

Glenfall Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 511772 |
| Inspection date | 14 November 2007 |
| Inspector | Jenny Read |
| Setting Address | Glenfall CP School, Glenfall Way, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL52 6XZ |
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| Registered person | The Trustees of Glenfall Pre-school Group |
| 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?

Glenfall Pre-school is a committee run group situated in a self-contained area within Glenfall Primary School in the Charlton Kings area of Cheltenham. The pre-school operates from one classroom, which is divided up by use of furniture to create different areas of learning and has a cloakroom area and toilet. There is an enclosed outdoor area with role play area, willow tree house, planting area and wooden structure. The school hall, playground, playing field and adventure play area are used as additional outdoor play space. Children attend from the local and surrounding areas.

A maximum of 20 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 20 children from two-years-nine months to under five years on roll. Of these, 18 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school is open each week day from 09.00 to 12.30 during school terms. The pre-school currently supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs four staff. The play leader holds appropriate childcare qualifications to Level 3. All staff have completed relevant first aid and child protection training. The pre-school are members of the Gloucestershire Parent And Toddler Association (PATA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children gain good awareness about the affect exercise has on their body and its importance on their healthy well-being through well-planned practical activities and clear explanations. They warm up and cool down during music and dance sessions, excitedly jump up and down, shake their arms and legs and feel their heart after outdoor play, exclaiming 'mine is going bumpety bump, bumpety bump'.

The children enjoy an abundant range of outdoor equipment that challenge their skills and encourage self-confidence in their physical ability. They develop co-ordination, accuracy and strength when using bats, balls, hoops, quoits, and beanbags and improve their agility, balance and control when climbing and exploring on the adventure playground, using equipment in the school hall and joining in games on the school playing field.

Children are confident to try new things and gain good support from staff when attempting to stand up and balance while using the new-wheeled toys and build strength and co-ordination when learning to manoeuvre the hand-held bike in a straight line. Parents value the amount of fresh air their children enjoy each day and praise how well the outdoor play area is used to support their children's learning.

Children learn to understand simple good health and hygiene practices because they know hand-washing routines and eagerly help to keep the play areas clean. For example, staff offer them individual cloths to wash the tables before snack time. Children understand they need to wash their hands after painting and messy play activities and after using the toilet or playing on the floor because their fingers are dirty.

Staff promote children's health well because all have completed first aid training and act in the best interest of children when they are ill. The medical emergency policy is informative and useful laminated cards displayed on the wall clearly outline the roles for individual staff. This ensures children's health care needs are well met.

Children benefit from a healthy, balanced diet and although independent access to drinks is restricted they are confident to ask staff for a drink when they are thirsty. They ask staff to open the rolling snack bar if they become hungry during the session and enjoy a planned small group snack time where they share news with each other and recall what they have been doing. This helps create a social occasion. Children take an active part in snack time routines, helping to prepare the drinks tray with the correct number of milk cartons or cups of water, taking it in turns to serve the snack to their peers and helping by taking their cups and plates to the kitchen area when they have finished. This helps children feel involved and promotes their enjoyment of food.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a bright, cheerful and compact setting, where staff give great emphasis to utilising the space effectively and making sure the environment is welcoming for children to aid their development. For example, staff divide the indoor and outdoor play areas well to create different learning experiences, display photographs of the children and their pictures and encourage the children to contribute to the displays. This helps to create an interactive environment where children feel valued and welcomed. The committee and staff are currently working hard to seek funding to renovate the toilet facilities to ensure they are more child friendly.

Children play with an abundant range of toys, games and play materials that stimulate and actively encourage their learning and interests. They easily select items for themselves from the drawer units and cupboards to instigate and extend their play independently. Staff are vigilant and supervise the children appropriately at the same time allowing them to take risks safely. For example, children put their name up on the wall when going out in the garden to play with the home corner, sand, water and willow tree house independently. Close supervision of the main entrance at the beginning and end of each session ensures the children are safe on arrival and collection. Staff complete a daily register to indicate the numbers of children, staff and visitors present each day, however, their actual times of arrival and departure are not clear to show accurately who is present at any one time, in the event of a fire or child protection concern.

The staff, parents and committee are continually monitoring children's safety and security to ensure hazards are minimised. For example, the recent purchase of a buzzer alarm system for the main gate enables staff to monitor and supervise any adults visiting the setting or school. Instinctive visual checking of the play areas and toys each day, and termly reviewing of the informative risk assessments indoors and outdoors make sure children are safe. Although children only practise the escape plan once a term and are not involved in contributing to the risk assessments, they show a generally good awareness of the boundaries for safe play, such as no running inside and the reporting of any broken toys to staff as they observe them.

Children are generally well protected from abuse and neglect as the staff demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of child protection issues. All staff complete child protection training, although some are waiting to attend a refresher course to up-date their knowledge of the new referral procedures. The child protection policies are freely available to parents, although useful information about the procedures to follow if an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff is not secure.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settle well because staff greet them warmly on arrival, readily promote their decision-making skills and nurture their emotional well-being successfully. Staff create an environment conducive to learning, organising the space and resources to promote children's independent learning. Children take part in a broad range of stimulating activities alongside their peers, such as making salt dough leaves, painting to music and instinctively selecting games, construction and art and craft materials for themselves. This develops children's confidence and enables them to explore and develop their interests independently.

