

Somerville Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 128480 |
| Inspection date | 15 November 2007 |
| Inspector | Deborah Ann Benn |

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| Setting Address | Church Hall,, Somerville Road,Chadwell Heath, Romford, Essex, RM6 5AT |
| Telephone number | 07765 072797 |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | Sommerville Playgroup |
| 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?

Somerville Pre-School is a parent committee managed group, it opened in 1992. It operates from a church hall in a residential area of Chadwell Heath in the London borough of Redbridge. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. It is open each weekday from 09:30 to 12:00, term time only. 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, 6 receive funding for early education. The pre-school mainly provides for children in the local area. It currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs five members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Very good regard is given to children's health and wellbeing. They benefit from good routines which ensure that the environment is kept clean and the risk of cross infection minimised. Staff use anti-bacterial spray to clean tables throughout the session as activities are changed and regularly clean toys and play equipment. Children understand why they need to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating, speaking knowledgeably about getting rid of germs. Clear systems are in place to record children's individual medical needs and the administration of any medication. Good procedures are in place to protect children in the case of an emergency, first aid trained staff are present at every session and the first aid kit is kept readily to hand. Accidents are clearly recorded and parents kept well informed of any action taken to ensure continuity of care for the children.

Children are able to make healthy food choices and enjoy nutritional and attractively presented snacks daily. These include a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables as well as more substantial foods such as bread, cheese and crackers. As well as having the option of milk at snack time, effective systems mean that children are able to independently access drinks of water throughout the session, identifying their own cup or water bottle easily. Snack time is sociable with children and staff sitting together in small groups conversing together comfortably. Children are well supported to serve themselves and be aware of each other's needs.

Good use is made of the outdoor play area to provide children with daily opportunity to play and exercise in the fresh air. They are able to run freely as well as using equipment to balance or practise throwing and catching skills. Children show control over their bodies as they creep and 'freeze' when playing 'What's the time Mr Wolf?'. Children recognise their needs, telling staff that they must put their coat on before going outside because of the cold. Staff help them to understand the effect of exercise on their bodies, explaining that running around will make them hot and make their hearts beat faster. Children's finer motor skills are supported through a wide range of activities such as spreading butter on bread at snack time, threading beads as they count and using scissors, glue sticks and pencils with accuracy in craft activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a comfortable setting. The premises are bright and airy with a lot of natural light and staff work hard to ensure that the environment is attractive and welcoming. All resources and displays are put out and packed away daily. Innovative ideas such as using magnets to attach pictures to radiators and window frames and the use of portable notice boards on window sills, demonstrate staff commitment to ensuring children and parents feel comfortable. Very good use is made of the space available to provide for all types of play with ample space for children to access activities and equipment without impeding on others. The outside area is fully enclosed and well used to provide children with a wider range of experiences. Children are able to move easily between indoors and out for part of every session. Low level tables and chairs help to make the space and activities more accessible. Role play areas are simply defined with sufficient stylised frames to help children to create a scenario but still leaving space for them to use their own imaginations and develop their own ideas.

A wide range of good quality toys and play equipment is put out daily enabling children to make free choices within all areas of learning. Staff put thought and consideration into the resources put out daily both in and out of doors, to ensure that an appropriate variety is offered and children's free choice well supported.

A daily check list is used by staff to ensure that the environment is safe, they are alert to dangers and supervise children well. Staff recognise when children's safety is compromised and have the confidence to address this, for example removing the piano lid when the catch becomes unsafe. Although the fire evacuation procedure is clearly displayed and drills carried out, these are infrequent and there is no system in place to ensure that all staff and children have taken part. There is a risk that children will not be fully aware of what is expected of them in an emergency. Very good systems are in place to keep children safe as they arrive and leave, parents work closely with the setting and are very aware of the need to follow their protocol. For example if the usual person collecting a child is unable to do so the pre-school is informed and a password is agreed.

Good regard is given to safeguarding children. A clear and appropriate statement is in place and staff receive information regarding child protection and the appropriate action to take, as part of the induction process. The identified child protection officer in the staff team has received external training and feeds back any updates. Staff are confident about their role and responsibility to act swiftly and follow local procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and eager to take part in activities. They interact positively with adults and peers and enjoy their time at pre-school. Children respond with anticipation and delight to favourite stories and rhymes, joining in with gusto. Children enjoy playing with different textures both natural and man-made, they are encouraged to use all their senses as they rustle shredded paper and leaves or make shapes from scented and glittered play-dough. Children have very good opportunities to use their imaginations, they confidently create characters and play out scenarios using puppets and props well supported by staff. Children are enthralled as they learn about animals hibernating, putting toy hedgehogs into shoeboxes and covering them, with leaves. Staff give children the freedom to explore and investigate, letting them discover through play rather than insisting that they follow their plans for an activity. For example a two year old is distracted from his sticking activity as he becomes fascinated with watching the way in which the glue behaves when he holds the spreader high and lets the glue fall in a ribbon onto the table. Staff do not interrupt his pleasure but help him to express his findings as they describe what is happening and help him to find words that reflect what he sees.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and children are progressing toward the early learning goals. Children are able to recognise their names and make very good attempts at writing them. Daily routines support children's recognition of their name, for example they find their name on arrival and also place their drinking bottle on their own label which shows their name and picture. This awareness is further strengthened at snack time when children have individual place mats showing their name and photograph, helping them to also begin to recognise each others' names. Children are beginning to link sounds and letters as they join in alliterative songs and rhymes such as 'dancing dinosaurs' whilst being shown letters and pictures by staff. However,

