

East Brent Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	142930
Inspection date	25 January 2008
Inspector	Joyce Bowler
Setting Address	East Brent C of E First School, Church Road, East Brent, Highbridge, Somerset, TA9 4HZ
Telephone number	01278 760490
E-mail	
Registered person	The Trustees of East Brent 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 satisfactory. 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?

East Brent Pre-School registered in 1992. It is a committee run group which operates from the village school hall on Fridays only between 09.00 and 12.00. The setting may provide sessional care for a maximum of 24 children at any one time. There are 14 children on roll currently, seven of whom are in receipt of funding for nursery education. There is an enclosed outside play area.

There are four members of staff, two of whom hold early years qualifications. The group welcomes children with learning difficulties, physical disabilities and English as an additional language.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to learn to follow routines for good hygiene. For example, they wash their hands after using the toilet and dry them on disposable paper towels. The school hall is equipped with wash hand basins with running water but staff prepare these with soapy water and children are therefore using shared bowls of water in the hall to wash their hands after messy play and before snack. This does not promote good hygiene as there is a risk of cross contamination. Children in nappies are protected from the risk of cross infection as staff use disposable gloves to change them on mats which are wiped clean after each use. Tables are cleaned before snack and between activities. Children are becoming aware of their own health needs as they access tissues to wipe their noses and are reminded to hold their hands over their mouths when they cough.

Children's health is protected by staff who implement the written health policy. There is a clear policy to exclude children who are sick or infectious and this is shared with parents. Staff obtain written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice and treatment for their children and have recording systems in place to ensure that medication is not administered without parents written consent. Children's minor accidents are dealt with appropriately as all staff are first aid trained. First aid boxes are held on site and taken on outings.

Children's dietary needs are recorded on their registration forms and staff adhere to individual requirements. At snack time children have a choice between water and a carton of milk with a small nutritious snack to give them energy between breakfast and lunch time. This consists of a plain biscuit and fresh fruit, for example, grapes or apple. However, during sessions children do not have access to fresh drinking water and this prevents them from meeting their own health needs when they are thirsty.

All children have opportunities to develop their physical development both indoors and out. They have access to a range of resources to develop manual dexterity and hand to eye coordination. Children use tools for play dough modelling and pens, crayons and brushes for painting and mark making. They have access to ride on and push along toys to develop their large muscle groups and staff create play opportunities which enable children to balance, climb and negotiate obstacles. Children enjoy the 'Sticky kids' taped physical play exercises and respond to music by moving and following simple instructions. The school hall provides a large safe indoor play area for whole group activities in poor weather when children cannot play outside.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning to be aware of their own safety needs and respond to staff reminders not to run indoors and why. Staff have introduced risk assessment procedures which are effective. There are radiator covers in place, an intercom to the school office for emergencies in addition to the pre-school mobile phone and a visitors book is maintained. School premises are locked during sessions and all visitors are required to report to the school office and to wear a visitors badge. The school premises provides a hall for indoor play. Children have to be escorted to the toilets in the adjacent school buildings. There is an enclosed outdoor play space which provides a safety surfaced area, fixed play equipment, a playhouse and shelter.

The group have sole use of the school hall during sessions. All resources are maintained in good order and are checked and cleaned regularly. All fire safety equipment is maintained by the local authority who are also responsible for annual maintenance checks of the utilities and equipment. An emergency evacuation procedure is displayed in the hall. Children are collected by nominated persons only and staff obtain written permission from parents for outings and walks. Emergency contact details are held on children's registration forms.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by staff who have updated the child protection policy and procedure to ensure that it is in line with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The flowchart for staff to follow in case of a concern regarding suspected neglect or abuse is held on file and shared with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning to play together in a friendly pre-school and are familiar with established routines. Many of the procedures at the pre-school foster children's good behaviour. These include tidying up together, sitting and listening at show and tell and story time and lining up to go outside. It is evident that the daily choice of activities and the selection of resources are chosen by staff with limited consideration of the needs of specific children or groups of children attending on each day. Children's individual ages and stages of development are not used to inform planning for the children aged under three years and staff do not use the Birth to three matters framework. Assessment is very limited and there is no evidence of daily spontaneous observations or records on file. There is a very good range of resources, toys and equipment available at the pre-school when on school site. They share some with the reception class and transport additional resources from the village hall site which they occupy from Monday to Thursdays.

