety of purposeful activities prepared for them by the staff team. The setting's good settling in procedures, and the staff team's sensitivity toward parent and child's individuality and need, ensure that new or anxious children are settled skilfully and are happy to stay. However, the setting does not currently conduct a baseline assessment with parents and carers and this limits their ability to monitor progress initially, or to plan for the next steps for individual children.

The staff have, and are, developing warm and caring relationships with the children that foster a genuine sense of trust and well-being between them. The extremely good adult-child interactions which these relationships result in, in turn, help to promote the development of early communication skills and a positive attitude to learning. The relaxed and child-friendly environment allows children to make confident choices and they are absorbed and very happy in their play.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are supported by staff who, overall, have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and who use this to effectively support and extend children's learning. They promote children's learning, through effective questioning and discussion and are keen to ensure that they listen to children. They plan a good variety of activities, which cover all areas of learning and offer children a very good range of indoor and outdoor experiences.

Staff also have a good understanding of the practical uses of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They have further developed their observation and assessment systems to assist in planning for the children's next step and have implemented systems to share these with parents. However, there are inconsistencies in the way in which these are completed for individual children and this leads to gaps in the information available to them for planning the next step consistently.

The staff team and other adults extend children's mathematical vocabulary and skills through directed activities and by taking opportunities that arise during day to day activities and the children's free play. Children use these learnt skills with purpose during their play by sharing resources equally, counting various objects and toys, or by telling staff how many plates will be needed at lunch time.

Staff provide a good range of resources and activities which the children enjoy and are able to choose from independently. All children have the confidence and ability to initiate their own play and do so with ease. Children are confident, independent learners, who develop excellent concentration skills as they engage in a very good balance of free play and carefully structured activities.

Children learn to recognise their names and the oldest develop a good understanding of letter sounds through systematic teaching and use of phonetics. All three and four-year-olds use mark making to represent their ideas and older children are becoming adept at writing their own names. Children also make marks and write for a range of different purposes, such as when role playing in the home-corner 'café' or by labelling their own work.

Children learn about the natural world through planned projects and themes. For example, they grow vegetables and other plants carefully watering and monitoring them over a period of time, and they learn how to care for other animals, taking great delight in counting their giant snails to see if they have had babies and to see how much food they have eaten. They use natural items such as pine cones, seashells and leaves in their play and art work. They also discuss what makes them special and look at differing foods and cultures. The children also experience a range of technology equipment, such as weighing scales, computers, telephones and tills, and they develop a good sense of time as they talk with staff about events in their lives or the daily routine. This connected approach helps to extend their knowledge and understanding of their own and the wider world.

Children's creativity is supported well by the setting and they enjoy using a wide range of materials. They enjoy sensory play, such as sand and water, and they particularly enjoy making and playing with their own 'gloop', a combination of water and corn-flour. Children begin their own role-play and work in co-operative groups, which is effectively extended and encouraged by staff. The children are imaginative in their play and will extend stories and other learning into the self-directed play. They have a good repertoire of nursery rhymes, counting and other songs and enjoy regular opportunities to sing and use musical instruments as they develop their understanding of rhythm and increase their physical control. They use a range of small equipment, such as scissors, pencils and brushes, and develop very good control of their large and small physical movements.

Staff have established a clearly warm and caring atmosphere in the setting and the children are clearly valued as individuals. The children demonstrate this by making themselves very much at home when they arrive and eagerly participating in the varied practical and stimulating activities planned by the staff.

Children talk clearly and discuss real and imaginary events. They initiate their own play and develop this to include ideas and subjects they have learned about. Children achieve well because staff plan well and have a good understanding of early years guidance, using this to ensure they suitably challenge individual children.

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

The provision is good.

