

Nythe Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109082
Inspection date	01 November 2007
Inspector	Rosemary Davies
Setting Address	Nythe Annexe, The Drive, Nythe, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN3 3RR
Telephone number	01793 642424
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Registered person	Nythe 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Nythe Pre-school opened in 1965. A voluntary committee manages it. It operates from a rented building within the grounds of Nythe Primary School in the Nythe area of Swindon, Wiltshire. The pre-school has sole use of these premises, which consist of a main room and a second room with a kitchenette. Toilet facilities have recently been refurbished. There is ready access to a secure outside play area. The pre-school serves the local, culturally mixed area.

The pre-school opens for five week days during school terms. Sessions run from 09.00 to 11.30 for children over three years of age and from 12.30 to 15.00 for those aged under three. There are currently 43 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 21 receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

Currently, the pre-school employs five staff, of whom three have appropriate early years qualifications at Level 3. Regular support is received from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is maintained well when in this pre-school. Children use clean premises. The potential dangers of cross-infection are minimised effectively, as staff follow stipulated procedures well. They clean toys regularly and maintain good hygiene routines in the kitchenette. Parents receive clear information about when their children must be kept at home, owing to illness. Children are cared for appropriately should they become unwell or sustain an accident when in the pre-school's care because staff update their first aid skills regularly and maintain the first aid box properly.

Children spend much of each session outdoors in the fresh air whatever the weather. Here they participate in a good range of games, activities and experiences, developing their physical skills well. Older children make good progress in gaining control of their body movements as they balance on tyres and use the indoor climbing frame. They become skilled at weaving in and out one another on tricycles or scooters. They hop along curved lines drawn on the playground. Younger children benefit from much individual support as they learn to pedal or try to balance.

Children eat a diverse range of healthy snacks that are freshly prepared daily. They learn good personal hygiene routines, covering their mouths when they cough and washing their hands thoroughly, disposing of paper towels properly in the bins provided. They clean their teeth, learning why they do this and brushing carefully.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in child-friendly premises that suit their individual requirements well. Staff create an inviting playroom in which children move around freely. Children choose what they want to play with from activities offered on the tables or help themselves to resources on large low-level shelves. The room is set up to encourage children's independence. A large, well equipped cloakroom area allows several children to wash their hands at once, without having to queue. Children take their snack in the kitchenette area, which has plenty of seating space, so that children eat when they wish, again, without having to wait. Children make full use of both the indoor and outdoor areas.

The premises are secure, with staff checking visitors' identity carefully. They supervise children closely at all times, both indoors and outside. Children play in safety because staff follow stipulated procedures closely. Potential risks to children's safety are identified and minimised, including when on outings in the locality. Effective fire prevention precautions are in place and the emergency evacuation plan practised regularly. Children use good quality resources and equipment, which are maintained in good condition. The book corner is not presented well, however, with some books in a poor state of repair.

Staff are clear on their roles and responsibilities in regard to safeguarding children's welfare. Child protection forms part of the verbal induction procedure for staff. Staff take regular training to keep their knowledge updated, so that children are safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children of all ages enjoy their time in this pre-school. Staff make good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan suitable, interesting activities for those under three years. All children learn through practical play, investigating and exploring the properties of both made and natural materials to find out about the world around them. Children benefit from the strong emphasis placed on outdoor learning. They begin to make decisions about what to do, where to play and when to take their snack. They develop their personal independence well overall, although they are not fully involved in the preparation of their snacks or in clearing up afterwards.

Staff use a good range of strategies to develop children's self-esteem and their sense of identity; for example, the youngest children register themselves through finding their photograph. Children develop well in all areas. They receive much individual support from staff, which helps the language development of all children effectively but especially those who learn English as an additional language. Relationships are extremely good. Children receive excellent support when first settling in to the pre-school.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals of the Foundation Stage. Staff have a secure understanding of this educational stage and plan an appropriate programme of learning for the children. There are some weaknesses in planning. Adult-led activities are not always centred around children's interests. Staff miss opportunities to offer some aspects of the early learning goals on a daily basis, however, such as encouraging children to represent objects through looking at them closely. They do not provide much clear print around the playroom at child height, to help develop children's pre-reading skills. However, staff make commendable use of the outside area, offering a wide range of suitable learning opportunities there.

