

# Sheredes Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

---

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 124115  |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 22 January 2008   |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Jill Nugent   |
| <b>Setting Address</b>         | Sheredes Primary School, Benford Road, Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire, EN11 8LL |
| <b>Telephone number</b>        | 01992 465154  |
| <b>E-mail</b>                  |   |
| <b>Registered person</b>       | Sheredes Pre-School   |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Integrated  |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | 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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Sheredes Pre-School opened in 1986 and operates from a classroom within Sheredes Primary School in Hoddesdon. It is open each weekday from 08:55 to 11:40 during term time. Children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 29 children on roll, of whom 15 receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs three staff. Two members of staff, including the leader, hold relevant early years qualifications.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well because there are good procedures in place. All medical records are maintained appropriately and necessary consents requested. Children are protected from infection as parents receive information about excluding children who are ill. In the event of an accident children are well taken care of as staff maintain up to date first aid qualifications. They are attentive to hygiene and ensure that children are cared for in clean and hygienic surroundings. There are suitable procedures in place for nappy changing. Children are becoming aware of good hygiene practice and know to wash their hands before cooking or eating. These procedures contribute effectively to keeping children healthy.

Children enjoy a variety of healthy snacks, such as fresh fruit and salad vegetables. They are encouraged to develop personal independence at snack time and to try new foods. In cooking activities they increase their awareness of the differing health aspects of foods. For example, they make pizzas and savoury rice as well as mince pies. Children with special diets are well catered for as all adults are aware of their dietary needs. Children have good access to drinking water during the session thereby avoiding the risk of dehydration. Consequently, children are well nourished.

Children enjoy regular opportunities for outdoor physical activity. They have plenty of space to move around in the playground and enjoy the fresh air. They like playing with balls, hoops and riding on wheeled vehicles. Staff encourage children to develop physical skills, such as throwing and catching. Children learn to negotiate space as they steer tricycles around a designated area. They have fun playing imaginatively on a wooden train. Children benefit from this opportunity for outdoor play which helps to keep them fit and healthy.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. The room is bright and spacious and there is good access to toilets and the outdoor play area. Staff carry out regular risk assessments and safety checks to ensure that children are safe and secure in the setting. There are effective procedures in place to ensure children's security at the beginning and end of each session. Children move freely and safely around the room in order to choose activities. They are prevented from having access to kitchen equipment or cleaning materials. There are appropriate fire precautions in place and an evacuation plan is practised in case of an emergency.

Children use a wide range of suitable, safe and attractive resources. Staff keep a check on all resources and equipment to ensure they are safe for children. The toys, games and books are arranged at low-level so that children can choose independently. The selection of resources is refreshed and added to whenever possible. For example, a recent acquisition has been a new computer which enables children to access learning through information technology.

Children are becoming aware of personal safety because staff continually remind them about safe play. On outings, such as walks in the local area, staff risk assess the activity and ensure good adult-to-child ratios. Staff have a good understanding of child protection issues and ensure that children are safeguarded at all times. There is a system in place for recording any concerns and all staff know where to seek advice. Therefore, children are well protected.

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

The provision is good.

Children are settled and happy at pre-school. They enjoy exploring the various resources and activities on offer and are gaining confidence and independence. For instance, children construct models, make patterns and dig sand. They have good relationships with each other and often play together in groups. For example, they gather around a play mat to play with toy vehicles and small world settings. They show particular interest in investigating mark-making and creative activities. Children talk confidently with adults, readily showing what they have done. Their self-esteem is boosted through much praise from staff for their efforts and achievements.

Children learn through their play and are encouraged to develop appropriate skills. The learning areas are well resourced and provide a stimulating environment for children. There are good opportunities for children to explore in their own way as they begin to make connections with their environment. Staff interact with children, engaging them in conversation to encourage the development of communication skills. For instance, children talk about shapes and patterns as they make marks on paper or about their likes and dislikes as they cut up vegetables. They respond positively to staff's suggestions and are happy to try out new activities. Therefore, children acquire new skills and increase their knowledge and understanding in different areas.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff plan the educational programme around themes, providing a balance of activities across the six learning areas. The weekly plans show how resources are rotated to offer different learning experiences. Staff have recently introduced focus activity plans in order to focus children's learning more effectively, although the particular learning intention is not always clear. A new system for assessing children's progress within the six learning areas is also in place. Staff intend to use this to target children's individual learning more effectively and thereby guide their future planning.

Staff offer good support to children during activities. They explain clearly to children the nature of each activity and include a degree of flexibility so that children can approach it in their own way. Children are offered choices, for example, what they would like to do on a rainy day. Staff question children to encourage them to think and to pose a challenge. However, they do not always take the opportunity to extend children further during the planned focus activities. Children are encouraged to be independent in free choice, for example, finding painting aprons and paints. This approach helps children to enjoy exploring and become independent learners. Good use is made of circle times to interest children in books and songs and reinforce learning in a group situation.