Children and parents are warmly welcomed to the setting by the friendly and approachable staff team. Who, by making sure they have collected all the required information before placement, are able to meet individual need, and consider and act upon family background and parental wishes. To further support this the staff work closely in partnership with parents and other professionals to ensure that all individual needs are met. The staff also actively support all children to 'feel at home', integrate and make new friends. This considered approach supports all that use the service to feel welcome and valued. Through planned activities, themes, resources, and opportune discussions, children have good opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them. For example, they explore cultural and religious festivals, take part in discussions about difference, and have access to an acceptable range of positive image resources. However, although the impact is currently negligible, the policy dealing with equal opportunities, although reviewed, has not been updated to include all current legislation.

Children are polite, confident and have genuinely warm and mutually respectful relationships with both staff and their peers. They respond very well to the clear routines, appropriate boundaries and high expectations of the staff team and experience good amounts of praise for their efforts and achievements. The children's understanding of right and wrong improves as they respond positively to gentle reminders to care for their environment, the resources, and each other. They learn to share and take turns as staff gently encourage them to think of others. Staff treat each child as an individual and appropriately respond, or gauge their response, according to the child's developmental stage. This combined approach of sensitivity and high expectation goes a long way to ensuring that the children's behaviour is consistently superb. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive regular information about their children's activities and achievements, and all policies and procedures are available in a 'parent folder'. Parents are able to participate in the day to day running of the setting by joining the management committee or by taking part in the parent-helper rotas. Displays of information for parents have been established and regular newsletters are sent home with the children. Although the setting have established new systems to share information with parents, for example 'the red book' which moves between home and the setting, or the sharing of the children's 'I can do' statements, the information shared with them about the Foundation Stage curriculum and current planning is limited and this hinders their ability to further support their children's learning. Also whilst the setting does have a complaints policy it does not quite meet current guidelines. Staff make sure that parents are aware of how their children are progressing and developing through access to their observation and assessment records and regular discussion. The positive involvement of parents in the setting and their good communication with staff benefit the children greatly.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The quality of leadership and management is good. Staff and committee members meet regularly to ensure the quality of the provision is maintained. Good induction procedures and strong commitment from management committee and staff make sure that all adults work well together to promote children's health, achievement and enjoyment. The setting actively seeks advice and support from local early years professionals and the local authority to improve and extend children's care and learning. This very good teamwork, and the general spirit of collaboration and partnership work, contributes greatly to the setting's ability to meet individual need.

The management committee and staff have a mainly good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of provision, and constantly seek to improve the service provided for the children. All legally required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being, is in place and stored securely. However, as previously mentioned, three policies do not currently fully comply with guidance. Children play in a well organised setting where all who work with the children are suitable to do so. Ratios are maintained at a good level and all adults are deployed effectively to meet the needs of the children. Along with the management committee, skilled and qualified staff, who are highly motivated and committed, contribute to the day to day running of the setting and its continued improvement and development. All of this ensures that the setting meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to complete two recommendations. One under National Standard 2; Organisation, and one under National Standard 12; Partnership with parents. They have completed these by ensuring that the arrival and departure times for staff and children are clearly recorded, and by providing further opportunities for parents to receive regular information on their children's progress.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting were asked to complete three recommendations. They have completed these by developing their observation and assessment system, sharing this with parents, and developing a system to identify the next steps for individual children. They have developed appropriate strategies to reduce noise levels at the setting, and they have also developed their short term planning to show clearer learning intentions and staff are aware of how activities may be extended for the more or less able child.

## **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.

## 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 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 parents consistently sign to acknowledge the accident record
- ensure the entrance to the setting is consistently secured and that children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised and that others cannot access the setting without challenge
- ensure that a baseline assessment is conducted with parents and carers for all new children attending (also applies to nursery education)
- ensure that policies and procedures are fully reviewed and updated on a regular basis, in particular ensure that the complaints, child protection and equal opportunities policies are up to date and comply with current guidelines.

#### 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):

- ensure that current systems to identify the next steps for individual children are completed consistently
- provide parents with further information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and current planning.

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)