

Barham Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127001
Inspection date	21 November 2007
Inspector	Cilla Rachel Mullane
Setting Address	c/o Barham Primary School, Valley Road, Barham, Canterbury, Kent, CT4 6NX
Telephone number	07941 829647
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Registered person	Barham 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 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?

Barham Pre-school opened in 1994 It operates from a mobile situated on the grounds of Barham Primary School, Kent. The pre-school has access to one room, toilets, a kitchen and an outside area. The pre-school serves the local area and surrounding towns.

The pre-school is registered to provide 16 places for children aged 2 to under 5 years. There are currently 24 children on roll. This includes 12 funded 3 and 4 year olds. Children attend a variety of sessions each week. The staff have experience of working with children who have learning difficulties and disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school opens five days a week term time only. Sessions last from 9.00 to 12.00. An extra session is offered on Wednesday when children may stay all day until 15.00. Parents provide a packed lunch on this day.

There are six staff working with the children, and a regular volunteer. Of these four have early years qualifications, and two are currently undertaking training. The pre-school receives support from an Early Years advisory teacher.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for within clean premises. Furthermore, staff employ hygienic practices such as using disposable gloves to help prevent the spread of infection during nappy changing. Children are learning about good personal hygiene, and are starting to take responsibility for keeping themselves clean. Pictorial reminders by the tissues and showing hand washing in the toilet area reinforce the message. All of the staff hold current first aid qualifications, enabling them to care for children appropriately in an emergency. Clear and accurate accident and medication records further protect children.

Children are learning to make healthy choices, as staff offer a variety of nutritious food, such as fruit and cheese. Parents are informed of the daily snack, and are encouraged to reinforce the message of healthy food in their preparation of lunchboxes: they were requested via a newsletter not to include chocolate bars. Children are able to keep their bodies hydrated, as their drinks are available at all times, and at snack times they enjoy the independence of serving their own food and pouring drinks.

Children enjoy playing in the fresh air daily, putting on coats and wellies in the rain. Outside, they are challenged by balancing equipment, and obstacle courses. They develop coordination and spatial awareness as they ride around on trikes, and lift the parachute up and down. Development of small motor skills is promoted by such activities as cutting playdoh and making collages with small beans and pasta.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Maximum use is made of the limited pre-school space, so children can choose freely from the good range of toys and equipment, and daily activities. The room is clearly divided into designated areas, for example, there is a mark making area where children practise pre-writing skills, and a craft area where they can self select from containers holding such resources as pasta and lentils. The book area is inviting, so children make good use of the range of books which are sorted into types, such as touch and feel and maths and counting. Children can opt to play outside frequently, and enjoy physical activities, or play in the well-equipped house. Whilst some indoor activities are taken outside, there are not always play and learning opportunities in all of the six areas of learning.

Children are kept safe within the pre-school. The main door and gate are kept secure, staff carefully check visitors' identification, and a visitors record is kept. There are formal safety checks in place, which protect children, such as the use of a safety checklist before children play in the outside area, checking, for example, for rubbish thrown over the fence. A recent risk assessment of the whole premises, further protects children. Fire drills are held each day for a week, on a termly basis, so staff can be confident that all children and staff have been included. If an adult asks a child to do something, they explain why, for example, a child was reminded not to stand on a chair in case it fell over, so children are learning to keep themselves safe. Also, a visit from a 'lollipop lady', and activities such as taking the children to the nearby zebra crossing, help children to learn about personal safety.

Children are safeguarded from harm and neglect because staff have attended recent training regarding child protection, and updated the thorough safeguarding children policy. They therefore have the knowledge and understanding of issues and procedures to care for children if they have concerns. Information is also displayed for staff and parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at pre-school. They cheer when told they can go outside to play, and gather in groups around the computer and laugh at the games. Parents stay with their children for a settling in period, so children are settled, secure and ready to learn. Activities and resources are provided which enable children to learn using all their senses: they feel wet paint on their hands, and listen to the sounds of different musical instruments. Adults show they enjoy children's company, and appreciate what they say and do. For example, they show delight as children recount stories from home, and value their contributions at 'show and tell' time.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

The environment is well-arranged so that children have daily access to resources and opportunities to take part in activities promoting all the six areas of learning. For example, they create collages at the craft table, develop their knowledge and understanding of the world by looking at items on the nature table, and using information technology equipment. There is labelling throughout the setting, drawing children's attention to the importance of the written word. They enjoy reading and making good use of the comfortable book area. There is a good balance between child initiated activities, and adult planned activities, and adults support children's play and learning well. Staff are very good at responding to children's interests: they promptly provide requested resources, and join in play alongside the children. The activities provided, and staffs' interaction encourage children to talk a lot, but staff do not often encourage children to listen, remember and talk about sounds. Staff do not often draw children's attention to the sounds of words, or their first letters.