These older children undoubtedly enjoy learning through play. Their personal, social and emotional development and mathematical development are strengths of this pre-school. Most enter the playroom eagerly, confidently greeting staff and their friends. Children concentrate very well at their self-chosen activities. This is helped by staff planning routines that allow children to enjoy long periods of uninterrupted play. Consequently, they make their own decisions about when to change activities or stop and take their snack.

Children respond well to staff, helping to tidy up willingly and quickly gathering for circle time when asked. They learn to recognise their names through seeing them by their coat pegs and on their toothbrush mugs. Some begin to write them too, confidently naming chalk outlines of themselves on the playground outside. Children know the names of basic shapes, such as 'circle' and 'triangle'. They use their developing counting skills spontaneously in their play.

Staff are careful to speak clearly to children. This helps those learning English as an additional language or any who have learning difficulties. Children see and handle natural materials, demonstrating widening vocabularies when describing a pumpkin as, 'smooth, hard and quite heavy'. Children are not encouraged to represent such objects in their creative work, however, although they paint and draw freely from their imaginations. They develop their hand and finger control well as they do so and as they mould playdough, use rolling pins and complete puzzles. Such experiences underpin eventual handwriting skills well.

Staff observe children's play, recording their progress and assessing what they need to learn next. They interact well with the children, always being engaged in their play and questioning them effectively to extend their thinking, so that individual children are challenged appropriately.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and included in this friendly pre-school. Staff treat all children equally. They help children understand that families differ and have different special celebrations. Staff are very caring towards children, providing first class support to any who are unsettled. They recognise that some children have additional needs and do their best to meet these by offering individual support. They seek specialist help when necessary.

Children behave extremely well because they enjoy their experiences, receive clear directions from staff and therefore know what is expected of them. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Many parents feel confident in entering the playroom. They value the good range of information they receive about what the pre-school offers their children. Staff encourage parents to be involved in their children's learning but this is not fully effective. There is an effective two-way system of communication between staff and parents who attend the parents' evenings or discuss their children's progress regularly with staff.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff and the management committee work together well to provide appropriately for the children's care and education. The committee chairperson and the pre-school manager are clear on their separate roles and responsibilities. Children are cared for by persons who are cleared as being suitable to work with them. Robust appointment procedures are in place. Volunteers are clear about what they can and cannot do when in the pre-school. New staff receive clear information about what is expected of them, although there is no written induction procedure. High priority is given to staff training, which is identified through an appraisal system.

All required policies and procedures are in place; some need updating and others do not reflect most recent changes in legislation. All legally required registers, records and parental permissions are in place and contribute well to the children receiving good care. Effective use is made of the available space, both indoors and outside. Staff act on the advice of outside professionals to make sure that all children are included in activities. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff receive clear leadership, are well organised and know their individual responsibilities each session. They work together as an effective team to provide appropriate, enjoyable learning environments daily, indoors and out. They plan these satisfactorily, as monitoring is not sufficiently developed to ensure that as many aspects as possible of the early learning goals are covered each session. Staff cover activities effectively. They recognise the importance of outdoor learning. They organise sessions well, so that children are becoming independent learners, always engaged in purposeful play and time is not wasted. Staff act on the advice of outside professionals. They begin to evaluate their own practice and what they offer the children.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection for care, the pre-school was required to address five recommendations. These related to the suitability of adults working with children, staff training, the range of resources, the management of children's behaviour and development of documentation. The pre-school has addressed all of the issues raised, with the result that the care of children has improved and children's behaviour has improved notably.

Following the last inspection for nursery education, four recommendations were raised. These related to staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage, the planning of activities for children of differing abilities, children's behaviour when in a large group and the programme for communication, literacy and language. All these issues have been addressed, with the result that learning in some areas has improved.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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):

- continue to review policies and procedures, ensuring that all are up to date and reflect the October 2005 legislation

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 adult led activities are centred around children's current interests
- further develop the system to monitor what is provided for the children
- further develop the partnership with parents and carers to encourage them to be fully involved in their children's 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