

Broad Town Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	199449
Inspection date	10 October 2007
Inspector	Rachel Edwards
Setting Address	Broad Town School, Broad Town, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN4 7RE
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Registered person	The Trustees of Broadtown 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?

Broad Town Pre-School opened in 1992. It operates from a mobile classroom in the grounds of the primary school, in Broad Town village, near Swindon. There is a fully enclosed outdoor area for the pre-school, who also have the use of the school playground and field. It is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children at the pre-school and members of the local community. The pre-school serves the local area.

The group is registered to care for no more than 20 children from two to under five years at any one time. There are currently 22 children aged from two to four years on roll. This includes 10 children who receive nursery education funding. Children attend a variety of sessions. The group supports children with additional needs. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 15:05 from Monday to Thursday and 09:00-12:30 on Fridays.

There are three staff members who work with the children. The play leader is a qualified teacher, her deputy has a level 3 qualification in early years and the assistant is level 2 working towards level 3. Support is received from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children attending the pre-school are given every encouragement to adopt a healthy lifestyle. They become highly independent in their personal care as they manage the toilet and washing their hands very proficiently, with older children often helping younger children, for example, by turning on taps or fetching tissues.

The well maintained premises are clean and bright and parents' help is enlisted to wash equipment so that children benefit from playing with clean and hygienic toys. Staff follow effective procedures to prevent the spread of infection, for example, there is a large supply of spare clothes so that any toileting accidents are sensitively and promptly dealt with. All staff have current first aid certificates so that minor accidents can be treated appropriately.

Children really enjoy the range of healthy snacks that the group provides. They are fully involved in helping to lay the table, prepare the food and pour drinks. The 'snack bar' is open for part of the morning, enabling children to choose when they want to eat and giving them time to finish other activities first. There is lots of chatter around the table and great concentration as they skilfully butter their crackers. Children may bring packed lunches or order nutritious hot meals, which are delivered from the primary school. Staff help children learn about healthy eating as they discuss what they are eating and offer gentle encouragement to reluctant eaters and very young children.

Children benefit from playing outside in the fresh air every day. They have their own adjacent enclosed area and also the use of school playgrounds and playing field. One area is undercover so that they can play outside whatever the weather. They develop strength and good control over their movements as they use a wide variety of small and large equipment, offering good levels of challenge. For example, they learn to balance on the school's 'timber trail'. However, children are not able to move freely between the indoor and outdoor area, which limits the benefits and learning opportunities from outdoor play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are well protected from harm and accidental injury at the pre-school. Staff carry out ongoing, thorough risk assessments for the premises, all activities and outings, so that any hazards are identified and prompt action taken to minimise risks to children. Staff achieve an excellent balance between keeping children safe and allowing them to take some risks so that they become aware of danger and learn to keep themselves safe. For example, they are shown how to safely use scissors and knives; they know they have to be careful on the wet playground as it will be slippery and they are allowed to use ride-on toys on the slightly sloping playground. They regularly go for walks around the village and learn about road safety. Children of all ages take part in routine fire evacuation drills, so that they learn the importance of quickly following instructions.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by staff who have a very good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. Staff have attended training and are fully aware of their responsibilities, which they share with parents. They would know what to do in the child's best interest if they had concerns. However, their child protection procedure does not include the

need to inform Ofsted if there is an allegation against a member of staff or adult present in the group.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy spending time at the pre-school. All children, including the youngest two-year-olds, come in happily and separate easily from their parents and carers. Younger children are supported very well by staff as they settle in and gradually learn social skills, such as sharing, taking turns and not throwing sand. Older children demonstrate a real sense of belonging as they find their coat hook, greet friends and settle very quickly to chosen activities.

The experienced staff use their good knowledge and understanding of early years guidance, such as the Birth to three matters framework and Foundation Stage curriculum to plan a range of practical activities that help children develop well in all areas. Singing and rhyming activities, help develop children's language and communication and they have many opportunities to talk with others, such as in the role play area or whilst sharing a story. Staff are skilled at interacting with children and asking questions that encourage them to think and make connections in their learning.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff all contribute towards planning a range of worthwhile practical activities that help children make good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of their development. They have been successful in creating an environment that enables children to become independent learners, for example, boxes of resources are clearly labelled with photographs, so that children know what is available and are able to select what they need. Children relish the opportunity to do things for themselves, for example, as they confidently fetch paper and attach it to the easel, choose and mix paints and carefully place their finished work on a drying rack. Regular visitors and outings add interest to the curriculum and allow children to make connections between familiar and new ideas.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is a strength of the pre-school. They demonstrate a strong sense of belonging to the group and show great consideration for other's feelings, for example, when a child is upset at losing some conkers, another quickly offers 'here you can have some of mine'. Children play co-operatively with others, sharing and taking turns with equipment. Children have opportunities to make marks, for example, with paints and writing materials and they sometimes record their findings, for example, by drawing symbols to record the weather or ticking items they find on a nature walk. However, older and more able children are not sufficiently encouraged to further develop early writing skills in meaningful ways, for example, by writing their names on pictures. Children enjoy stories but these are not always well planned into the day as they are often read at the end of the session when children are distracted as they wait for their parents to arrive. Whilst there is a good selection of books, they are not clearly displayed so that few children choose to look at them.

