

Cholsey Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY259329
Inspection date	31 October 2007
Inspector	Margaret Davie
Setting Address	Cholsey CP School, Church Road, Cholsey, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, OX10 9PP
Telephone number	07980 417753
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Registered person	The Trustees of Cholsey 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 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?

Cholsey Pre-School opened in 1968 and moved to its present premises within Cholsey Primary School in 2003. It operates from one room within the school and shares use of a fully enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open during term time from 09.00 to 11.30 each weekday and from 12.45 to 15.15 on Monday to Thursday. There is also a lunch club each weekday from 11.30 to 12.45. The setting offers wrap around care to children who attend morning sessions in the Foundation Stage class of Cholsey Primary School.

There are currently 63 children from two years, five months to five years on roll who attend for various sessions. Of these 28 receive funding for early education. Most children come from the local area.

The pre-school employs seven members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working toward a qualification. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's good health is appropriately promoted. Younger children are beginning to understand the importance of good hygiene because staff are vigilant about supervising their hand washing, after they use the loo, before and after they eat and after messy play. Older children who use the toilets independently do not always remember to wash their hands and this poses a risk to their good health and detracts from firmly establishing good hygiene routines. Children play and learn in premises that are very clean. An additional member of staff has been employed to carry out domestic duties and she ensures all areas are cleaned and disinfected regularly. This helps to prevent the spread of germs.

Children receive appropriate care in the event of an illness or accident. Four members of staff have a current first aid qualification and the first aid box is routinely checked to make sure its contents are up to date. Medication records are completed in accordance with requirements, but the pre-school does not ask parents to countersign the medication record to ensure they know what medication has been administered to their child. This poses a potential risk to children's good health and continuity of care.

Children receive regular healthy snacks. Each child is asked to bring a piece of fruit from home and these are cut up and shared by all the children. Children either bring their own drink or have a drink of milk. However, children do not have free access to fresh drinking water at all times during the day to ensure they do not become thirsty. Snack time is a friendly, sociable occasion which supports children's good social development and helps them to establish good eating habits. Lunch club provides a sociable environment where children eat their own packed lunch in the company of staff and friends.

Children develop appropriate physical skills both indoors and in the pre-school's well appointed outdoor area. They develop physical control by balancing, climbing and moving across large apparatus and navigate wheeled toys along the road markings. They develop coordination while building models, using paint brushes, pens, pencils and chalk with increasing dexterity. They practise ball skills while shooting at hoops and rolling small balls through pieces of guttering. Older children have free access to play and learning in the outdoor area at all times. However this good practice is not extended to the younger children, which limits their access to play and learning in the fresh air.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play and learn in a setting that is welcoming, safe and secure. The play area is well organised so they can move around freely and safely and the outdoor area is fully enclosed for their security. Children and parents are greeted warmly when they arrive and made to feel welcome. This encourages children to enter the setting with confidence and join their friends in play.

Children's learning is promoted in all areas by a wide range of quality equipment. They select toys and resources independently and according to their own preferences. They enjoy painting and modelling, playing in the kitchen and playing with small world toys. They help staff to tidy up after play time and to set the tables ready for snack. Children attending the lunch club sit

together in a suitable area which allows staff to give them any needed help. The outdoor area is well resourced with a range of large and small toys and equipment which support children's development in all areas.

Children benefit from good security procedures which ensure there is no unauthorised entry and they can play safely. Thorough risk assessments are carried out to ensure the premises and equipment are safe for children to use and a daily visual inspection is carried out before children are allowed to go outside. Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have a clear understanding of what to do if they were worried a child in their care was being abused. The pre-school has up to date local authority contact numbers, however the details within its child protection policy about what to do if an allegation of abuse was made against a member of staff are not clear and this presents a potential risk to children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the pre-school. They engage in activities quickly when they arrive and interact with staff and their friends with growing confidence. They have access to a broad range of experiences, for example playing imaginatively in the home corner, ironing doll's clothes and serving snacks to their friends in the outside café. They paint pictures of autumn leaves, thinking carefully about what colours to use and also enjoy painting the fence and pavement outside using large paint brushes and water. Young children sing simple action songs such as 'Five Red Balloons', reinforcing their counting skills and skip and dance to music outside while waving streamers in the wind.

Children make their own choices when selecting activities and generally take turns and share well. Staff take time to speak to children about what they are doing and support their development appropriately. Young children are beginning to grow in confidence when going about routines; however their opportunities to develop independence for example, while getting ready for outdoor play, are limited because staff worry this will take too long and detract from the time they spend actively engaged in activities. Children develop a strong bond with their key worker which helps them to develop confidence. Children who attend the lunch club enjoy opportunities to chat and play with friends.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Pre-school staff have started to work with teaching staff from the primary school in order to bring their planning into line with the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance. To help prepare children for their transition to primary school the pre-school focuses on the same areas for development, such as speaking, listening and early writing skills. Children's development is assessed both formally and informally and records updated on a regular basis. However insufficient evidence is kept to show how children have achieved steps in order to reach their learning goals. Additionally, assessment information gathered is not clearly linked to future planning to ensure any gaps in children's learning are picked up. Daily planning is not evaluated in order to determine whether any areas of learning need to be revisited in order to ensure that children's individual needs are being met.

