

Berrynarbor Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	106297
Inspection date	26 February 2008
Inspector	Julie Neal
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Registered person	The Trustees of Berrynarbor 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?

Berrynarbor Pre-school is run by a voluntary committee and was registered to provide day care in 1984. It is situated between Ilfracombe and Coombe Martin, in North Devon. The group meets in the village hall, and has the use of an enclosed outdoor play area. The setting is registered to provide care for a maximum of 14 children aged three to five years. There are currently 16 children on roll, of whom 14 are in receipt of funded early years education. The setting is open Monday to Friday from 09.00 until 12.30 term time only. There are four members of staff working with children, two of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health and wellbeing are effectively supported overall. There are clear sickness procedures in place and these are implemented well by staff. For instance, information is

displayed for parents regarding a current outbreak of chicken-pox in the area, signs and symptoms to look out for, and how long their child should remain away from pre-school in order to minimise the spread of infection. Records of accidents, and of any medicines given to children, are clear and countersigned by parents. Children have a good understanding of the importance of personal hygiene and are highly independent as they manage their needs. For example, they go unprompted to wash their hands following messy activities or playing outside. Children are very thorough as they wash and rinse their hands. However, there are occasions when the supplies of paper towels generally used by children to dry their hands run out, resulting in them having to share small hand towels. These quickly become soiled, presenting a possible risk of cross infection.

Children enjoy the health benefits of plenty of fresh air and exercise. They play outside when they wish, maximising the use of outdoor space in a good variety of games and activities that promote the development of muscles and physical co-ordination. For example, they use a variety of bikes, cars and scooters as they learn to negotiate space safely and to control the way their bodies move. Children happily engage in games that will develop specific skills, such as learning to throw accurately as they aim bean bags at a large target they have drawn on the ground.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a bright and welcoming environment. The very good organisation of resources, and the excellent use of wall-space to display children's work, creates an inviting and child friendly atmosphere. For example, children can easily help themselves from the accessible, well labelled, drawers and shelves that contain a good variety of construction and creative materials; children select their own paintings and designs to brighten the walls, such as examples of interesting geometric patterns they have made from shapes. Good daily routines keep children safe and secure. Risk assessments are extremely thorough, covering all aspects of the provision, and these are reviewed and evaluated frequently, with prompt action taken to address any potential risks. For instance, changes to routines for the collection of children have been implemented following an evaluation of previous procedures, and these have enhanced children's safety. Risk assessments for outings, such as local walks, are extremely rigorous. For example, children regularly walk to features of the local community, such as the shop or the school. A new risk assessment is conducted prior to each outing, with a member of staff checking the route to identify any potential hazards, such as parked cars, that may need to be taken account of in order to keep children safe. These walks are used well to teach children about road safety. They also take part in regular fire drills, and staff evaluate these with children in order that they understand the importance of safe conduct in the event of an emergency. Children's safety is supported by the staff team's good understanding of their child protection responsibilities. They are aware of the appropriate procedures to follow if they have concerns regarding abuse or neglect, in order to safeguard children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy the good variety of activities that promote their individual learning and development. They benefit from a child centred environment, where individual choice is encouraged and promoted. For instance, children move freely between indoors and outside as they play, and the extremely good organisation of resources stimulates their interest and invites

them to explore and investigate. Children benefit from the staff team's good understanding of how children learn and develop through play. Staff talk to children about what they want to do, involving them in planning activities and deciding what resources and materials they need to achieve their desired objectives. This results in motivated children who are keen to participate.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning.

Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They plan well to ensure that children have a good variety of learning opportunities in all areas. Recently implemented systems of observation and assessment are used well to identify the next steps in learning for each child, and this information is used to develop children's individual learning plans. Staff make good observations of children's engagement and participation in activities and they are developing confidence in maintaining children's records of achievement, in order that children's progress can be monitored over time. Overall, sessions are well organised and support children's learning. For example, children benefit from the informal atmosphere where they are free to choose activities that interest them, and they are encouraged to make their own decisions about what they would like to do. This promotes their self esteem and ensures their involvement. However, activities where the whole group come together are not consistently well managed and this has an impact on children's behaviour at times. For example, children are taking part in an activity that encourages them to look at the shape of their mouths as they make letter sounds; staff take a lengthy time to gather the group together and explain what they will do, by which time some children have lost interest and it becomes extremely difficult to regain their attention.

Children are confident and enthusiastic learners. They enter the setting happily and are eager to choose what they want to do, concentrating well on chosen activities. They quickly link up with special friends and they learn to share and take turns. Children are helpful to each other, responding well to being given responsibility. For example, children who are very confident in the use of technology become 'computer buddies', showing younger and less confident children how to use the settings computer, and clearly explaining what they must do to make different programmes work. Children are confident communicators, thoroughly enjoying sharing their news. For example, they are eager to talk about things they have done over the half term holidays and they enthusiastically bring items from home to show their friends at 'show and tell'. Children are confident mark makers. Paper and pencils are freely available in different areas of the provision for children to use in a variety of contexts. For instance, children make shopping lists in imaginary play, they keep score when aiming bean bags at a target, they label their own work. Children enjoy stories and bring favourite books to staff to read. Generally they concentrate well while being read to, particularly when in smaller groups. Children count confidently as part of everyday routines, for instance, they count the number of children present, and the number of plates needed at snack time. There are developing a knowledge of simple calculation, for example, they can correctly identify 'one more' and 'one less'. Children have a good understanding of weight and measure, using their knowledge well as they measure the height of structures they have built, and weigh the ingredients for cooking activities. Children use mathematical language well and in context, for instance talking about objects being 'bigger' and 'smaller'. They thoroughly enjoy experimentation and exploration. For example, they enthusiastically predict items that will sink or float; they are very curious as they mix corn flour and water, talking about the texture of the powder and how it continues to change as more