Children count well and use mathematical language such as bigger and smaller in their play. They begin to use their mathematical understanding to solve simple problems, for example, knowing they need 'one more' plate when laying the snack table. They use and recognise shapes around them, for example, a child says she is going 'round and round the circle' as she runs around a circle of mushrooms she finds growing in the field.

Children enjoy building and designing using tools and a range of materials with great skill. This encourages them to be creative, for example, a child is delighted as he makes a vehicle ramp from a lid. However, staff do not always encourage children to experiment further to extend their learning. They use their imagination well in role play and to create individual works of art, for example, as they experiment making patterns in paint with fir cones, leaves and conkers. Children feel an important part of the pre-school community; they are listened to and their ideas and achievements are valued.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff work closely with parents and with the highly effective system of key workers, get to know children and their families extremely well. This allows them to identify children's individual needs and take account of home circumstances in the care and learning they provide. For example, staff sit alongside children that are reluctant eaters, chatting and offering support to help build their confidence. Staff know the children well and provide much individual support. This helps all children learn but is particularly beneficial to those learning English as an additional language and any with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children learn about their own community through meaningful outings and visitors to the setting, for example, they have good links with the adjacent primary school and regular walks round the village to visit the church or look at different houses. They become aware of other cultures and the wider world through playing with resources that reflect different people and planned topics, for example, to learn about the Chinese New Year. Children behave very well and with clear guidance from the staff they learn to resolve their own minor disagreements. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are well informed about all aspects of the pre-school, through regular newsletters, easy access to all policies and procedures and a very informative notice board. Parents speak highly of the pre-school. Staff are always available for informal discussions and parents' evenings are organised during the year to discuss children's progress in the Foundation Stage. However, parents are not fully encouraged to be involved in their children's learning at home or to contribute to ongoing assessments of their children's achievements.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The pre-school employs qualified, experienced staff and maintains a high ratio of staff to children so that children receive high levels of individual attention. There are rigorous procedures in place to ensure that all involved in running the group or working with children are suitable to do so. Thorough policies and procedures are followed effectively and good use is generally made of time and resources to promote children's welfare and learning. All the required paperwork is in place, although it occasionally lacks sufficient detail.

The staff work extremely well as a team. They are well deployed to meet children's individual needs and all are clear about their roles and responsibilities. The group are effective in monitoring and evaluating their practice, for example through routine staff appraisals, which help identify strengths and areas for improvement. Staff regularly attend relevant training. The effective and safe running of the pre-school is enhanced by the hard work of the supportive committee, for example, they have raised funds and organised the recent refurbishment of the

premises. They have a clear vision for the future of the pre-school and are particularly committed to further improving the involvement and communication between all stakeholders. The pre-school meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The curriculum is closely monitored to ensure all areas are covered in sufficient detail. Staff are receptive to advice from outside professionals and constantly look to enhance their practice, for example, by making changes to the environment to enable children to learn independently. Children's development is closely followed but this information is not consistently used to plan activities that help all children move on to the next stage in their learning. This means that on occasions, older and more able children are not always sufficiently challenged.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection, several recommendations were made to improve the quality of care and education. For care, these related to staff qualifications, induction for new staff and children with additional needs. All these issues have been addressed, improving the quality of care for all children. Staff are now well qualified with a good knowledge of child protection and supporting children with additional needs.

To improve nursery education several recommendations were made relating to the organisation of the day; planning and assessing children's development; sharing records with parents and helping older and more able children progress through practical everyday activities. Good progress has been made in most of these areas. Children no longer have to sit for long periods and planning ensures they are involved in interesting practical activities that cover all areas of the curriculum. Children are encouraged to use their understanding of numbers to solve simple problems and they learn about different cultures and the wider world. They have good opportunities to make marks but more able children are not sufficiently encouraged to develop early writing skills. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress but they do not routinely share what they know about their child's achievements.

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):

- update all policies, in particular child protection, to ensure Ofsted are informed in the event of an allegation against a member of staff and the complaints procedure to include the correct address for Ofsted
- maximise the use of the outdoor area by allowing children greater freedom to play indoors or outdoors and by providing activities to cover all areas of children's development

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):

- re-organise the book area so that books are more clearly displayed and easier for children to reach
- use the information from children's assessments to guide planning to ensure that older and more able children are sufficiently challenged, in particular in developing early writing skills

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