

# Briary Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	154404
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Virginia Cooper
<b>Setting Address</b>	Greenhill Road, Herne Bay, Kent, CT6 7RS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01227 742050
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<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees of Briary Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Briary Pre-School opened in 2001. It operates from a mobile on the grounds of Briary Primary School in Herne Bay. The pre-school has access to three rooms, an office, toilets, a kitchen and an outside area. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school serves the local area and surrounding towns.

There are currently 49 children aged from two and a half to under five years on roll. Of these 30 children receive funding for early education. The pre-school opens five days a week in term time. Sessions are from 08.45 to 11.30 and 12.15 to 14.45. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and is able to support children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs six members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications and three are working towards a higher qualification. The pre-school receives support from a teacher and an area Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator from the Early Years Advisory team.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Staff understand the importance of children feeling secure and safe. The staff are very smiley assuring children that everything is all right. They have a comprehensive settling in procedure that enables children and their parents to adjust to new care arrangements. Staff work in co-operation with parents when children are potty training to ensure a consistent approach. The pre-school is decorated with the children's pictures and photographs from home that give children a sense of belonging.

Children's good health is promoted in premises that are bright, welcoming and maintained to a good standard of hygiene and cleanliness. There are very effective systems in place for keeping the environment clean. Staff clean before, between and after each session, the toilet area and sinks are kept very clean to help prevent the transmission of communicable diseases. Children learn about good hygiene practice through the daily routine; for example, staff ensure they wash their hands after visiting the toilet and before eating. This daily routine is helping them understand the importance of hand washing. Children receive explanations about hygiene in an age appropriate manner helping them understand.

Staff do not care for children who are contagious ensuring others are not at risk of cross-infection. Children who become poorly whilst at the group are comforted, and made comfortable, until their parents are able to collect them. Staff ensure they obtain written permission before they administer any medication, the dose and time is recorded to ensure parents are well informed and their children are not given anything that is unsuitable. When parents provide permission for long term medication staff ensure they update it regularly checking that nothing requires changing. Staff record any accidents and any first aid that is administered whilst children are in their care. This results in parents being well informed about what has happened to their child. There is always one member of staff present who has a current first aid qualification; there is a first aid kit that they check and replenish as necessary. They are able to administer first aid to children in the event of an accident or emergency.

Staff teach children how to sit nicely with good posture when they sit on the floor encouraging them to adopt good habits. Children enjoy plenty of fresh air; they regularly play in the garden and get plenty of exercise.

Staff record any dietary needs children have to ensure they do not eat any food that is unsuitable. Children undertake projects where they get to examine different foods, cut it up and taste it expanding their knowledge. Staff teach children which foods are healthiest, helping them to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Children will often bring a piece of fruit in to pre-school to share at snack time. Children eat sitting at the table and are beginning to learn about good table manners and food hygiene. Children can ask for a drink of water at any time and have milk and water at snack time.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed enthusiastically when they arrive and settle to play immediately. The carefully prepared, well organised and nurturing environment helps children to settle quickly, ready to participate in a broad and varied range of interesting and stimulating activities, designed

to promote all areas of development. There is child-sized furniture that helps children undertake tasks comfortably. Toys are safe, clean and well maintained, enabling children to play safely; staff check these regularly to ensure there are no broken parts that could harm a child.

A nominated member of staff who has undertaken relevant training carries out a thorough risk assessment of the premises regularly. The potential hazards and risks are identified and safety equipment is in place to prevent accidents, for example, socket covers and fire guards. They carry out a visual check of the premises each day to maintain the safety standards. Children are reminded how to behave to keep themselves safe, for example, to tuck their chairs in under the table so people do not fall over them. This is beginning to help them understand about taking personal responsibility for their own safety. Staff have considered the children's safety in the event of a fire. There is a clear, written emergency evacuation plan and all staff are familiar with it. Fire drills are practised regularly.