Staff know the children well and demonstrate a secure understanding of the Birth to three matters framework. As a result, the younger children are successfully integrated and staff take steps to ensure many topics and activities radiate from the children's ideas and interests. For example, children showed interest in babies and growing because many of their parents were pregnant. Thoughtful practical activities, such as washing, dressing and caring for their dolls were introduced alongside discussion and activities about how we grow. Children show interest in everything they do and respond well to staff's instinctive support and spontaneous interaction during play. As a result, all children are making good progress in their development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making very good progress and staff support them very well through their clear understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Successful use of time and implementation of a range of practical teaching methods are supporting children's individual learning needs. For example, introducing aspects of High Scope and the Reggio Emilia approach is encouraging the children to reflect and recall their experiences during small group time. Effective grouping of the children at key times provides good opportunities to question and extend those children that are more able and readily supports their individual learning needs. Children competently use the computer to support their learning and extend their knowledge of shape, colour, numerals and sounds. The introduction of weekly French lessons, excellent use of the outdoor learning environment, interactive displays and use of props during story times enhances children's learning.

Planning covers all areas of learning and short term plans are used effectively to meet the needs of the children. Although the short term and tracking observations are completed routinely, guide assessments and intelligently inform future planning, these are not assessed against the stepping stones to show clearly how children work towards the early learning goals. However, staff monitor and review their key children's assessments each week and show sound awareness of their next steps. This ensures challenges for children are purposeful.

Children respond well to staff involvement in their play and learning and are keen to include them in their games, role play and other activities. Excellent questioning encourages the children to think for themselves and positively promotes their independent learning. As a result, some children are becoming autonomous in their play. For example, a child brings three small flowers to pre-school and talks with her peers and staff about the colours. Children are inspired selecting coloured tissue paper, straws and cellotape to design and make their own flowers.

All children recognise their written names and refer to these when finding their names at small group time to indicate who is present. Children have very good opportunities to see, hear and say letter sounds and begin to recognise letters through numerous matching and rhyming games. Children are confident communicators and enjoy sharing news and reading books together. They develop hand and eye co-ordination and practise their writing skills both in adult-led and free-play activities, such as individual white boards, magnetic letters, role-play, play dough and sand. Older children write for a purpose and write recognisable letters for their names.

Children are developing their skills in numbers and have excellent opportunities to select number games, use mathematical language, such as wavy, curved, heavier and lighter, and hear, say and recognise numerals in the environment and during daily routines. For instance, they count the numbers of children present and predict and compare how many boys and girls are in their group each day, hearing new words, such as fewest, more than, most and less than. Children

use their growing knowledge of weight, shapes and patterns to identify and describe natural resources, such as pebbles, shells, rakes and conkers.

Children enjoy many opportunities to investigate and explore their natural environment. For instance, they explore the properties of water using different materials, such as washing up liquid, containers and homemade boats to experiment with floating and sinking. They confidently use a broad range of everyday technology in their play. For example, they use programmable toys, such as beet bops, the listening centre, computer and remote control toys with developing skill and co-ordination. The children show interest in learning the affects different weather has on animals and the environment and readily participate in recycling their fruit peelings and food waste in the recycle bin.

Children enjoy a wide and varied range of creative activities, which stimulate their interests and actively promote their creativity. For example, they show interest in traditional nursery rhymes and draw pictures of the King and Queen from the Princess and the Pea story. They readily choose craft materials to decorate their picture before attaching it to the display board with support from staff.

Children begin to learn different techniques of painting as they review and discuss different artists, such as Henri Rousseau. They begin to express their feelings and ideas as they use various tools and textured paint to recreate the artist's impression on canvas. The children are imaginative and resourceful using the bear masks they have made, porridge, cardboard bear cave and dressing up materials to recreate and act out the story of Goldilocks and the three bears. The children enjoy regular music sessions and eagerly participate in familiar songs using instruments to explore different sounds and develop rhythm in dance when listening to Indian music.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children become aware of the wider society and benefit from well-planned activities and a good range of resources, which help them to value diversity. Jigsaws that depict other cultures instigate discussion about Eid and dressing up in Sari's and designing Rangoli patterns during Diwali celebrations helps increase their interest. The introduction of weekly French lessons and inviting parents to participate in a 'Taste of France day' is helping the children to learn about another language and country. Staff nurture children's emotional well-being successfully and readily invite parents to share their skills and experiences with the children, for example, learning words and writing signs for the room in Gujarati and Hindi.

