

Poundfield Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	108438
Inspection date	16 January 2008
Inspector	Sandra Laura Bates
Setting Address	The Community Hall, Radcot Close, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 7UJ
Telephone number	01628 621130 or 673571 (pm)
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Registered person	The Trustees of Poundfield 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?

Poundfield Pre-School is run by a parent committee. It opened in 1977 and operates from the Poundfield Community Centre. It is situated in the Furze Platt area of Maidenhead. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.30 to 12.00 term time only. A lunch club operates Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 12.00 until 13.15. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 25 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 19 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs, and who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs four staff who work directly with children. The manager and two staff members hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children receive their care in premises that are well maintained and kept in a very clean and hygienic condition. Staff pay close attention to daily hygiene routines such as thoroughly cleaning tables in between activities and before snack times in order to maintain an environment that promotes children's health and welfare. There are detailed procedures in place for the exclusion of sick children so that others are protected from possible cross infections in this way. Children are cared for appropriately in the event of an accident because staff have the training and resources to manage such incidents effectively.

Children learn how to manage their own personal hygiene needs effectively. They wash their hands after using the toilet, for instance, and most know why this is important. For example, children say that this is to wash off any germs that might make them poorly. They help themselves to a tissue to manage a runny nose and know how to dispose of the used tissue appropriately.

Children enjoy the social aspect of the shared snack time. They tuck in enthusiastically to a range of healthy eating options such as fresh fruit or cheese portions. They pour their own drinks of milk or water at these times and may ask for further drinks at any time. However, the opportunities for children to freely help themselves to drinks throughout the session is limited.

Children participate in regular cooking activities that also prompt discussions about where the ingredients come from. They taste foods from a variety of cultures linked to the celebration of festivals such as Eid for example.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play and rest in very safe and secure surroundings. Staff pay very close attention to the security of the premises to ensure that children are kept safe in both indoors and in the enclosed outdoor play area. Detailed risk assessments, regularly carried out and recorded, ensure that continuing attention is given to the maintenance of high standards in respect of safety both at the setting's premises and on outings away from the setting. Regular fire drills ensure that children will know what to do in the event of an emergency evacuation. Well maintained fire appliances are in place.

Children begin to learn how to keep themselves safe while at play. Staff are vigilant and remind children why it is important not to run indoors for instance. They supervise the use of challenging equipment such as the climbing apparatus very carefully to minimise the risks while allowing children to develop their confidence and skills. Children use safe and suitable resources and equipment that are regularly checked and maintained in good condition.

Children's welfare is promoted due to the staff's clear understanding of their roles in respect of child protection. Staff confidently identify the forms that abuse may take and they know the steps to take if they have any concerns about a child. A comprehensive, up to date policy statement underpins staff's secure knowledge and is shared with all parents, who are required to indicate, by countersigning the document, their own understanding of the setting's responsibilities in this respect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children come into the setting confidently and separate from their parents or carers easily. Staff greet the children individually with a cheerful 'good morning' and the children go happily in to play. A wide range of interesting and stimulating resources and activities are provided so that children are well occupied and never bored or wandering. There is animated chatter between children and their peers and between children and staff throughout the sessions. A busy atmosphere of fun and laughter prevails. Children take great pride in their personal achievements, bringing their pictures with a smiley face reward stamp on them to share with adults present. Children are confident within the routines of the setting. They sit together in a circle to greet each other and use sign language to reinforce the messages. They tell visitors to the setting what comes next in the course of the session, for example, taking a mat to sit on after tidying up.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The manager and staff make clear plans to ensure that children are presented with activities that interest and challenge them. They evaluate the effectiveness of the plans and how well the children react. Staff also evaluate their own practice, both as individuals and as a whole team. They are very motivated and keen to enhance their practice through ongoing training and development.

Children are also very motivated and keen to learn. They take an enthusiastic part in the various activities and respond positively to the staff's encouragement and support as they play. They have a good grasp of a variety of mathematical concepts that includes such things as measuring and weighing during a cooking activity or adding and subtracting from a row of human 'buns' as they sing Five Currant Buns in a Bakers Shop. Children recognise shapes such as triangles and squares as they stack blocks and most count these confidently to ten and beyond. They are able to sequence sizes as they complete puzzles and count the number of circles that they have painted.

