

# Condover Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** EY235698  
**Inspection date** 30 January 2008  
**Inspector** Josephine Mary Hammick

**Setting Address** Condover, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY5 7AA

**Telephone number** 01743 873518

**E-mail**

**Registered person** Condover Pre-School

**Type of inspection** Integrated

**Type of care** Full day 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](http://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 outstanding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Condover Pre-School is situated within the grounds of Condover School in the village of Condover, near Shrewsbury. The Pre-School serves the local area.

There are currently 27 children aged from 2 years to under 5 years on roll. This includes 17 funded three- and four-year-olds. Children can access a variety of sessions. The group supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens for five mornings and four afternoons a week. Sessions are from 09.00 to 12:00 and 13.00 to 15.30. There is a lunch-club facility available between 12.00 and 13:00. Full day care is from 09:00 to 15:30. The group is closed on Friday afternoons.

Three members of staff work with the children; all hold suitable Early Years qualifications. The staff access regular training and receive support from a teacher mentor from the local authority. The group is a member of The Pre-School Learning Alliance.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy and are generally protected from infection because staff have procedures in place to protect them. For example, table cloths are used for snack and meal times, dish-cloths are colour-coded and disposed of at the end of the day, and toys are washed on a regular basis. Children are learning why routines are important through everyday conversations with staff. For example, children know that germs spread if they do not wash their hands thoroughly.

Children are well cared for in the event of an accident. All staff hold first aid qualifications to enable them to deal with accidents effectively. Appropriate documentation is kept and shared with parents to safeguard children, including reporting of accidents and administration of medicines.

Children learn about leading a healthy lifestyle through everyday practical experiences. There is a parent rota to bring in nutritious items for snack time. Children enjoy fresh fruit and vegetables together with breadsticks, cheese, pure diluted juice and milk. Snack menus are therefore varied so that children have many opportunities to experience different tastes and textures. Although parents provide packed lunches for their children, they are learning to make healthy choices about the foods they eat through discussions with staff, displays and planned activities.

All children benefit from the strong emphasis on physical development. They enjoy a range of indoor and outdoor activities which promote their physical development. For example, they are able to play outside at all times using a range of equipment such as bikes, building bricks and climbing frames. An active parents' committee have developed the area, marking out a roadway system so that children can practise their negotiation and road safety skills. Music and movement sessions ensure that children benefit from opportunities to stretch and let off steam when they can't go outside. Once a week the children re-locate to the local woods in order to benefit from 'Forest School' activities. They relish projects such as den building, nature trails and bridge making. The children benefit greatly from the fresh air and being able to let off steam in a well planned environment. The wide provision of resources ensures that activities provide sufficient physical challenges to children of all ages. Children also have opportunities to use cutters, scissors, paintbrushes and other small tools to develop their manipulative skills.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well-maintained and child-focused environment. Staff prepare the room with a bright and attractive range of appropriate resources before children arrive each day. This creates a stimulating environment for them. Children have access to a wide range of developmentally appropriate toys and equipment of high quality. As a result they play safely and are happily occupied.

Children's safety is enhanced by procedures which are used to restrict access to the setting. For example, entry is restricted into the nursery by the entrance being accessed through a coded doorway, and visitors are supervised at all times. However, systems to record their presence are not always adhered to. Children enjoy well-planned outings to places such as the West Midlands Safari Park or Severn Valley Railway. Full risk assessments are carried out before

each visit and a high adult-to-child ratio is adhered to at all times. Routine risk assessments are carried out before and after each session and recorded for future reference. This also applies to the 'Forest School' sessions where extra vigilant records are kept on a daily basis. This helps to ensure children remain safe. Children's safety in case of fire is promoted. Regular discussions and fire drills help children to learn how they could evacuate the premises safely to protect themselves. Children's welfare is well protected. Staff training is up to date and the group have a written policy on child protection. They are fully aware of their duty to protect children. This protects children from harm or neglect.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

All children are happy to attend, they enjoy their time in the stimulating and well-resourced environment. Children throughout the setting are happy, confident and have built secure relationships with each other and staff. Practitioners provide a good balance of child-initiated and group projects to ensure that children have access to a range of stimulating activities. For example, stories and songs during circle time ensure that play is linked in with the theme of weather and safety; the painting and gluing activities stimulate interest and extend learning in a fun and informal way. The children are keen and motivated by what is available to them and demonstrate a good understanding of the overall theme.

