

Pool House Under 5's Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	502191
Inspection date	13 December 2007
Inspector	Lesley Sharples
Setting Address	Kidsgrove, Tanterton, Preston, PR2 7BX
Telephone number	01772 732 628
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Registered person	The Trustees of Pool House Under 5's Nursery
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Pool House Under 5's Nursery has been registered since April 2001. The nursery is operated by a management committee and is situated in the Tanterton area of Preston within Pool House Community Primary School. The nursery is self contained, having its own entrance and outdoor play area. There are two rooms set adjacent to each other, one of which provides care for children aged two to three years and one of which provides care and early education for children aged three to five years. There is use of the school hall when available.

Registration is for a maximum total of 38 children aged two to five years. Currently there are 31 children on roll, 16 of whom are funded for nursery education. The provision is open term time only and operates from 09.00 to 15.00 for children aged three and four years and from 09.00 to 11.30 for children aged two years. Some children aged two years stay all day. The setting supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities and for whom English is an additional language

The staff team is led by a new nursery manager who is qualified to degree level and deputy nursery manager, as well as five other staff members. The setting is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and advice, support and training are gained from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning effectively about being healthy through their daily routine because they understand the importance of regular hand washing during significant times of the day, such as after visiting the toilet and before eating. They have provision to encourage their developing independence and ably help themselves to tissues to wipe their noses and dispose of them appropriately. This helps to prevent the spread of infection. Children's health is protected by the way systems and documentation are now in place to protect them regarding the administration of medication and accident recording. Accidents are regularly reviewed by the manager to see if there may be reasons for them, which is effective practice.

Children have their health and dietary needs met because staff use information from parents. This means requirements and preferences are adhered to at all times. Staff provide a range of very healthy and nutritious snacks which include whole fresh fruits, dried fruits and vegetable sticks and dips. Fresh drinking water is always available alongside milk to drink during snack times. This promotes children's good health and aids the development of both physical and mental growth. Children thoroughly enjoy the recently introduced 'self snacking' aspect of their session, whereby they decide for themselves when they choose to stop their activity to have something to eat and drink. This is working extremely well and is reinforcing the importance of allowing children to make choices and decisions.

Physical development is well promoted through regular opportunities for energetic play outdoors as well as experiences using small tools and utensils, such as scissors. This means that they develop both large and small muscles. They enthusiastically use equipment to slide and ride and are taken on walks within the school grounds, gaining benefits of fresh air and sunshine. This particularly supports those children attending full days. Many curriculum activities are also available so children can continue their learning experiences outdoors.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment. They are greeted and immediately settle to play in rooms that are inviting and well decorated. Children are able to move freely around as space is sufficient and organised well to allow movement between activities. Following the last inspection, the setting has been fully supported in renewing furniture and equipment which contributes to the greatly improved learning environment. Children are now able to self select all activities and resources, such as craft items and plenty of paper, which are stored at low-level and are of high quality and well chosen. However, the setting lacks appropriate facilities for children wishing to have a rest.

Satisfactory and effective daily risk assessments are undertaken, alongside well implemented policies and procedures to maintain children's safety and well-being, but their security is not complete. Measures are in place to secure children in their room but this is not always used in the pre-school room. Access is only gained by ringing a bell and being greeted by a member

of staff. Visitors sign in and everyone is accounted for on the premises at all times. The collection of children is fully monitored by only allowing children to leave with those persons known to staff and authorised by parents. Children are encouraged to keep themselves safe by helping to tidy away, such as before going to see the school play, and staff are vigilant in mopping up spills around the water play area to minimise the risk of slips.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff clearly understand the procedures for recording and reporting any concerns relating to child protection. The designated person has undertaken recent training and demonstrates knowledge and awareness of a range of types of abuse and neglect and the deputy also clearly understands procedures. The child protection statement includes relevant telephone numbers, procedures if an allegation is made against a member of staff and up to date information regarding the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Staff are also aware of the government guidance 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused - summary'.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from practitioners who work with current guidance and frameworks to ensure satisfactory planning and provision of activities and play opportunities are offered. This supports and develops children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities. Children are developing confidence within the setting and are given many opportunities to make decisions, such as when to eat their snack and what to have. They explore the setting freely but know where to get help should it be required, for example, when requiring more glue. They relate well to others and like to show their work to adults who are interested in what they do and say, which enhances their motivation levels. The key person role is being fully embraced by staff to ensure individual children's needs are identified and met, following observations, and providing for the next steps in their learning.

Children under three years are becoming skilful communicators as they explore their environment. They are fascinated with play dough, cooked and raw spaghetti, mark making and making festive crafts. Children's work is celebrated within the setting by being displayed as well as taken home for parents to enjoy. Particularly, children are absorbed in sand and water play. They use cars to make tracks in the sand and bath dolls in the water tray. They use their imagination in the role play area, mixing a range of ingredients in bowls and take plenty of time to look at books. These activities develop essential skills and help children interact with others.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There have been major improvements implemented to help promote children's learning in all areas. Children learn through directing their own play and learning because their environment provides opportunities for the six areas of learning. Staff support children in their play by asking some questions, praising them and helping when required, such as cutting out the Christmas tree so that children can decorate it. Planning links to ongoing observation and assessment, which ensures next steps for learning are included. Children show interest and persist in activities of their choosing, for example, a child cuts around circles she has drawn, concentrating very carefully. Children particularly enjoy free painting and chalking and using resources to create their own art work.

