

English Martyrs Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	116837
Inspection date	06 February 2008
Inspector	Caroline Hearn
Setting Address	The Community Centre, English Martyrs Church, 64 Liebenrood Road, READING, RG30 2EB
Telephone number	0118 9593121 or 0118 9012725
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Registered person	English Martyrs 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 satisfactory. 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?

English Martyrs Pre-School is a committee run group and it originally opened in 1972. It is located in the community centre within the grounds of English Martyrs Church. A maximum of 26 children may attend the group at any one time. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are Monday to Friday between 09:10 to 11:40 and Monday, Tuesday and Friday between 12:20 to 14:50. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 42 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 30 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The group support children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who have English as an additional language.

The group employs five members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to wash their hands prior to snacks and after using the toilet. These simple effective routines help prevent the spread of infection. Children receive appropriate first aid and treatment for any minor incidents due to staff having a good understanding of how to implement their training. Children's needs are well met when they are unwell as staff know them well and are quick to spot any changes in behaviour, which could indicate ill health. Children who are un-well are closely monitored and their parents are kept well informed of any changes. This prompt action ensures the best outcomes for the ill child and greatly minimises the spread of infection for others.

Children are presented with a healthy snack of fresh fruit or vegetables. They are encouraged to try items which they have not had before to broaden their understanding of healthy eating. As well as trying the fruit staff may pass round the skin or top of the pineapple for the children to feel. During this time they chat about how and where a pineapple grows. These opportunities increase children's understanding of how we get fresh produce. Children have access to drinks as their water bottles are set out for them to freely use each session.

Children have many opportunities to undertake physical activity; such as during the planned physical exercise session, when they may dance or use balancing equipment. They are encouraged to notice changes in their heart rate after exercising which increases their understanding of how their bodies work. Children are able to handle tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are made to feel welcome. They quickly learn the routines of the group such as hanging up their coats and self registration on the name board. These routines help children to settle in at the start of the session. Children have good access to a wide range of well used resources and equipment, which are clearly displayed and at their height. All of the toys and resource boxes are clearly labelled to help children know where everything goes. Children treat the resources with respect and carefully tidy them away at the end of the session.

Children's safety is well thought through at all times. The Staff check the surroundings regularly and make changes as necessary, such as moving play equipment placed in walkways by the children. Risk assessments are recorded and acted upon.

Staff have undertaken appropriate safe guarding training. They clearly understand how to put it into practice to ensure the children's wellbeing. However, the registered person had not been made known to Ofsted. This resulted in Ofsted not being able to check this person was suitable for the role.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are all offered the same range of activities. Staff know how to tailor the activities to the age and stage of the children involved. During a number activity younger children may be

asked to name the numbers and older more able children begin to look at concepts, such as addition. This clear differentiation ensures all children are sufficiently challenged. The pre-school however maintains no records of achievement for children who are not as yet funded. This makes it difficult to obtain a clear sense of what these children have achieved.

Nursery education

The quality of the teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals of the Foundation Stage. The planning is closely monitored and fully evaluated. These evaluations are clear and are acted upon when planning for future learning. The planning effectively covers all six areas of learning to ensure children develop quickly across these. Children's records contain detailed observations of how children achieve certain outcomes. These are not however completed on a regular basis making it difficult to get a clear up to date picture of each child's level of attainment.

Children are confident, they happily talk to adults present. They are learning good basic life skills such as how to get changed for a physical exercise session or doing up their coats before going out to play. Older children show concern for younger ones by helping them with their zips if they are struggling. Staff are always on hand to offer support however the children obviously enjoy helping each other and the sense of achievement this gives them.

Children are provided with a well stocked book area and they make good use of this space. They freely select books and sit to read in groups or just look at picture books. Through these activities children develop a clear enjoyment of reading and books. Children clearly understand print carries meaning. Older more able children are able to read their friends names while younger children may be able to name the first letter in their names.

Children have many opportunities to use counting and other basic maths skills in everyday situations. When singing songs they look at ones with numbers, such as sausages in a pan. Staff make good use of play food and a frying pan for visual props. Children counted down until they had no sausages left they then extended the song to sing no sausages in the pan. Some children pointed out that none is less than one.

Children have good opportunities to explore the outside environment. Some of these activities are planned while others are impromptu; for example, children decide to look for worms in the bark. Staff are quick to spot their interest and gather resources such as magnifying glasses and trowels. Children become absorbed in these activities and staff extend them well by asking opened ended questions, such as why are there no worms in this bit of the garden or how does it feel on your hand.