The pre-school's child protection policy includes all the required information to enable staff to safeguard children from harm. The policy is available to all parents making them aware of the staff's responsibilities. Some staff have recently attended training to update their knowledge and this information was cascaded to all staff. These strategies all help to contribute to a safe outcome for children.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Staff are aware of the framework Birth to three matters and provide many appropriate activities for the youngest children; however, some of the planned activities are not always adapted sufficiently to hold their attention. Staff spend the first six weeks after new children come to the group observing them closely and they write a settling in report which they share with parents. This time ensures children are emotionally secure and ready to learn and take an active role in the activities. The youngest children's level of involvement increases when they undertake activities that enable them to explore and experiment, for example, water play and moulding dough. The weekly planning sheet has an area to note the relevance of the activity to the Birth to three curriculum but it is not equally represented. Staff take advantage of spontaneous learning opportunities, for example, on a foggy day they went to look for spiders' webs covered in dew because a child expressed an interest in a web in the garden. Staff are happy to follow a child's interest which helps children feel that what they say and discover is of value, improving their self-esteem. Staff support children well when they undertake new tasks, for instance, making a more complex jigsaw puzzle. Children readily ask for assistance when they need help, confident that an adult will help them.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. All staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and contribute ideas at regular meetings to plan activities for the children. They consider their key children's individual learning needs and include activities they think will help them progress into the plans, however, much of what they know about the children is committed to memory rather than formally identified in their assessment records. The activities cover all six areas of learning. Staff observe children regularly and these observation records help to build the children's assessment records which they share with parents regularly. Staff communicate effectively with children; they extend their knowledge naturally; discussing with them what they are doing and asking them thought provoking questions as they play. Staff support children with additional learning needs well, enabling

them to take a full and active role in the activities. The resources are easily accessible and children exercise considerable choice over which activities they undertake. However, the decision making about which materials might be the most appropriate for them to use is usually made by the staff which inhibits children's experimentation and discovery for themselves about what works best.

Children are able to sit quietly, and concentrate when appropriate, for example, during story time. They often play games with the staff and this helps them work as part of a group, taking turns and sharing fairly. Staff have high expectations of the children to behave in a pro social manner; to show consideration to one another and develop an understanding of what is right and wrong and why. Children celebrate a variety of different festivals from around the world introducing them to different cultures and beliefs.

Children converse confidently with adults, especially when they are talking about things that are important to them. Photos from home enable children to speak about their families and staff reward them by listening carefully. Staff encourage children to develop a love of books; children learn that books can be for providing information as well as for pleasure. Children join in rhyming songs enthusiastically. Staff extend children's vocabulary naturally as they undertake activities, for example, when discussing different types of homes children learn that a single storey building is called a bungalow. They have regular opportunities to recognise their own name and some children are beginning to write letters correctly. Staff use the role play area effectively to encourage emergent writing skills when children play 'offices'. Staff often write what children say about their pictures, listening to them carefully.

Children regularly count; staff teach them how to recognise written numerals by using numbers familiar and relevant to them, for example, their home door number. Staff regularly refer to shapes, position, size and quantity using the correct mathematical terms. Children are beginning to make simple calculations at snack time; they work out how many cups they need. They explore measurement, volume and ratio when they cook and play in the sand and water. There are resources that encourage children to recognise and recreate patterns; a butterfly project enables children to discover symmetry.

Children undertake some quite complex scientific activities, for example, learning about the water cycle. The project introduces children to new words and concepts like evaporation and condensation. Children's awareness of living things and nature grows as they undertake projects about the lifecycle of a butterfly. Staff plan projects about other countries to extend the children's knowledge of the wider world. They enjoy learning about the different types of food eaten around the world; they made their own sushi whilst studying Japan. Children use a variety of construction toys and design and make self chosen projects. A child is very proud of a windmill he makes with a sail that turns. Whilst children use keyboards and phones in a role play context, they have few opportunities to use working everyday technology and programmable toys regularly to support their learning. Children are beginning to understand the concept of time by using sand timers and discussing how many days of the month have passed.

Children love to play outside; they go out in the fresh air most days. Even on chillier days they dress up warm and get outside encouraging them to regularly undertake physical exercise. They enjoy playing with the large parachute and make circles with ribbons. These activities help children move confidently, imaginatively and safely as they play. They are able to use some interesting climbing equipment shaped like a pirate ship that belongs to the school; this provides some physical challenge for children. They also have one special tree that they are able to climb with supervision; this helps children learn their own physical capabilities. Children handle tools

confidently and regularly use scissors increasing their dexterity. Staff discuss the benefits of healthy lifestyles and teach children which foods are healthiest.

One room is devoted to role play and staff change the focus of this room regularly, children enjoy make believe games where they pretend to be doctors and nurses, office staff and hairdressers. This enables them to explore some scenarios they are familiar with, and others that are new to them. Even the youngest children confidently name different colours; staff refer regularly to this as children play. Children get to explore a range of media and materials; however, they rarely decide for themselves at the outset what they believe they might need for a project. Children enjoy using musical instruments and sing familiar songs enthusiastically; they can beat, shake and strum instruments in time to the music exploring tone, rhythm and pitch.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Staff greet children and parents at the beginning of each session; children come in to nursery happily and settle quickly. Staff encourage children to bring photographs from home that they display giving children lots of opportunity to talk about their home and family. Staff are very kind in their interaction with children. They are good role models and the atmosphere is calm and tranquil. Staff introduce children to the concept of recycling helping them become aware of the importance of caring for the environment and being responsible citizens. Images throughout the nursery reflect diversity positively, children understand that everyone is different and they learn about other people's customs and festivals. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff have a positive attitude towards children with learning difficulties or disabilities. They observe children closely to ensure they provide an appropriate service. The group's co-ordinator for children experiencing difficulties writes an individual education plan that sets relevant and achievable targets to help children progress. Staff work closely with other agencies when this is appropriate.

