

Shareshill Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	218220
Inspection date	05 October 2007
Inspector	Patricia Webb
Setting Address	Shareshill Village Hall, Elms lane, Shareshill, Walsall, Staffordshire, WV10 7JX
Telephone number	01902 728192
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Registered person	Shareshill Playgroup
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 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?

Shareshill Pre-School has been registered since 1970 and runs under the governance of a committee. It operates from the village hall in Shareshill, Staffordshire and is open Monday to Friday, from 09:15 until 11:45 term time only. Children have access to an outside play area.

The pre-school is registered to care for a maximum of 24 children aged two years to under five years at any one time. There are currently 21 children on roll of whom four are in receipt of nursery education funding. Staff support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language.

The pre-school employs four members of staff of whom two hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the early years team of the local authority and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PLA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is generally effectively promoted as staff follow careful routines for reducing the risk of the spread of infection. Cleaning routines are effective as staff follow familiar procedures such as washing tables before snack time and cookery activities, explaining to children why they do this. Older children understand about the need to wash their hands and respond to gentle reminders from staff when engaged in messy play activities. Their health needs are attended to efficiently by staff who hold current first aid qualifications and ensure children are comforted and reassured. Consent for seeking emergency medical treatment or advice has not yet been sought from all parents, hindering how swiftly medical attention may be obtained in such a situation. Parents receive information about infectious diseases and know to inform the pre-school staff to reduce the spread of infection.

Children's dietary and health requirements are acknowledged as staff record such information and ensure it is adhered to. Allergies and food intolerances are noted in records and staff regularly discuss with parents to update such information. Children enjoy their healthy snacks and drinks, developing their independence as they pour their chosen drinks and make their own sandwiches in simple cookery activities. The use of topic work links effectively into healthy eating as they make various types of dough to produce bread rolls and pizzas. Much discussion takes place about what vegetables are good for them as they prepare for Harvest time.

Children's health is further promoted by regular physical activity indoors and outside. Although outdoor play is not freely accessible, activities are planned using a range of equipment to enable children to benefit from vigorous exercise such as propelling the small roundabout and using the climbing frame as well as ball games and hoops. Indoors, children show a keen awareness of space as they negotiate carefully round furniture and toys and each other taking care not to encroach on others' space. They also demonstrate skill and dexterity using tools and implements such as cookery utensils and plastic knives and forks as well as scissors and paintbrushes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe environment where staff take positive steps to minimise risks. Risk assessments are carried out regularly to address any issues such as the swing door to the kitchen area where a child-friendly 'stop' sign is displayed. Care is taken before children use the outdoor play area with the barrier locked to prevent vehicular access whilst children are playing. Older children understand the principles of the fire drill as they have practised it and know the routines. Records of such drills are maintained and fire fighting equipment is regularly checked for safety. Children are encouraged to be aware of their own safety as they learn to cross the road with care when out on local visits and by understanding the reasons behind rules such as not running indoors. Policies and procedures for children's safety are shared with parents and carers and are frequently updated.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff are aware of the procedures for reporting any child protection concerns should they arise. Information for contacting relevant agencies is readily available ensuring that swift action could be taken to address any concerns.

Children arrive eagerly into the setting, and participate immediately in the familiar routine. They make choices about their play from the varied range of activities, toys and equipment that is safe, clean and suitable for the ages and stages of the children. They choose from the selection offered by staff who plan around the current topics to promote children's learning.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the group confidently and settle quickly in the well-prepared and welcoming environment. Younger children are sensitively supported to cope with separating from their parents or carers as staff use distraction and direct their interest and attention to the variety of activities available. Planning for the younger children is based on the 'Birth to three' framework and is effectively delivered by staff who are knowledgeable and enthusiastic in their practice. Their understanding of how children learn through play and experience leads to a range of activities which interest and enthral children. For example, observation records demonstrate how children showed awe and wonderment when trying their hand at leaf prints expressing 'wow' as they pulled the paper back to reveal the imprint. Children build strong and appropriate relationships with the adults seeking them out for support and to assist and join in in some activities. For instance, during sand play, children hide objects and direct a member of staff to find them. Such practice develops children's self-esteem and demonstrates how staff value children's efforts and contributions. Staff know the children well and keep parents informed about their children's progress.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff use their sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage to help children learn through experience and active play. This means children are stimulated and become engaged in activity making good progress towards the early learning goals. The environment provided is varied and stimulating with a suitable balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities which are developmentally appropriate for the ages and stages of the children. Sessions are well-paced for individual children allowing for them to revisit activities if they wish. Most areas of learning are well-resourced although the setting is still developing the range of equipment for information technology. Effective teaching methods are used to motivate children and develop their interest in certain activities such as when splashing around outside with umbrellas and Wellingtons in rainy weather. Staff are aware of adapting planning to take account of individual children's interests and therefore the timetable is very flexible. This allows for children to take their ideas and expand them as they wish.

Staff use a variety of teaching methods to engage and motivate children such as a pictorial recipe demonstrating the sequence of making bread. A similar approach using pictures to assist the story of Little Red Hen helps younger, less able children to focus and enjoy the experience, developing concentration and listening skills. This also assists children with delayed language development or where English is an additional language. This has not yet been extended to make use of knowledge and experience of the special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) to further develop non-verbal communication systems in preparation for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The challenge for more able children is effective, as for example, staff use wide vocabulary when speaking with and talking to children. This is demonstrated, for instance, when talking about preparing the 'display' in the shop and making sure that bread is 'fresh and not 'stale'. Assessment of children's progress is plotted in their profiles and clearly shows how staff follow through from 'Birth to three' to the Foundation Stage. Differentiation for children of various abilities and stages of development are clearly indicated in the evaluation of focus

activities and this information is then used to plan for the next steps. For example, where a child is adept at cutting with scissors along straight planes they are now being encouraged to cut along curves to further develop their skills. Children respond well to the firm but sensitively applied boundaries to their behaviour. Staff have realistic expectations of behaviour and provide positive role models ensuring that good manners and showing an awareness of the needs of others are acknowledged.