Children have lots of good opportunities to undertake a wide range of art and craft activities. They learn about mixing colours or making play dough shapes. Children take pride in their art work and are keen to show this to the staff. Staff take time to discuss this with the children showing them that they value their efforts.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are very well met. Staff clearly take time to find out about each child and their family. Children look at some other cultures and lifestyles during planned topic work, such as why Hanukah is celebrated. This increases their understanding of the wider world.

Children who speak English as an additional language have no resources which reflect their home culture. This limits how much of their culture and experiences they can share with their peers. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have their needs well met as staff undertake appropriate additional training and are clearly aware of how to implement this effectively.

Children are encouraged to consider the impact their behaviour has on other people. Staff support them in this by asking them to think about how they would feel if other children did not share the toys and resources. Children clearly understand these discussions and as a result are considerate to the needs of others and are generally well behaved. Children's, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are taught about different cultures, right and wrong and discuss how others would feel in different situations.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents state that they have regular opportunities to discuss their children's educational progress. They feel the staff know their children well and are aware of future developmental needs. Parents also comment that they are regularly given information about current topic work so they can continue this at home with the children should they wish. This level of information exchange ensures the children receive good continuity of care between home and the pre-school.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The pre-school are aware of the need to inform Ofsted of significant events. They failed however to inform Ofsted of their change of committee in 2004. Failure to inform Ofsted of a change to the registered person is a breach of the regulations. A warning letter has been issued. The pre-school are now ensuring that Ofsted is aware of the new committee members. This ensures Ofsted is able to undertake relevant checks on these people to safeguard children.

All of the required documentation relating to the care of the children is in place and stored securely. The pre-school fully understands their responsibilities for investigating any complaints parents and carers may have. They do not have all of the most recent amendments to the National Standards and other Ofsted publications. Although, without this information they still have a good understanding of children's needs and promote positive outcomes for children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The quality of the leadership and management of nursery education is good. The staff are committed to developing their existing childcare knowledge and they regularly attend relevant training. This develops their existing good practice which in turn raises the standard of education.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following their last care inspection the group was set four recommendations. Firstly they were asked to develop an action plan to indicate how the staff qualification requirement is to be met and include a named deputy. Since the last inspection the group has had a change of manager. The new manager does not as yet hold an appropriate level three qualification. Due to this the pre-school have submitted an action plan to Ofsted detailing how this will be achieved and the timescales involved. Ofsted have approved this action plan and will monitor progress towards this at the next inspection. The pre-school have also identified a member of staff to be the named deputy. Staff who are appropriately trained with identified roles will enable the group to further support positive outcomes for children. The second recommendation was to

develop the information to parents to include details of the policies on child protection, learning difficulties and/or disabilities and equal opportunities. All of these policies have been added to the policy pack and are regularly reviewed. The third recommendation was to ensure all policies and procedures are readily accessible to parents and refer to Ofsted as the regulatory authority. Copies of all of the policies/procedures and Ofsted's contact details are set out on the parents notice board. This helps parents to understand what they can expect from the pre-school and increase continuity of care between home and the setting. The fourth recommendation was to, ensure the times of attendance for staff and children are indicated on the register and visitors are recorded. Registers now give a clear picture of the times of attendance of each child.

Following their last inspection of nursery education the group was set three recommendations. Firstly they were asked to develop the use of evaluation of activities and observations of children's progress to inform planning for the next step for individual children and reflect extension activities provided for more able children. The planning and evaluations of this clearly show how activities have provided sufficient challenge for more able children. The evaluations are used effectively to plan for the next steps of learning for all children. The second recommendation was to, provide more opportunities for parents to be involved and to contribute to their child's learning. Parents spoken to state that they play an active role in their children's learning. They are able to speak to staff on an as and when basis as well as planned opportunities to discuss their children's progress. Parents also are given information regarding current topic work to enable them to continue this at home with the children should they wish. This information exchange further increases the continuity of care between home and the pre-school for the children. The third recommendation was to, investigate and develop methods of encouraging children to independently select books during free play sessions. The book area is clearly defined and set out each session with rugs and cushions to make it an inviting place to sit. The books are stored at child height allowing the children to freely select from these. This has resulted in the book area being a well used resource.

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 how parents can be given a clear picture of the developmental achievements of children who do not receive funding for nursery education
- increase resources for children who speak English as an additional language to include some which reflect their home language
- ensure an effective system is in place to keep up to date with new childcare information
- ensure Ofsted is kept informed of any significant events such as a change to the registered person.

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 child's records of achievements are regularly up-dated to give a clear current picture of each child's level of attainment.

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