Children generally behave very well and show kindness and consideration toward one another. If a child is unkind staff explain why that is unacceptable and how it upsets their friends, teaching children there are consequences to their actions. Staff are positive role models, they speak to children calmly with respect, understanding and kindness; they take children's age and stage of development into consideration when managing their behaviour. There is a strong emphasis on nurturing children's emotional development, especially noticeable as new children settle in to the group.

The partnership with parents is good. The parents speak very highly of the staff and say their children are making good progress. They know who their child's key worker is and they exchange information easily each day when they drop off and collect their children. They particularly appreciate how children visit the main school and how the staff prepare them for school. There is lots of information available for them about the provision, a notice board, regular newsletters and face to face contact. Photos are used to good effect to demonstrate to parents how the six areas of learning are addressed. There is limited information, however, about the curriculum Birth to three matters for the younger children. Staff encourage parents to look at their children's assessment records regularly; they have not had much success when they invite parents to contribute to their children's records. However, parents become involved in their children's

learning in other ways, for example, they often bring in something from home relevant to the current topic.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The pre-school has comprehensive policies and procedures that are always available for parents to read. The recruitment procedure is robust and all staff hold a current criminal records check, and most hold a current first aid qualification. Staff are encouraged to update their training as courses become available. Staff meetings are held regularly and they use these meetings to review their practice. All mandatory documentation is in place, for example, details about the children, accident records and records for the administration of medication. Staff appreciate and understand the importance of confidentiality. An attendance register is kept and late arrivals and early departures are recorded in the register correlating to the reasons recorded in a Day Book; very occasionally this system lets them down. The Day Book is also used to record any messages from parents ensuring all staff are well informed.

The leadership and management are good. The pre-school is a committee run group, who employ a manager who takes responsibility for the day to day running of the group. The manager is well supported by a very capable deputy and staff. All the staff work well as a team and are dedicated and committed to improving the care and education for all children. The setting meets the needs of the range children for whom it provides. Staff regularly attend meetings where they discuss children's progress and evaluate how successful particular activities are, enabling them to make improvements. They quite often use Montessori methods of teaching to aid children's development.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection one action and five recommendations were made that relate to Standards 3, 6, 7 and 14.

The group were asked to ensure procedures to be followed in the event of allegations made against members of staff or volunteers are in place; devise a system for planning and implementing a range of activities for children aged from 2 to 3 years, which is appropriate for their stage of development and based on their needs; ensure all electrical appliances conform to safety requirements and do not pose a hazard to children; ensure all policies and procedures in place accurately reflect practice; ensure children have access to fresh drinking water at all times and ensure children's attendance is recorded according to arrival and departure times.

Children can always access fresh drinking water at all times; they stand at a sign of a tap if they want a drink and a member of staff will get them one. This may not be entirely apparent to some of the younger children. When they are outside in the summer and it is hot a jug of water is on a table in the garden and they can help themselves. All electrical appliances have been checked for their safety and suitability. The policies and procedures are updated, children's attendance is recorded and late arrivals or early departures are noted. This system occasionally lets them down. Procedures have been written in the event of any allegations being made against members of staff or volunteers. Staff have undertaken training to help them deliver a more appropriate curriculum for children under the age of three, however, some of the activities for the youngest children are still not quite pitched at the right level and therefore a similar recommendation remains.

At the last education inspection three key issues were identified for improvement.

They were asked to ensure the routine and pace of the sessions effectively retains children's motivation particularly during whole group times; continue to develop the existing planning process, to ensure assessment informs future plans in order to consistently meet the needs of all the children and to plan and provide for more challenging physical activities on a more regular basis.

The routine and pace of the day has been examined and whilst there are large group activities children are generally engaged and attentive. Staff have experimented with different ways in which they plan activities. All staff feed ideas into the planning so that activities are included to meet their key children's current learning needs, however, this is an area that still requires further development and so a similar recommendation remains. There are now more opportunities for children to undertake challenging physical activities on a regular basis.

The changes made have had a positive impact upon the service delivery improving the care and education of children attending.

### **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 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 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 planned activities are sufficiently modified to maintain the youngest children's interest
- provide parents with information about the curriculum for children under three years old

#### **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):



- use the children's assessment records to formally identify individual children's next steps and then monitor their progress in these areas; improve the opportunities for children to explore everyday technology and use information and communication technology and programmable toys to support their learning

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