Nursery Education

The quality of the teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff talk to the children during play and offer good levels of one to one attention. Staff deployment is not always effective as one member of staff coordinates the craft activity and sits with children for most of the session which is not always the best use of the time. It is not always possible to include all planned activities, such as including both show and tell and outside play time, as staff do not always manage time effectively. Staff do avoid over direction at the craft activity and allow children choice, for example, between a variety of dot to dot work sheets which are linked to the current topic. At other times children are given limited choice, for example, by having no influence on the selection of toys provided on a daily basis. Staff write medium and short term plans which show some relation to the Foundation Stage. These detail which resources will be provided to cover each of the six areas of learning. In addition there is a more detailed planned daily activity which is usually craft based and this is evaluated by staff. These evaluations are limited as they often report mainly on whether children enjoyed the activity and do not always highlight specific learning objectives or actions for individual children which can be used to inform future planning. Staff are reliant on core basic provision to provide a spread across the six areas of learning.

The assessment system consists of progress records and reports which are shared with parents once a term. Staff write play plans for each child and these include sections for children's current developing stage and action plans for the future. Some of these lack detail and there are long periods where no observations or play plans are reviewed. They are not used to inform

planning. It is not always possible to see how children are developing across the stepping stones towards the early learning goals.

Opportunities for children to develop their personal, social and emotional development are in place but limited by an imbalance in adult led and child initiated play. Children enjoy a long period of free choice during sessions but are not instrumental in the layout or selection of resources or activities. They have some opportunities to develop independence by putting on their own coats to play outside and helping to give out biscuits at snack time. They enjoy helping to tidy up and welcome opportunities to work as a group as well as individually. Children benefit from lots of chat and discussion during sessions and respond eagerly to staff interaction. They listen beautifully at story time and staff enable them to ask questions during stories. Name labels are used throughout sessions, for example, children use them to identify where to put their own possessions ready for show and tell and where to sit for snack. Some children are beginning to link sounds to letters by noticing names that start with the same letter sound. There are daily opportunities for mark making with a table equipped with writing tools and paper. Children use maths language throughout play and are learning to count with confidence, for example, at register time. They have access to a range of commercially produced games which develop their skills in comparing, sorting, matching and solving simple problems. Children enjoy creating art and craft and staff provide opportunities for free expression as well as using pre-cut shapes and worksheets. Children enjoy singing songs and rhymes. There are resources available for imaginative and role play. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is supported by use of the local environment and planned topics. Children are able to recall what the topics are about, for example, they know which animals live in cold places. They celebrate birthdays and are introduced to customs and celebrations which relate to other cultures, such as the Chinese new year.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are given a friendly welcome by name as they arrive at the pre-school. Staff liaise with parents regarding effective and appropriate settling in procedures for each child. Children's work is not displayed in the school hall which limits opportunities for them to develop a sense of value and belonging. There are resources in place which promote positive images of social and cultural diversity. These include dressing up clothes, books and dolls. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. There are no children attending currently with additional educational needs however the staff team are aware of their responsibilities to communicate any concerns with parents. They adhere to the code of practice when referring children for additional help, for example, for speech and language therapy. A special needs coordinator, or SENCO, is appointed.

