

The Cabin Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	133703
Inspection date	12 February 2008
Inspector	Melissa Cox
Setting Address	Langtree School Ground, Reading Road, Woodcote, Reading, Berkshire, RG8 0QY
Telephone number	01491 680854
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Registered person	The Trustees of Cabin 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?

The Cabin Pre-school opened in 1987 and is located in a purpose built portacabin on a primary and secondary school site in the village of Woodcote. The setting has access to a safe outside area which is shared with the school. The pre-school serves mainly the village and surrounding local area.

The setting is registered to provide care for a maximum of 22 children aged two to five years at any one time. There are currently 39 children on roll. Of these, 20 receive nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The group is open during term times from 09.00 to 11.45 and 13.00 to 15.30, Monday to Friday, term time only. The group also offer a lunch club and an early start group. A holiday scheme for children aged up to seven years operates during some school holiday periods.

Five full and part time members of staff work with the children, of whom three hold early years or teaching qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from eating very healthy snacks, including plenty of fresh fruit and savoury items. They learn about healthy eating, as they discuss which foods are good for them and those which are only suitable as treats. They take plenty of fluids, as staff encourage them to drink water or juice at snack, and fresh drinking water is always available to them. Children enjoy daily physical exercise and good opportunities to experience fresh air. They play in the adjoining playground and field, where they run freely, play with sand and water or ride wheeled toys. Children have very good opportunities to use a wide range of small equipment to develop their fine control, for example, cutting with scissors, using paintbrushes and drawing with chunky chalk.

Children are very well-protected from infection. They play in clean and tidy surroundings and staff are vigilant in keeping the indoor areas clean, throughout sessions. Children learn good hygiene routines, washing their hands appropriately before they eat. Children's care is good when they are unwell or injured. All staff have current first aid qualifications, and records of accidents are shared appropriately with parents. There is a clear sickness policy, which further ensures the children's good health. Medication is only administered with written instructions and consent from parents and the record is signed by them to acknowledge every entry.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, bright, spacious environment where their work is displayed and valued. Mats or tables, posters and resource boxes help children to see what they can choose to do in each area. For example, there is a role play and dressing up area marked with a low partition and a reading area arranged on a mat in one of the corners. As a result, children are confident to move around the setting and choose what interests them.

Children are well supervised by staff at all times, who take good measures in reducing potential risks around the building, both inside and outside. Written risk assessments are carried out and these are supported by detailed policies and procedures to ensure that the staff are consistent in keeping children safe. Fire drills are practised regularly. Children learn to keep themselves safe by giving each other gentle reminders of the safety rules of the group. For example, reminding each other not to run, or how to carry their chairs safely.

Staff understand their roles and responsibilities to safeguard children in their care. They have a working knowledge of the possible signs and symptoms which would cause concern and how to manage these. Supporting documentation is available, however, the pre-school does not have a clear procedure should an allegation be made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident and happy as they leave their parents to play. Staff are dedicated and enjoy the company of the children in their care. The children's understanding of language is promoted well by staff, through constant conversation, questions and individual attention. Staff sit with children to talk about their toys and books and prompt them to name objects and

shapes. Consequently, children are developing their communication skills and are able to express their needs. All children enjoy themselves at pre-school and the activities offered are fun and enjoyable, although more able children find some activities too easy. Assessment and observations of progress for those children under three is maintained to a satisfactory level. Staff know the children well and keep adequate records of their progress.

Nursery education:

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are confident and happy as they leave their parents to play. Staff are experienced and enjoy the company of the children in their care. They spend time talking to and playing with them. Very positive relationships are evident between staff and children. The staff are caring, patient and supportive towards the children. Staff know the children well and demonstrate a very high level of commitment to their work. All children enjoy themselves at pre-school and the activities offered are fun and enjoyable. Children can select their own activities and staff have a good understanding about ensuring children complete their activity in their own time or in their own way. Children concentrate well and persevere with tasks, showing growing levels of confidence and self-esteem. For example, they spend long periods of time playing with the home corner equipment, sitting for singing and snack time.

