

Breachwood Green Pre - School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	146743
Inspection date	13 November 2007
Inspector	Sheelagh Barnes
Setting Address	Breachwood Green, Village Hall, Breachwood Green, HITCHIN, Hertfordshire, SG4 8MX
Telephone number	01438 831099
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Registered person	The Trustees of Breachwood Green Pre-School
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?

Breachwood Green Pre-school opened in 1978. It is run by The Trustees of Breachwood Green Pre-School. It operates within a small single story building that is adjacent to Breachwood Green Village Hall. The building is used solely by the pre-school and comprises of a large room, kitchen, hall and toilets. There is a small enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school also have access to the nearby playing fields and enclosed village playground area. The pre-school serves the local community. There are currently 31 children from two and a half years to four years on roll. Of these, 18 children are in receipt of funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions and do not all attend at any one time.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 to 14:00 Wednesdays and Fridays. On Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays sessions run from 09:15 to 14:00 and 14:15 to 15:00. Some children bring a packed lunch and stay all day. There are three part-time staff and two full-time staff who work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 2 and 3. One staff member is currently working towards their Level 3 NVQ qualifications. The setting receives

support from the local Community Development Team and the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The pre-school holds the Hertfordshire Quality Standard Award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children adopt healthy lifestyles well because staff all hold this as very important and work hard and successfully to convince children to make healthy choices. The children learn extremely well about the health benefits of eating a range of fruit and vegetables because of very good levels of initiative of staff. Children are offered an excellent variety of healthy snacks. Options for snacks recently have included vegetables and humous dip, fruit salad and couscous. Children are regularly involved in hygienic food preparation activities including the making of falafel, sandwiches, vegetable wraps and soda bread. Dietary needs of children are met well, including care taken for particular needs, such as intolerances. Children gently select a drink of water or milk from a tray at snack time. Drinks of water are available throughout the session if children ask for one but it is not easily accessible to them. Children learn satisfactorily about the benefits of physical education because they have regular opportunity to work and play outside with a range of equipment.

Children's welfare is promoted well by all staff. The spread of infectious illnesses is reduced by effectively implemented policies. For example, the policy on how to handle child sickness and accidents is successfully implemented in practice. Children wash their hands thoroughly at appropriate times due to good staff encouragement and guidance. Written records of all medicines administered are kept effectively. Staff inform parents in detail about any medication given. Children are cared for appropriately if they hurt themselves because staff are well trained to handle minor accidents and illnesses. Any accidents and treatments are recorded meticulously. Children's health is effectively maintained because the accident record is signed by the parent when they are told about an incident which involved their child and so they are well informed about what has happened to their child. First aid qualifications of staff are displayed clearly for all parents to see.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children keep themselves safe successfully because teaching focuses effectively on how to use equipment carefully and stay safe. This ensures that children are suitably aware of everyday hazards. Children have a satisfactory knowledge of what to do in the event of a fire because regular evacuation drills are undertaken. However, this term, this has only been for children in the afternoon session and there has been no practise in the morning or at lunchtime, as yet to ensure that systems are fully effective and maintain children's safety. Trips out with children are well planned due to the completion of risk assessments. Children are provided with snacks and drinks that are prepared in a kitchen area that is clean and hygienic. Child protection procedures are laid out well in the policy and staff know what they would do if they had any concerns about a child. In the event of children not being collected or becoming lost a suitable policy is in place and staff are aware of what to do in these situations.

Children are cared for in one small, but well managed room. The pre-school copes well with arrangements such as sharing confidential information with parents due to careful management of time and space. There are attractive displays which celebrate children's achievements.

Resources stimulate children effectively because there are many interactive activities for them to undertake independently. Children can easily get involved in safe activities because the learning areas are well organised. The children concentrate well on the gluing and sticking of various materials together. For example, they make attractive firework models using card, glue and glitter. Equipment inside is in a good condition and there is an extensive range for children to choose from. There is rather limited space for children to rest or relax in, apart from the small library area. As a result a few of the children get a little tired on occasion, by the end of the day. There is no indoor climbing equipment, due to lack of space. The safe outdoor play area is enclosed but small with uneven surface in parts. The use of the outside area is planned satisfactorily with a sound range of equipment. On occasion the nearby playing fields and the village play area is used, so that children can take part in strenuous activity.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children enjoy coming to the group because they are welcomed by staff and their personal development is supported well. Children from all backgrounds and abilities are involved effectively in playgroup life. The children separate from their parents easily, overall. Staff are very caring and successfully reassure any who are feeling reluctant, such as new children, who are quickly fully involved in activities. Children's confidence is developed considerably as a result of the staff's use of praise. Children enjoy learning to draw and cut out shapes and to make pictures and models. The children make connections in their learning because adults plan a good range of activities which link well. The children are really proud of their pictures which they have created using glue and various materials. They are keen to show them and to take them home.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching is effective and so children make good progress in all areas of learning. This means that children are prepared well for the next stage of education. Staff manage children successfully and so they behave well, form positive relationships and have positive attitudes to learning. Children's personal, social and emotional development is good. Independence in children is promoted well because, for example, they pour their own drinks at snack time and select what they want to eat from the food on offer.