Children's behaviour is very good. They respond well to staff requests to help and readily say please and thank you. Staff model kind behaviour and offer positive praise as a means of maintaining a harmonious atmosphere in the pre-school. All behaviour management strategies and procedures are shared with parents as written policies. Incident records are maintained correctly on individual forms to maintain confidentiality.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are provided with good quality information in the prospectus. This includes comprehensive information on the Foundation Stage. Regular newsletters keep parents up to date with events and news. It is not possible for parents to gain a clear picture of their child's progress and achievements in the Foundation Stage as the assessment system is not fully developed or implemented. Parents are provided

with information regarding how to contact Ofsted and procedures to follow in case of a complaint.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by staff who are suitably qualified and experienced and are vetted appropriately. One member of staff is undertaking a further qualification. The pre-school have access to the local authority child care advisory service and a Foundation Stage advisory teacher for support. The school hall is organised effectively to allow for space for table top play, floor play, physical development games and whole group activities. Each session is divided into time for free play, group time and snack time. However the imbalance between adult led and child initiated activities diminishes children's ability to self select and have a say in what they play with during sessions. This is evident as staff adhere to a largely unchanging layout of the hall and organisation of sessions everyday. Staff follow a written rota for the selection of resources rather than responding to the identified needs or interests of children. Staff build in opportunities for children to play outside in most weathers. The operational plan includes all policies and procedures required by regulation. The register is maintained correctly. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. There is a voluntary committee in place and they adhere to the written constitution and mission statement. Although the pre-school is no longer a member of the Pre-School learning Alliance they are run in accordance with many of it's principles including offering learning through play. They delegate the planning of the curriculum and most of the day to day running to the supervisor in charge. The committee oversee staff recruitment and induction procedures are in place. Most recently they have liaised with Ofsted to ensure the continued running of the group at it's other site in the village hall while the hall floor was being replaced. They sought alternative premises and worked hard to ensure that all appropriate documentation, risk assessment and vetting of committee members was up to date and correct. They are fully aware of the need to keep Ofsted informed of all significant changes and events. The staff appraisal system is not established fully and is under review currently. It is not evident that staff have accessed training since the last inspection as a result of any changes to early years frameworks or staff appraisals. Staff hold regular staff meetings and discuss planning and forthcoming events. Self evaluation exercises have not identified current strengths and weaknesses at the pre-school. The manager oversees the curriculum design and content and this shared with staff at fortnightly meetings. The registration certificate is displayed.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to address issues relating to safety, health, staff deployment and documentation. Following the inspection the provider displayed the emergency evacuation procedure, obtained written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice and treatment for children, devised a policy to exclude children who are sick or infectious, improved recording of any administration of medication and informed parents of procedures in case of a child who is lost or uncollected. They share the pre-school policy for dealing with complaints with parents. The key worker system is not yet established.

At the last nursery education inspection three key issues were raised. The provider was asked to deploy staff effectively to ensure that all children benefited from all activities, to provide parents with information regarding the Foundation Stage and the setting and to provide children

with easy access to a wide range of resources. These have been addressed in part. Parents and carers receive a copy of the prospectus which includes comprehensive details of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They receive copies of policies and procedures and full details of the setting and the staff. Staff deployment still requires attention as they follow a rigid routine regarding the coordination of each session's craft activity. Children do have free choice play but this is from a selection of resources which are chosen by the adults and do not yet reflect the specific interests and needs of each group of children at each session.

Some improvements have been made which indicates that the health and safety needs of children are protected, the partnership with parents is strengthened and that documentation is complete. Areas still requiring attention arise as recommendations in this inspection report.

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.

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 satisfactory.

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):

- establish the key worker system
- use the Birth to three matters framework to inform planning and assessment for children aged under three years
- provide children with fresh drinking water

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 the planning in order to meet the individual needs of all children by making full use of assessments, observations, children's own contributions and staff evaluations
- develop the assessment system to ensure that it shows how children are progressing across the stepping stones towards the early learning goals
- extend opportunities for children to grow in independence and confidence

- establish a staff appraisal system.

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