liquid is added. Staff support their ideas well, for instance, children wonder what the corn flour paste will look like with added colour, staff provide a selection of food colourings that children swirl into the mix, talking about how the colours blend and contrast. Children learn well about the world around them. They visit places in their local community, such as the church, the school, and the village shop. They learn about the traditions of other cultures, exploring celebrations and festivals, and trying foods from different places. Children have excellent opportunities to express themselves creatively. They make extremely good use of the very wide range of media and materials as they freely explore their ideas. For example, children create exciting models using recycled objects, that they decorate imaginatively using feathers, fabrics and textured materials; they immensely enjoy using paints in different ways, they use their hands and fingers as well as brushes and sponges to explore textures and create individual effects.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are confident with good levels of self esteem. They benefit from an inclusive environment where staff demonstrate their good understanding of equal opportunities in the effective way they meet the needs of each child. For example, children with learning difficulties and disabilities are provided with high quality support from staff, who work closely with parents and others involved in their care to ensure that planning is effective in enabling children to participate fully. Children learn to show respect for each other, and are generally kind and considerate, for example, showing new children the routines at snack time. Children know the setting's ground rules because they are involved in devising them. Staff regularly talk to children about things they think are important, they write the children's words down and display these, giving children opportunities to review and revise the rules. Staff are warm and encouraging in their interactions with children, recognising where some children need additional intervention in order to foster appropriate behaviour. In these situations, they work closely with parents to develop consistent, positive strategies that lead to individual development. Generally, children are well behaved. However, the inconsistent organisation of activities where the whole group comes together has impact on children's behaviour at certain times. For example, sometimes snack time is lengthy and children become bored with sitting still; children can become distracted at story time if staff are not deployed effectively.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children learn well about their own and other communities and cultures. They learn about diversity, for example, developing an understanding of disability, and celebrating different cultural traditions.

Staff work well with parents to ensure their children's needs are met. Information is shared most effectively, for instance, very good use is made of notice boards to keep parents up to date with current events in the pre-school. All policies and procedures, and other documents relating to children's care are shared well with parents. The setting is pro-active in inviting feedback from parents, for example, encouraging them to make suggestions for improvements and inviting comments on recent changes.

Partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of early years education is good. They are kept well informed about their children's progress in learning, for example, receiving regular written reports that highlight their achievements in each area of learning. Parents are involved in their children's individual learning plans, with staff informing them of things they can do at home to support their children's development. The setting is currently updating the prospectus

in order to present parents with more dynamic information regarding how activities at pre-school support children's learning through play.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Space and resources are very well organised to provide interesting and inviting play and learning environments for children. Daily routines are generally well organised and support the safety and wellbeing of children. However, there are occasional inconsistencies. For instance, stocks of paper towels are not replenished in a timely fashion, resulting in children having to share hand towels, which undermines the otherwise good health and hygiene practise in the setting. Documentation supporting the care of children is in place and maintained appropriately, with policies and procedures being reviewed and updated to ensure these reflect current practice. Ratios are maintained at all times. Deployment of staff is effective during most of the session, ensuring that children can freely choose whether to play indoors or outside. However, there are times when the whole group comes together, such as for a story, when staff are not always positioned effectively in order to support some children. This can have impact on children's engagement and behaviour.

The leadership and management of early years education is good. Changes to the management team have had a very positive impact on the delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Records for monitoring children's progress towards the early learning goals are in place and these are kept up to date, making good use of the effective observations that staff make of children. However, staff do not consistently link evidence of progress, such as children's formative writing and their artwork, and photographs of them engaged in activities, to the early learning goals. Good systems of team meetings and individual support ensures that staff are rapidly developing confidence in monitoring and recording children's progress, and in using children's assessments in identifying the next steps in learning for individual children. Staff monitor the effectiveness of what they do, they identify areas of weakness and develop strategies to counteract these, such as seeking professional advice, and developing skills through training.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, recommendations were made to improve the quality of care and of nursery education. With regard to care, it was agreed to ensure that all policies and procedures are appropriate and in place; and to ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children. These have been addressed, all policies and procedures are in place and there is a process to review and update these. Staff have good knowledge and awareness of their responsibilities to safeguard children.

With regard to nursery education, it was agreed to promote children's mathematical knowledge through everyday routines and activities, and to improve processes of planning and assessment. Everyday activities are used well to encourage children to use their mathematical skills and language. There has been a recent, comprehensive, review of assessment and planning processes. This has resulted in a system that enables staff to clearly monitor and record children's progress in each area of learning, and to plan the next steps in learning for individual children.

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 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

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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 the organisation of daily routines does not have an impact on children's behaviour
- ensure there is a consistent supply of appropriate hand towels for children to use when drying their hands

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):

- continue to develop systems of monitoring children's progress in learning, in order that staff develop confidence in consistent use of recording processes
- ensure that activities where the whole group comes together are effectively planned and organised so that children are appropriately engaged, in order to consistently foster positive behaviour

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