Children are provided with a wide range of experiences through a well planned series of activities. The effective planning demonstrates that staff have a good knowledge of the early learning goals and developmental guidance and this ensures that opportunities match children's needs and interests well. Use of time is good and this means that the sessions are methodically planned so that children have access to both organised activities and free play. As a result, children have good opportunities to initiate their own play and learning. The children are eager to join in tasks because staff are enthusiastic about the learning activities. They work and play alongside each other and together happily.

Staff have an effective knowledge of how this age group learn best and so there is good emphasis on practical activities and experiences. Children are successfully challenged because staff have high expectations of them. For example, counting and number are integrated very effectively into everyday play and activities, such as counting out plates for snack. Children's knowledge of numbers and mathematics are developed successfully through practical activities and songs. Children's awareness of money is developed well through the use of the shop.

Children learn to listen attentively because staff make whole group times interesting and exciting. For instance, children listened enrapt to the story of a teddy who went into space. Children are encouraged to draw and make marks. Children learn to write and draw because there is a good range of equipment and this is used very well to support their learning. They are encouraged to look at and learn to enjoy books as a result of the effective use of stories and story time. Teaching develops children's understanding well of the fact that words represent things, by the good use of labels. Children show considerable curiosity and understanding of the world. For example, they learn successfully about the changes in nature during the season of autumn because of a well-planned trip to a local wood, in conjunction with another local playgroup. Children are given good opportunities to recap on their experiences through the table top displays and the use of photographs. Adults develop children's understanding well, by talking with them about the pictures.

Children can expand their imagination by pretending to be shop keepers in the new shop area or playing with the hand puppets because areas for creative development are used well. They have good opportunity to develop skills in craft and the resulting attractive objects and pictures are displayed effectively. Rhyme and song are used well for many areas of learning and children happily and spontaneously start singing 'She'll be coming round the mountain' during snack time. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to promote learning. For example, children work together to complete simple games and puzzles.

Physical development is planned for well in terms of increasing skills in hand and eye coordination through cutting, drawing and sticking. Space and equipment for undertaking strenuous exercise and building upper body space is limited and this to some extent restricts children's further development of their physical skills.

Assessment activities are used effectively. Assessment records are carefully completed. Regular observations and assessments of children are recorded accurately in each area of learning. The records show most children are making good progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Children's progress is tracked effectively and so staff have a good knowledge of what they need to do to further extend children's learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children make a good contribution to the community. They are encouraged effectively to feel that they are an important part of the playgroup. This is partly because activities are set up as they arrive which get them involved in working alongside and with others in stimulating challenges. The children also learn to work well as a team. For example, setting out the train track or playing with the castle.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children's self-esteem is promoted very effectively through positive comments from staff. Their emotional development is promoted well. This is because staff talk calmly and patiently with children so that they understand how their actions affect the feelings of others. The establishment of key workers who are responsible for a group of five or six children allows them to form strong relationships with one adult. Children's social development is promoted well as a result of effective guidance from staff. When children behave maturely they are rewarded with positive comments from staff. Children's behaviour is good. Children understand pre-school rules well. They demonstrate a clear understanding of right from wrong. The children are satisfactorily aware of our multicultural society.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are welcomed into the room at the start of the session to discuss their child's progress and any concerns they have about their well-being. Parents are satisfactorily encouraged to share what they know about their children and staff use this information well and their own initial evaluations of the starting points of children to plan activities. Parents' meetings are held once a year, when good quality children's records of achievement are discussed effectively. Parents find staff approachable and are appreciative of the work of the pre-school. Thorough record sheets are available for parents to read when ever they wish to see them, but staff say this rarely ever happens. Reports to parents are informative and positive but are not always written in a way that will fully assist parents to support their child's learning further at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The group is well organised and efficiently run and the required documentation is in place. Registers clearly record both children's arrival and departure times. Staff have all the necessary information to enable them to make contact with a parent if a child is unwell during a session. Children clearly understand the schedule for the day because staff follow well established routines during morning and afternoon sessions and also at lunch time. The day is planned well so that children all know what will happen at particular times. A good record system ensures that children have sufficient opportunities to learn key skills and all areas of learning for children under the age of five years are covered regularly. This ensures that a broad curriculum is offered.

Leadership and management is good. An effective team spirit between staff allows them to work together well. Most of the staff are suitably qualified and the manager has a Level 3 qualification. Monitoring of the quality of provision and use of self-evaluation are good. The playgroup's leadership is well aware of the strengths and areas for development. For example, the development of resources for the outside area has already been identified as an aspect which would benefit from extra equipment. The leadership is effectively committed to making further improvements to what the pre-school is providing. Children have good levels of stability because new staff are effectively inducted into the way the pre-school works. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the group was asked to work on three areas. There were limitations in the kitchen area, staff awareness of safety issues and an area for private discussions with parents. These have been completely resolved in two of the areas. The group has refurbished the kitchen area to make a safe and enclosed space for the hygienic preparation of snacks. Staff awareness of safety issues when sessions are running is now good. These developments mean that children's health and safety are now further promoted. However, the limited space in the main room means that discussing any matter with parents confidentially is difficult to arrange during session times. Staff are fully aware of the importance of maintaining confidentiality at all times.

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 the procedures for emergency evacuation of the building are fully effective across the varied session times.

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 that information provided to parents further assists them to support their children's learning at home
- improve opportunities for children to undertake strenuous exercise and build upper body strength.

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