Staff know the children well, and are led by children's interests. Observations of the children are carried out frequently, and these are added to the appropriate areas of learning in the children's folders, providing a record of progress. Staff are developing and improving a system of using these observations to plan children's next steps, and incorporate them in the planning of activities, thus meeting the needs of individual children.

Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is a strength. For example, children concentrate for long periods on challenging computer games, and persevere with difficult puzzles. Children are cooperating and helping one another: again on the computer, they offer assistance and take turns. Staff promote independence, and as a result children pour their own drinks and select their own toys. Children are making generally good progress with communication, language and literacy. They choose books and read to each other, and a volunteer staff member spends time reading to them, encouraging their interest in the written word. They recognise their names at snack times. Good questioning by staff enables them to recount stories about events in their lives.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is increasing: there are trips into the local community, and visitors such as a vet and a police officer increase their awareness. Information technology skills are developing well. The computer is frequently available, children demonstrate good mouse-control when playing challenging shape, number and coordination games, and are pleased and proud with their successes. Children create collages using readily available craft resources. They make up imaginary games for example, animal families with the zoo animals, telling each other not to be afraid of the jungle. Children often count spontaneously, and songs such as 'five little men in a flying saucer' help them understand basic subtraction.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are well known by the staff, and they respond to the children's interests. Children have access to books and toys depicting people with disabilities, for example, a guide dog and a white stick, so children are learning about diversity in society. They are learning about their local community and the world around them, for example, visitors such as a police officer and a paramedic come and chat to them. They visit the local shop and scan items at the till, and take their recycling to the village hall. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are cared for by trained staff, who have established links with other professionals and advisors.

Staff use sensible and age-appropriate strategies to manage children's behaviour, and work consistently, so children are generally behaving well. Adults offer clear explanations as to why behaviour is not acceptable, for example, when a child broke a toy it was made clear that it had to be thrown away. Staff are good role models, modelling calm and polite behaviour. They draw children's attention to the feelings of others: when a child was hurt, staff pointed out to the other children that she had a sad face. Therefore children are learning kindness and sensitivity.

Partnership with parents is good.

There is a very effective system of seeking feedback from parents, and the results of questionnaires have been carefully documented and scrutinized, and changes made. For example, a few parents felt that they did not have a great deal of access to their children's folders, so there is now a list which is used to ensure that all parents see these regularly. Parents in general are pleased with the friendliness of the staff, and are happy that their children look forward to coming. They appreciate the fact that they can stay for a session, so they know what happens within the setting. Detailed information about the curriculum for the Foundation Stage, and the six areas of learning is displayed, and parents are regularly shown their children's folders, with observations and assessments linked to the six areas of learning. Information about activities and topics is displayed and included in newsletters, so parents can continue their children's learning at home. A notice informs parents of the complaints procedure, and who to contact, and a record including all necessary details is prepared for use.

Children's social, moral and spiritual development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The pre-school meets the needs of the range of children for whom care and education are provided.

Staff are well qualified, and are positive about attending short courses. For example, staff have recently attended workshops about language development and safeguarding children. Therefore children are cared for by knowledgeable practitioners. Sessions are well organized to include times for adult lead activities, and times when staff can support children, and scaffold children's learning. Children can initiate their own activities, and develop them as they choose.

All records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision and for children's well-being are in place.

The quality of leadership and management is good.

The management committee is supportive, and the supervisor has a very positive attitude towards change and improvement. Therefore children benefit from attending a pre-school where management and staff constantly strive towards the provision of a high quality service for children and their carers. A very informative self evaluation form folder shows that staff and management are carefully considering the quality of the pre-school, and working together to make ongoing improvements, for example, the introduction of a snack bar. In the recent past, managers have identified areas where the premises need improvement, and have achieved appropriate changes, for example, there is now an air conditioning unit, keeping the children cool in summer. Staff recognize weaknesses in the programme for nursery education, and work together to make changes for example, they are improving the use of observations to inform planning. When staff attend short courses, they are asked to note important points, and feed back information to the rest of the staff. Therefore children benefit, as all staff have up to date information. Staff meetings are used constructively: recently staff record forms have been enhanced, and new ideas for the sand and water trays have been introduced.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection it was recommended that the pre-school should continue to develop the use of the Birth to three matters framework. This is now used in the planning and provision of activities for the youngest children. The pre-school was asked to provide adult toilet facilities on site. There is now an adult sized toilet. At the last inspection of nursery education, it was agreed that planning of activities should show when activities are to take place outside. Children play outside daily, in the school grounds or in the enclosed pre-school garden.

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):

- develop the outdoor environment so learning opportunities are provided in all areas of learning.

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):

- develop children's awareness of letters, and the sounds they make
- continue to develop the use of observations to identify children's next steps, and use these to inform the curriculum 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