opportunities for signs and labels are not fully exploited in the role play area. Children confidently relate dice spots to numbers and are able to recognise numerals out of sequence. Children enjoy exploring sounds and playing instruments, however opportunities are missed to extend this activity for older and more able children. Staff undertake regular observations of children, however these are not fully evaluated. Next steps are identified but the link to the stepping stones is not consistently clear.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Children play together co-operatively, they take turns well and show respect as they listen to each other when talking together at snack time or when hearing a story. Staff's positive and patient interaction with children help them to learn self-control, the clear and simple rules have been agreed between staff and children and are based on respect. Children own these and are very aware of expectations of how they should behave to make the setting a happy and caring place. Children learn about different faiths and cultures through practical activities such as having a Diwali party or learning Christmas songs as well as having role play resources and books which reflect the wider world and support their understanding.

Good systems are in place to support children with learning difficulties/disabilities and also to aid communication and understanding of children learning English as an additional language. A number of staff are able to use Makaton signing to support language development and good links have been formed with the local inclusion support team who provide peripatetic workers to give additional support to individual children. The positive attitude of the staff team is also reflected in that the setting is part of a local inclusive project within the local authority where they share ideas and good practice about how to develop a fully inclusive provision.

Parents are made very welcome in the pre-school and state they are very happy with the care provided. Parents take on roles on the committee and support the group through fundraising activities. Parents are confident to speak with staff and feel able to discuss any matter regarding their children.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Parents are given an overview of the Foundation Stage of learning in the information booklet they receive when their child first commences at the group. Although parents' input is encouraged at the beginning of the child's placement, their views are not actively sought to help assess where the child is starting from when they take up a funded place. Although parents are able to speak informally with key workers daily and are welcome to look at their child's file at any time, there is no formal system to keep them informed of their child's progress toward the early learning goals.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Good communication between the whole staff team underpins the well organised setting. Effective planning and preparation means that staff are clear on the activities and resources to be put out daily. Staff work well as a team, they are aware of their own and each other's areas of responsibility and together ensure that children are well supervised and happily occupied at all times. Effective staff employment, induction and vetting processes coupled with good deployment of adults means that children are cared for appropriately.

Leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory, staff input to planning is valued and encouraged. Although systems to monitor the delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum and record children's progress are not fully developed, regular peer observations are carried out and staff are encouraged to record their own self evaluations.

All necessary documentation is in place, the certificate of registration is clearly displayed and although no complaints have been received, a clear format for logging complaints is in place.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection carried out in 2004 an action and several recommendations were made to improve the setting. These have been satisfactorily addressed.

Good systems are in place to ensure that Ofsted are informed of any changes in the committee, appropriate checks are carried out to ensure their suitability to further safeguard children. The premises have been redecorated and regular cleaning is carried out by an employed cleaner on behalf of the landlords as well as daily routines carried out by pre-school staff. This keeps the premises clean and well maintained providing a clean and safe environment for children to play in. The fire evacuation procedure is displayed, a risk assessment has been formulated and daily premises checks are carried out limiting hazards for children. Children are better safeguarded because the setting have obtained a copy of current child protection guidance, have a clear procedure for lost and uncollected children and have signed agreements in place to seek emergency medical treatment. Children's daily attendance is clearly recorded and a detailed complaints procedure is in place.

Key issues regarding Nursery Education have been appropriately addressed but some are not yet fully developed. Staff receive regular training and support from the Local Authority in the Foundation Stage improving their knowledge and therefore the activities and challenges set for children support children's learning. The manager carries out observations of staff practice and uses these along with self-evaluation to help identify areas for development. Regular observations and play plans are used by key workers to identify individual achievable goals. However, no formal system is in place to keep parents informed of children's progress.

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):

- ensure that fire drills are carried out more frequently and recorded in more detail

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):

- evaluate observations of children's progress to better link with the stepping stones toward the early learning goals
- develop ways in which parents are kept better informed about the Foundation Stage curriculum, their child's progress toward the early learning goals and how they can be actively involved in their children's learning

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