Children's play and learning is very well supported by staff who have a good understanding of how children learn, making links with the Foundation Stage and Birth to Three frameworks. Staff consistently interact with children to extend their learning and play. Children's confidence and self-esteem are developed through the attention and praise they receive for their achievements. Staff value children's creations, displaying them attractively on wall displays or by including them in their own diaries or learning files.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children relish being in the setting. They are curious and enthusiastic about the range of activities provided and are eager to participate. They concentrate and persevere well, whether playing alone or when benefiting from interaction with their peers or adults. Children are confident to express opinions or suggest ideas. Staff ensure children have many opportunities for conversation and discussions, while the less articulate children have good support to help them join in. Excellent use is made of open ended questions to foster children's thinking and inspire curiosity.

Children enthusiastically enjoy stories and rhymes. They listen attentively and contribute with vigour to discussions about features of stories; for example, when discussing the book 'One Winters Day', the children talk about wrapping up warmly, and the sights and colours around them. They describe a 'grey' winters day and a 'yellow' sunny day. Excellent use is made of props and visual aids. Larger format books and story sacks help children to concentrate and enjoy different aspects of stories. Staff make their own resources in order to consolidate learning, for example, a 'feely box' encourages the children to use descriptive language and develop their senses. A flip chart is used by practitioners to scribe ideas or concepts the children volunteer in order to enable children to link thoughts and words, and therefore develop their reading skills. Children sing tunefully and with enthusiasm; rhymes are used imaginatively to reinforce aspects of the topic and inspire creative thinking. Children also enjoy mark-making in different contexts, whether they are forming patterns in sand and paint or drawing their

faces on self-portraits. All children are supported in writing their names after circle time each day, either by tracing or writing freely.

Counting and number recognition activities are inspiring, practical and fun for children. Many count confidently beyond 10. During routines, play activities and discussions, children get numerous opportunities to consolidate their understanding of one-to-one correspondence in a natural and non-threatening way. Children are keen to work out simple number problems, such as how many more cups are needed at each table at snack time. Stories and rhymes are also used well to support children's awareness of simple number operations. Staff encourage children to check their answers so that, for example, they often spontaneously count using their fingers.

Children are inquisitive, keen and interested in how things work. They explore different materials, such as wet and dry sand, play dough and clay. They find out how different construction toys and other items fit together. They enjoy using technology, for example, by using the computer with confidence. They choose their preferred game, insert it into the computer and manage the mouse with dexterity and confidence. Other opportunities to use technological resources are accessed on a regular basis, including programmable toys and digital cameras. Children confidently handle tools such as scissors. Children design and make their own clay models, such as hedgehogs. They mould pieces to fit together and insert sticks to represent prickles. They are proud of their accomplishments. Staff applaud their achievements and display them attractively for all to see. Photographs show how the children are well supported when using working tools, such as hand drills, during the making of wooden necklaces. When playing with construction toys, children confidently use mathematical language to describe their models' appearance and the position of key features.

Children are well supported in their developing awareness of the wider world and society in which they live. They have daily access to toys and resources promoting positive images of diversity and regularly celebrate festivals and customs to enrich their learning and awareness of other cultures. For example, the children eagerly await their turn to try on a richly embroidered kimono brought in by a member of staff. They touch and feel the silk and examine the embroidery. They twirl around and pose for the camera. They are able to play with a porcelain Chinese tea set and rice bowls, and show knowledge and understanding when they prepare and decorate their lanterns to celebrate Chinese New Year. A firey, richly decorated Chinese dragon adorns the entrance hall when they arrive. Photographs show children celebrating other festivals including Divali and Hanukah. They are able to gain an awareness of, and look at the position of, different countries by studying the globe and map of the world displayed prominently on the wall.

Children move with agility and confidence. They are keen to go outside and benefit from the fresh air. During an enjoyable outside play session of 'What's the time Mr Wolf?' they competently follow different actions, stretching up, wiggling and moving in different directions. They talk about how they feel out of breath after exercise, and the consequent need for a rest. Further opportunities are provided when the children go to the woods. Detailed planning shows that children relish the freedom to run freely, jump, climb and balance whilst being supported in a safe, natural environment.

A wide and attractive range of collage and creative materials are freely available to inspire children's imaginative painting and craft work. They have daily opportunities to draw and paint expressively, trying out different techniques and using colour imaginatively. Role play areas are available throughout the session to enable children to fully develop their own ideas. The

scenarios that are provided are realistically resourced and inspire children's meaningful play. For example, the children immerse themselves into the 'Teddy's hospital' whilst benefiting from the identified learning objectives linked in to the project on safety.