Staff know the children well and have realistic expectations for the children. As a result, the children are happy, settled and appear relaxed. Children feel a strong sense of belonging as they proudly wear their pre-school tee shirts and sweat tops, sing the pre-school 'Thank you very much' song together and learn some words in their peers native language. Children readily participate in charity events to help raise money for those less fortunate than themselves. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Although no children currently attend, staff have good experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff adopt a professional approach to provide an inclusive environment. For example, recruiting an additional member of staff to support and work with a child and implementing a multi-agency approach when reviewing and monitoring a child's individual educational programmes, ensure they are fully integrated.

Children are confident and forging good relationships with each other because they benefit from a relaxed atmosphere. They know the routines very well and demonstrate good understanding of the rules and boundaries for acceptable behaviour. Regular discussion, clear explanations and useful questions are helping children learn to manage their own behaviour and gain understanding about the affect their behaviour has on others. They readily help each other during play and respond positively to frequent praise and encouragement from the staff. This encourages children's self-esteem.

Children benefit from the professional and friendly relationship between their parents and staff. Staff actively encourage parent's involvement in the setting through asking them to review and contribute ideas to the parent welcome pack and yearly questionnaire about the service and their children's learning. Parents receive good quality information about the setting through the policies, procedures and resourceful notice board articles and posters. However, the complaints procedure does not include up-to-date contact details of the regulator.

Parents value the close interest staff take in their children's individual needs and feel the dedication of all staff in providing varied topics is keeping the children interested and supporting their learning about the world we live in. They receive sound information about what their children are doing each day and praise the insightful weekly newsletter that gives a daily overview of what the children have done, what they have learnt and guidance on forthcoming events. This ensures parents are well informed. Useful notices about what children are learning in the different areas successfully guides parents and enables them to provide purposeful support to children while on parent helper duty.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. They receive good quality information about the education provision and their children's progress in general terms. This is offered through termly conference meetings and written reports with their child's key worker. Although the reports link closely to the six areas of learning, these do not show a clear link to the stepping stones to promote parents understanding of how their children build on what they already know and can do. Parents have clear and detailed information about what their children will be learning across the six areas of learning from the daily, weekly and termly activity and topics sheets. As a result, parents feel well informed about their children's learning and are confident to approach staff if they want further information.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management of the setting are good. Children's learning is of a consistently good standard and they are making sound progress from their individual starting points. All six areas of learning are given equal emphasis and weekly monitoring of individual assessments ensure that children are encouraged to move onto the next steps in their learning at the appropriate time. The children relate very well to the staff and readily seek out the male member of staff during play and daily routines.

The play leader has a clear vision for the setting to ensure the continuation of good quality education, such as further developing closer links with the school and other providers. She empowers the staff successfully with her dynamic and enthusiastic approach to childcare and values what each of them brings to the setting. As a result, the integration of care and nursery education is effective. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The multi-skilled and experienced staff are highly committed to providing a rich learning environment indoors and out where strong focus is given to organising space and presenting resources well to facilitate children's independent learning. The children are happy and motivated to learn because staff group the children appropriately according to ability and work extremely well as a team to create an inclusive environment. They meet regularly to plan and assess their practice and are enthusiastic and inspired to attend training and adapt to new systems of working. The clear management structure supports staff effectively in their personal development and use training tracking sheets and appraisals well to monitor staff's on-going suitability.

The pre-school is committed to on-going improvements and the committee and staff group demonstrate a clear view of future developments, for example, seeking funding to make some structural changes to the toilets to ensure these are child-friendly and utilised to their best possible effect. The operational plan contains generally good information about most aspects of care and is readily available to parents and staff. Although, there is no formalised recruitment and induction programme or system for checking new applicants' medical suitability to ensure procedures are robust, the play leader demonstrates a secure awareness of the procedures to follow. This ensures children are cared for by adults who are vetted and have relevant experience, knowledge and skills. All the required records are in place and most contain accurate information to share with parents to promote the health, safety and welfare of the children.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last care inspection recommended the provider reviewed hygiene routines and expanded the child protection policy to include procedures in the event an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff.

Very good hygiene routines and practices are well known and implemented by the children to promote their healthy well-being. The play leader demonstrates a clear understanding of the procedure to follow with any allegations of abuse against a member of staff, however, the written policy is not clear and does not contain sufficient detail.

The last nursery education inspection recommended the provider considered ways of making information and communication technology more readily available for the children and developed local links to monitor the effectiveness of the nursery education provision.

The children freely access the computers throughout the week and listen to music and games on the listening centre. Additional programmable toys are planned and rotated to broaden children's skills and learning. The pre-school has made initial contact with a local provider and discussion about how these and other links, including the school, can be developed, are currently being reviewed to further enhance the education provision and children's individual learning needs.

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):

- extend the operational plan to ensure formalised and robust systems are in place for the recruitment, vetting and induction of new staff to ensure they are suitable and have the relevant experience, knowledge and skills to do their job
- ensure all records and procedures contain sufficient detail to safeguard the children's welfare and review the frequency of fire practises to ensure all children know how to keep themselves safe in an emergency.

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):

- ensure observations and assessments link closely to the stepping stones to show clearly children's progress towards the early learning goals.

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