Children discuss the effect and strength of their breath as they try to blow down the Three Little Pigs houses. They talk about where ingredients such as eggs come from as they make gingerbread men. Children enjoy growing and nurturing plants from seeds, and describe how they have made Autumn leaf pictures. They confidently identify the days of the week and the month and seasons. Children use every day technology such as toy phones and tills and have regular opportunities to experiment with a laptop computer.

Children develop their small and large physical skills in a variety of ways such as balancing on stepping stones and using the climbing frame in an inventive and experimental manner. They run and jump in the outside area and use wheeled toys with a good appreciation of the space available. They manipulate small tools such as dough cutters and pens and pencils with good control.

Children enjoy lots of opportunities to be creative as they paint and draw, and use glue to make The Three Little Pigs houses of straw and sticks. They use the role play area in an imaginative way as they enact various scenarios. Children make good use of books and join in the telling of stories enthusiastically. Mark making materials are always in evidence, such as pencils and pads to make 'lists' in the role play area, and children make very creditable attempts to write their own names on their art work for example.

Children take pride in being given responsibility for small tasks such as handing around the plates and cups at snack time. They pour their own drinks with care. They demonstrate good manners, saying 'please' and 'thank you' and offering help to each other. Children confidently contribute their ideas as they choose songs to sing together. They play cooperatively in the role play area.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff develop very good relationships with children which helps them to identify their needs and personalities, and to provide individualised care for each child. A detailed and comprehensive equal opportunities policy underpins staff's positive and receptive attitudes towards inclusion. Children learn about the festivals and traditions of a variety of cultures through interesting activities and use resources that reflect positive images of social diversity.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported. Staff offer additional support for those children who require it, and monitor their development and achievements. They work closely with professionals from other organisations who speak very highly of the setting's commitment and care in this respect.

Children generally behave very well. They respect the wishes of the staff and are considerate of one another. For example, a child goes to fetch a tissue for her friend to use while another willingly gives up a scooter because his friend has asked to have a turn. There is a detailed underpinning policy which is evident in daily practice. Staff continually reinforce children's wanted behaviours with praise and positive language. They express their pleasure when children demonstrate positive behaviour with smiles and hugs. When staff need to modify a child's behaviour, they tell the child why the behaviour is not wanted, such as by telling them that they or another child might be hurt. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents speak highly of the service that they and their children receive. Staff provide regular feedback about how children are progressing through pre-arranged meetings with key workers, and informal access to records of achievement at any other time. Regular news letters keep parents advised of current themes, fund raising and other activities. All parents have complete copies of the policies and procedures when their child is admitted, and they are required to sign these to indicate their acceptance of them. Parents are welcomed to contribute their expertise in support of any themes or activities that are planned. Positive relationships are evident as parents drop off and collect their children. Time is made for brief social exchanges each day.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good. Children are cared for by the required ratio of qualified and experienced staff. The manager is committed to identifying and addressing staff's training needs in order to ensure that their practice is consistent with current regulatory frameworks, for instance the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff have informal appraisals at regular intervals, although these are not recorded so that staff's personal development needs can be tracked effectively. Staff and other professionals have great confidence in the management style and know the reporting line if they have professional needs or concerns.

The setting is well organised and sessions run very smoothly. Staff work very efficiently as a cohesive team. They understand their individual roles and responsibilities on a daily basis. The play space is very comfortable and welcoming to children. Lots of use of colourful display material and children's own art work helps to create a bright and cheerful environment.

There are detailed and comprehensive records to track children's achievements as well as a full range of supporting policies and procedures that underpins the service, and offers good initial information for parents. However, the complaints procedure lacks current details of the regulating authority. All the regulatory documentation is in place and is well maintained. For example, staff complete documents such as the accident book promptly and efficiently.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to ensure that written permission is obtained from parents prior to the administration of any medications to children. There is now an effective record form in place that includes both the necessary permission and details of the occasions when medicines are administered. They were also asked to ensure that the actual times of any early or late arrivals or departures from the setting are recorded in the attendance record. This has been addressed.

The manager reports that all current committee members have completed the required suitability documentation.

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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- consider possible options that would allow children to help themselves to a drink of water at any time during the sessions

- up date the complaints policy to ensure that it includes current contact details of the regulating authority

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):

- maximise opportunities for extending children's thinking and learning through everyday routines and situations

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