Children have good personal skills. They move around the setting confidently, selecting activities which interest them. Children develop good relationships with staff and other children and enjoy being together. During snack time when a member of staff asks a child 'what's that special

word we use when we ask for something?' a friend quickly comes to his aid, saying 'it's please!' Children are keen to act as 'helping hands', setting the tables for snack time.

Children enjoy listening to stories. Children are divided into two groups for story time to allow them all the opportunity to practise their speaking and listening skills when discussing the content of the books that are read. They practise early reading when finding their name to self register and start to recognise letter sounds by listening for the sound of the first letter in their name during group time. They develop early writing skills in the café and indoor role play areas. They calculate how many more when singing about falling leaves and count beyond 20 when counting the number of children present. They become familiar with technology by programming simple directional toys like 'beebot' and use phones, cameras and calculators in their role play. Appropriate adult guidance ensures children are making suitable progress in their development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children become aware of wider society and develop suitable attitudes toward diversity as they have access to resources such as books, DVDs and dressing up clothes depicting positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. Children learn about different festivals, for example tasting noodles to celebrate the Chinese New Year and are encouraged to take part in non stereotypical activities such as carrying out domestic chores in the role play area. Children are beginning to understand the importance of equal opportunities, as staff present good role models, ensuring they all have equal access to appropriate toys and equipment and opportunities to join in with all activities. However the pre-school does not routinely ask parents at the time of registration, to share information about their child's culture, religion or home language to ensure their individual needs can be met.

Children behave well as there are suitable systems in place to help them to learn right from wrong. Simple pre-school rules are discussed and displayed on the wall so they can be referred to if needed. Staff use plenty of praise and encouragement and have warm and close relationships with children which means they are happy to conform and eager to please. Children develop good levels of self esteem, for example by being selected as a 'helping hand' on their birthday. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnerships with parents and carers are satisfactory. Staff develop friendly, informal relationships with parents which supports children's continuity of care. Parents are pleased with the provision that is made for their children, but feel they are given insufficient feedback about how well their children are doing. Parents whose children are in receipt of nursery education are given insufficient information about the Foundation Stage of learning to support their child's learning at home if they wish.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children make satisfactory progress in the pre-school because staff have a suitable sense of purpose and the environment is well organised to encourage their development. The outdoor area is imaginatively presented and attractive to children. The employment of an additional member of staff to take care of all domestic duties ensures that teaching staff are not busy with these duties and are able to give children their full attention. This benefits their development and learning. Lunch club is appropriately organised and gives children the opportunity to eat in the company of their friends and play in the fresh air. Children are

supervised appropriately, and adult to child ratios are maintained at all times to ensure they receive appropriate care. However children's welfare is at risk because attendance registers are not maintained properly.

Staff have appropriate skills, qualifications and experience to provide children with suitable support. Documentation is in place to ensure children's welfare is protected however there is some risk to their continuity of care as parents are not asked to countersign medication records and procedures are not clear about what staff should do if an allegation of abuse is made against another member of staff. Parents are not asked to provide information about their children's backgrounds which means the pre-school cannot be sure they are meeting each child's individual needs.

The quality of leadership and management for nursery education is satisfactory. Staff work well as a team, supporting each other in the planning and assessment of the education provided. However gathering and use of assessment information is not robust enough to ensure that all children are doing as well as they can. Not all of the recommendations made at the time of the last inspection have been addressed. Parents still do not have ready access to their children's developmental records and there is no regular staff appraisal.

The pre-school meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection the pre-school was asked to implement a system to ensure 50% of qualified staff are present during all sessions, to record accidents in more detail and ensure these records are kept confidential, to record daily health and safety checks and to produce a written risk assessment. The pre-school was also asked to improve children's access to everyday technology, improve their opportunities to compare groups of objects, improve parent's access to their child's developmental records and to improve leadership and management in relation to appraisal of staff and evaluation of the provision of nursery education.

Of the six members of staff who are employed to directly supervise children's play and learning four now hold an appropriate qualification and one is working towards a qualification. This ensures there is always sufficient, qualified staff with appropriate skills to care for children. Children's good health is promoted because details of accidents are carefully recorded and this information is kept confidential. Children play and learn in an environment that is safe for them because daily health and safety checks are carried out and recorded, in order to identify and deal with any potential hazards. Children develop an appropriate understanding of everyday technology when they use equipment such as old mobile phones and cameras in their role play and access the computer and programmable toys such as the 'beebot'. Nursery education is evaluated to ensure it is meeting the needs of the children; however there are still some shortcomings in the way assessment information is gathered and used. Although parents can access their children's developmental records on request, there is no planned arrangement whereby they can access and discuss the records with staff. Performance appraisal has not yet been put in place to ensure staff have a clear understanding of their roles in provision of care and nursery education. As a result these recommendations remain outstanding.

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 fresh drinking water is available to children at all times
- improve access to the outdoor area for the younger children
- improve parents access to their child's records and information about how well their child is doing (also applies to nursery education)
- ensure records show children's hours of attendance

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 the assessment procedure and the way information gained from it is used
- develop a system of performance appraisal to promote the professional development of staff

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