Children are becoming independent learners as they pour their own drinks at snack time and make choices about their activity within the selection offered daily. They learn about caring and showing consideration for others as, for example, a child stays with a younger child until they have finished their drink and then guides the child to place the cup back on the hatch. They recognise their own names and those of others in the group as they self register on the 'learning train' and some older children have been able to write recognisable letters and marks that carry meaning.

Children enjoy well-developed and resourced imaginative play as they sell the bread products in the bakery. They are developing an awareness of colours and different shades. One child tells the member of staff that the pink jelly on the cake is 'not quite red, is it?'. Children are making strong progress in mathematical development. They use numbers within their play when buying the 'large loaf for £10' and calculating the 'cooking time for the cakes'. They are developing spatial awareness as, for instance, a child places the play cakes in the oven, realising that the tray will not fit and exchanging the tray for a smaller one. They use play equipment such as telephones and the microwave with familiarity and show a clear understanding of cause and effect as they operate a robust tape recorder and join in with the songs. Children do not yet have access to equipment to develop their competency in information technology. They ask clear questions during their activity being inquisitive and confident learners. Staff respond effectively such as when explaining the properties of the yeast and what it does to the dough.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children from a variety of backgrounds are warmly welcomed into the setting and staff know them very well. Time is taken to get to know individual characters and needs following discussions with parents and carers. Topics and resources are offered and adapted to take account of different lifestyles and this encourages children to learn to respect and value all aspects of society. They access a varied range of resources that promote positive images of the diversity of society. Children have opportunities to taste foods from other cultures and celebrate a range of festivals such as Harvest, Diwali and Chinese New Year. There are effective arrangements in place to care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and staff work in partnership with parents and other professionals to ensure children's specific needs are met.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They take walks around their local area, visiting nearby churches, shops and the library. They also visit the local schools to develop contact in order to make the transition from pre-school to school easier. Children's behaviour is good because staff offer well-deserved praise and encouragement to promote positive responses. Sensitive and consistent guidance by the staff enables children to begin to develop an awareness of the consequences of their actions on others. Older children are encouraged to apologise where appropriate as they learn about right and wrong in line with their ages and levels of understanding.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are invited to view the group's policies and procedures to inform them about the running of the group and they receive a welcome pack offering an overview and information about the staff and routines. Children benefit from the good relationships fostered with parents. Information is exchanged verbally on a daily basis to ensure children's changing needs are met and to provide continuity of care. Newsletters and displays are used to provide further information to parents about the Foundation Stage and what their children are learning. Parents are asked to join their children for outings and trips and are being invited to visit a nearby restaurant to test the new healthy options on the children's menu. They are able to access developmental profiles and discuss their child's progress at any time with staff. This promotes a sense of partnership enhancing their children's development and learning. Parents are very complimentary about the care and education provided and the progress their children are making.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are relaxed and happy in the setting. They are safeguarded as recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well-protected and cared for by staff who have a sound knowledge and understanding of child development. Staff work effectively as a team to offer sessions which are well-organised with clear routines which help children settle and become confident. This supports children's care, learning and play.

Operational policies and procedures are effective and evident within practice. Staff use information gained during their attendance at various courses to enhance the programme for the children such as the use of the 'learning train' for self-registration. The policies clearly detail the running of the provision and are readily available to parents. Regular reviews are undertaken to ensure practice reflects changes to methodology, legislation and to incorporate new ideas. They promote children's good health, safety, enjoyment and achievement within the setting. The required documentation is in place to promote the welfare of children attending. However the daily register of attendance does not clearly indicate times of arrival and departure should this happen outside of session times. This has the potential to hinder children's well-being as numbers of children may not be accurately recorded for referring to in an emergency.

The leadership and management is good. There is a strong emphasis on working as a team with all staff involved in planning and delivery equally. There is a commitment to on-going self-evaluation and improving the quality of care and the provision of nursery education. Regular discussions and staff meetings take place to monitor and evaluate the provision and identify areas for improvement. Staff appraisals are conducted regularly to identify individuals strengths and weaknesses and areas for professional development. Such practice maintains staff motivation and ensure they have opportunities to further develop in areas of specific interest. The setting works closely with other professionals acting upon any advice given.

Overall the setting meets the needs of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last care inspection, the management of the pre-school were asked to ensure that security of the premises was carefully monitored to safeguard children and ensure that the fire exit door from the kitchen was operable. Entry and exit from the premises is now monitored by a member of staff for children's arrival and departure. During operation the main

door is locked thus safeguarding children. The fire exits are now checked before the start of each session to ensure that emergency evacuation could be easily undertaken.

This is the first inspection of the nursery funded education.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider to take action.

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

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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):

- update the information given to parents with regard to seeking emergency medical advice and treatment and obtain their written consent
- ensure the daily register shows the hours of the children's 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):

- continue to develop opportunities for children to access information technology
- develop further the strategies for non-verbal communication (also applies to care).

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