Detailed planning and assessment effectively and efficiently support children's learning. Children are inspired by topics that are fun, stimulating, interesting and relevant. Practitioners spend time researching topics to ensure ideas are exciting. For example, they search the internet, access courses, read publications and use local resource libraries to keep their ideas fresh and stimulating. During the current topic on the weather and safety, children are keen and motivated to take part. They enthusiastically recall their own family experiences during discussions and through role play, art and craft work and modelling activities. Plans have clearly recorded learning outcomes which are followed through organised, focused activities which stimulate children. Personal preferences are recognised and acknowledged because each child has their own play plan to ensure their individual needs are met. Vigilant assessment procedures ensure a clear audit trail of children's progress whilst they attend the pre-school. Parental contributions and early observations help staff to compile an initial profile on each child, but from then on assessments are based on formal observations of children during play and activities. Staff have robust systems to check children's progress in relation to the stepping stones and early learning goals; they adapt activities to suit children's differing levels of skill or individual need.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's individual personalities and needs are well known and respected within the setting. The group seek a wide range of information from parents such as children's special interests, festivals that they celebrate at home and things that are special to the family. This information is used to ensure that children are cared for by staff who work with parents to meet their individual needs. It also ensures that all children are valued and included in the life of the setting. Children's play is supported by a wide range of resources such as books, dressing-up outfits and dolls which are aimed at promoting positive images of people from a wide range of cultures. For example, familiar objects are labelled in several languages; there are multilingual welcoming posters and pictures promoting positive images of diversity.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are recognised and well supported by well-trained, experienced and caring staff. Daily records are kept of children's progress and shared with parents and outside agencies to ensure that the children's changing needs are recognised and can continue to be met. Children behave very well, care for each other and freely share and take turns. For example, when playing at the sand tray, children share different sized containers and take turns using the equipment. They are developing a good understanding of right and wrong and are able to play happily within clearly set, but simple, boundaries. Children benefit from excellent settling-in procedures which are based around their individual needs, to support them in the transition between home and the setting. For example, parents and carers are actively encouraged to stay with their children until they are settled. This helps children to feel secure and confident in the group.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. The well-thought-out information booklet includes information on the Foundation Stage framework and the six areas of learning. Photographs and labels on attractive displays help parents and carers to learn about what educational aspects of learning are possible in any activity. The flip chart in the entrance lobby details the daily activities planned and how they link into the theme. It clearly details the areas of learning identified. Newsletters and notices on the information board keep parents and

carers informed about future activities or the many social events. There is an active parents' committee who are keen to participate in fund-raising and projects to improve the children's experiences whilst in the pre-school. Members of the committee regularly come in to support the valued staff. They have an excellent understanding of their own roles and responsibilities as employers. Parents are always welcome to stay and play with their children, and often do, bringing in many skills to enrich the children's experiences. Parents are always welcome to view or discuss their child's diary informally or formally through appointments. This enables parents to be involved and enhance their own child's learning. Parents interviewed said that they feel comfortable and confident to come into the pre-school and discuss their child's progress at any time. They also value the warm, welcoming and supportive environment.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The premises are very well organised and good use is made of the space available. All staff work well together and demonstrate enthusiasm for creating a learning environment that stimulates children of all ages. Children are well cared for by suitably qualified staff who have been appropriately vetted to ensure that they are suitable and have sufficient skills and knowledge to work with children.

Policies and procedures are clear, comprehensive and updated on a yearly basis. All staff are familiar with their content to ensure children are well cared for. New staff are made familiar through a thorough induction period. There is a high emphasis on staff training and working with other professionals, such as those from the local authority. As a result, children benefit from practices which are in line with current ideas and legislation.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is outstanding. There is a strong commitment by staff to develop high quality provision to promote learning in all areas; they are experienced and confident within their roles and have an excellent knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They are highly motivated to seek out exciting ways to deliver the curriculum in order to stimulate and engage all children whatever their developmental ability. These attributes support the children's learning and development very well.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provider agreed to make sure that the hot water in the children's wash basins remained at a safe temperature. Since then, the provider has adjusted the thermostat. The water remains at a safe and comfortable temperature. This ensures children's well-being is safeguarded 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.

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

### 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 children have access to appropriate hand-washing facilities, that prevent the risk of cross-infection, at all times
- ensure an effective system of recording visitors is implemented at all times.

#### The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)