Children are able to recognise their own names as they look for their placemats at lunchtime and put their work into their named trays. Some are beginning to recognise the sounds of letters at the beginning of their own name and those of their friends. Children are able to count to large numbers, as they count how many are present, together. They explore other mathematical concepts, such as size and shape.

Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They provide a purposeful learning environment for the children to learn and develop as individuals. Staff develop and use varied teaching methods to engage the children's interests. Staff demonstrate a developing knowledge of tracking the children's progress and are beginning to use the information effectively to guide their planning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's needs and parents' wishes are understood very well and clearly communicated to all other staff involved in individual children's care. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are able to have their needs met through staff working closely with parents and other parties.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children have access to appropriate resources within their natural play which reflect positive images of society, such as puzzles, dolls and books. Religious and festival dates are celebrated, for example, Diwali, Chinese New Year and Easter. This ensures children learn about traditional celebrations and learn about other people's way of life. This promotes understanding and acceptance.

Children behave well. Staff provide good role models and encourage good manners, such as 'please' and 'thank you'. Staff overall manage children's behaviour using appropriate and suitable strategies. Staff provide lots of praise and encouragement to support and develop children's self-esteem and confidence. There is good supporting documentation, for example

an incident book to record any concerns. However, the behaviour policy lacks a statement about bullying.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents benefit from clear communication with staff. They are greeted individually by staff and exchange information about their child's daily needs. The pre-school works closely with parents to ensure their wishes and their children's needs are met. Notice boards provide additional information about the pre-school, such as planned activities and committee involvement.

Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's education. Information about the curriculum and newsletters are given to parents. Parents are made aware that the group have an open door policy and are encouraged to spend as much time as they like at the setting. Parents take the opportunity of talking to staff about their child's achievements and progress daily, on arrival or collection. However, the group does not provide regular opportunities for parents to access and discuss their children's developmental records.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from being cared for by staff who work together as a highly effective team. Good systems are in place to ensure that all the staff are suitable to work with children. Ratios are always maintained and staff are experienced, which reflects in the quality of their interaction with the children. Staff ensure that the premises and resources are well used to provide an interesting, child-centred environment where children enjoy learning. However, the organisation of some routines hinders children's purposeful play, as they wait for staff to organise the activity. Staff are skilled and sensitive to the management of the children and their behaviour. They use the accommodation and resources effectively to support the children's learning, which reflects their backgrounds and the wider community.

All necessary documentation is available in the setting, although the child protection and behaviour policies lacks some detail. The documentation is shared with parents and reviewed annually by the committee to ensure the smooth running of the pre-school.

The provision for the quality of leadership and management are good. Staff working with the children are enthusiastic and consistently promote the children's well-being. This enables children to make good progress towards the early learning goals. The staff share a commitment to further their own learning through accessing relevant courses. However, the pre-school does not have regular systems in place to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and the curriculum. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last care inspection, the pre-school were asked to address staff training needs and their understanding of child protection issues; risk assessment and review documentation, including attendance registers and medical permission.

The pre-school have ensured that documentation has been addressed and this is now in place. Staff have increased their understanding of child protection issues and now have sufficient knowledge of the steps to take should they have a concern about a child in their care. This enhances children's well-being. Training needs have also been addressed, with staff accessing

on-going training and personal development. As a result, the children benefit from a well organised group which provides extensively for their needs.

At the last nursery education inspection, the pre-school were asked to provide children with activities for matching, sorting, ordering, comparing and sequencing objects on a daily basis; improve the children's opportunities for creating their own artistic works and provide clear plans indicating which area of learning the activity will address and the desired outcome, and share these with parents.

The pre-school have addressed all of these issues. Children have a good range of activities to help them sort, compare and match objects in their daily routine. More opportunities have been provided for them to be involved in their artistic work and plans are clear and comprehensive and are available for parents to see on the notice board.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- further develop the system for recording observations of children's progress and use these observations to plan the next steps for the children's play, learning and development (also applies to nursery education)
- review the range of activities and the daily routine to ensure they challenge children appropriately in their learning (also applies to nursery education)

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):

- improve systems to monitor and evaluate the teaching and the curriculum to ensure all areas of learning are covered

- develop and share documentation and records with parents, to inform them about the setting, the activities provided for the children, and their children's development (also applies to care)

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