Children are making good progress in the areas of literacy and numeracy. They learn to recognise their names and the sounds and shapes of letters of the alphabet. They develop skills needed for early writing when drawing pictures and telling adults what they would like written alongside. Children develop good concentration skills. They count confidently, becoming more aware of the use of numbers when joining in number rhymes. They compare shapes in creative activities and begin to problem solve when constructing models. They learn to use their imagination as they create paintings and collages, often becoming very absorbed in their work.

Children take part in various activities that help to provide them with an initial understanding of the world. They find out about the environment and living things when planting flowers or taking walks. They learn about different aspects of the weather and enjoy making and watching

windmills. When exploring magnetic toys they begin to discover how magnets work. Children demonstrate good manipulative skills as they use scissors to cut around shapes and large brushes to spread paint around paper. During activities in the hall they extend their physical skills as they climb, balance and travel in different ways.

Overall, children are progressing well in all areas of learning.

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

The provision is good.

Children feel valued and included in the setting. They enjoy an individual welcome at the initial registration time and soon develop a sense of belonging. There are attractive individual cushions on which children sit for group times and this helps them feel part of the group. They appreciate the opportunity to sit on staff's laps at times, for example to share a book quietly. They are generally content and mix well as they develop new friendships. A quiet and busy atmosphere prevails for much of the session as they enjoy free play and activities.

Children are becoming aware of their own needs and the needs of others. They have good opportunities to choose independently during activities and they all help to tidy up afterwards. They learn about a wider society through using resources which reflect diversity and taking part in activities based around festivals, such as Diwali and Chinese New Year. Children's behaviour is very good. They are aware of their boundaries within the setting and learn to share and take turns. They respond well to reminders and instructions from staff. A set of golden rules is in place to help children distinguish between right and wrong. As a result they learn to behave responsibly.

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

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support from staff. There are procedures in place for recording observations of children and various close links with other professionals enable staff to seek advice when necessary. Staff work closely with parents and carers and this is of benefit to their children. There is clear information in the prospectus concerning the pre-school's procedures and guidance notes for helping new children to settle in. Parents provide information about their children when they start which helps staff in meeting individual needs. Parents and carers are kept up to date with themes and events through newsletters and notices.

The partnership with parents and carers of children receiving nursery funding is good. The prospectus contains detailed information about the Early Learning Areas. The long-term planning is displayed on the notice board alongside information about the current theme. This helps parents to become involved in their children's learning. However, there is little information about the weekly activities for parents so that they can become involved in their children's learning on a day-to-day basis.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The pre-school's policies and procedures work well in practice to promote the outcomes for children. All the necessary policies are in place and readily available. Paper work is well organised and information about children is kept in a secure place. Staff are aware of confidentiality issues. The attendance registers for children and staff are well maintained. The written planning

for the nursery education is kept up to date and available for staff at the beginning of each week. This documentation provides a good framework for care and education.

The pre-school leader ensures that staff keep up to date with all necessary training, such as Child Protection. There are sound employment and induction procedures in place for new staff and regular appraisals are carried out to monitor staff's professional development. Staff have a high regard for the well-being of all children and maintain good adult-to-child ratios. The sessions follow a planned daily routine which works successfully in providing children with time for free choice and opportunities to participate in adult-led activities. Staff are deployed to the various activities and group times, although this does not always work effectively. In particular, children miss out on early engagement by staff as activities are not set out ready for them after registration time.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The leader meets with staff to plan the educational programme and is responsible for providing the written plans. Since the previous inspection she has worked on improving the written planning and setting up a system for observing and assessing children. She continually monitors the provision in discussion with staff and notes areas for development in an ongoing action plan. In this way she is able to continually improve the quality of education on offer to children.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the previous care inspection the pre-school was asked to ensure that staff hold suitable qualifications and to maintain a fire log. Over 50 percent of staff now hold an appropriate qualification. Fire drills are practised regularly and a fire log is maintained. This has led to an improvement in the outcomes for all children.

At the previous nursery education inspection the pre-school was asked to: increase staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage; monitor the quality of teaching; develop a system for assessing children's progress, and provide consultation times for parents. Staff have increased their knowledge of the Foundation Stage and now monitor and evaluate the planned programme and delivery of education. They have worked towards developing an appropriate system of assessment. Although there are no formal consultation times for parents, information is shared informally. These developments have contributed to an overall improvement in the quality of nursery education.

### **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 staff are deployed in such a way as to meet children's needs at all 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):

- continue to develop the systems of planning and assessment to ensure that children are focused and challenged effectively
- consider ways of developing the partnership with parents and carers so that they can be more fully involved in children's learning.

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)