There are clear expectations from staff regarding children's behaviour and they in turn role model kindness and good manners. Children are beginning to regard the feelings of others through staff explaining why certain actions are inappropriate. As a result, they do not mind waiting, taking turns and sharing. For example, two boys share the tap in the role play area whilst washing up and putting plates to drain. Children with additional needs are well supported through careful monitoring by their key worker and other members of staff. The Special Needs Coordinator has a secure knowledge of her role and of the Code of Practice and how this is used to the benefit of children. Children's needs are well understood and supported by staff who carry out ongoing observations and assessments, which are now being used to inform planning.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the setting. They are meaningfully engaged, are beginning to ask questions and use their initiative because staff allow children to self select and play spontaneously. Children listen carefully to stories, especially when being read to on an individual basis. They handle books carefully and take their time to absorb pictures, because staff give them the freedom to do this. There are many opportunities for mark making in many forms and with plenty of media and materials. Children are not encouraged to count and use number in play as part of their everyday activities and do not engage in number rhymes or songs to help with understanding this area of learning. Furthermore, children are not encouraged in musical activities or movement. They are starting to recognise shapes, colours and letters and staff know to offer rich sources for reference within their environment. There is presently no access to Information and Communications Technology (ICT) equipment which prevents them acquiring knowledge in this area, but they have some access to resources which help them learn how things work, such as a camera, a remote controlled car and microwave. Staff help children to understand the concept of time because they tell them they have five minutes before tidying away or that snack time will commence shortly.

Children are beginning to make progress in relation to the stepping stones towards the early learning goals in the six areas of learning. For example, they are gaining confidence in creating their own learning opportunities from a well planned learning environment. Information is being gathered from well written observations and being used to help move children to the next stage in their learning. This ensures they make steady progress through the stepping stones and gives a clear picture of what children are doing and how well they are learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

There are satisfactory procedures in place which help children to gain a sense of belonging and, as a result, they settle in well. Session times are increased as required when children commence and the settling in policy helps with strategies to include parents so that children feel they belong. Children gain a positive view and understanding of diversity as staff provide a selection of meaningful activities and resources. For example, they have access to various role play items, puppets, books and musical instruments and small world figures, which form part of their everyday play experiences. Support for children with learning difficulties and disabilities is successfully focussed on in the setting's policy. Designated staff have had training on the Code of Practice and they know how to signpost parents to appropriate professional advice if necessary. As a result, children's additional needs are effectively met.

Children's behaviour reflects the achievements of staff in providing a stimulating and caring environment for children. There is now a comprehensive policy in place. Good behaviour is promoted through positive reinforcement and children respond to this well. Children's behaviour

reflects their interest in activities and experiences provided, which are well matched to children's needs to provide a suitable level of challenge. Consequently, they play cooperatively and harmoniously.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Children are benefiting from improved continuity of care between home and the setting because staff are working more closely in partnership with parents. Complaints procedures are compliant with requirements. The staff communicate regularly with parents at collection time. Conversations are focussed upon the children's needs, preferences and experiences. This has been a priority for staff in order to share ongoing information and get to know the children well. Individual records clearly show the children's progression along the stepping stones, however, parents are not invited to comment, are not asked about their children's starting points when they commence in the setting, and are not subsequently involved in their children's learning on an ongoing basis. This does not value parents as educators.

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

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are looked after by staff who are suitable to do so and now have the skills and qualities to provide for their all round care and learning needs. Contingency plans to cover for staff sickness are in place and applied to maintain correct ratios. The staff team, half of whom hold relevant early years qualifications, are developing as individuals and as a team under the new manager. There have been many changes due to ill health and staff leaving following the last inspection, but they are responding well to strong leadership. This impacts positively on children who have fully benefited from the significant improvements implemented during the last three months.

Fully revised policies and procedures work effectively in practice to promote the safe and efficient management of the setting and promote the welfare, care and learning of children. Especially notable is the comprehensive behaviour management policy which informs and directs staff so that there is consistency in approach. Records of attendance accurately show all those present. The required documentation is organised, maintained up to date and stored to ensure confidentiality. For example, children's records hold relevant information so that staff can meet individual needs. These documents now contribute to the efficient operation of the setting and meet regulatory requirements.

The leadership and management within the setting is satisfactory. The newly appointed manager has a clear vision for the nursery education with a strong focus on the personal development and achievement of all children. The provision is already managed and monitored effectively because the nominated person, who is the head teacher, and manager implement ongoing reviews and evaluation, following the actions set at the last inspection. This means that significant changes have been made with the implementation of the Foundation Stage curriculum leading to improvements in the organisation of nursery education and the outcomes for children. As a result, children's learning is suitably enhanced and this contributes to their progress along the stepping stones.

The manager is working hard with the team to energise them and set high standards. She acts as a good role model and strongly believes in confronting and approaching aspects of practice that require changing, for example, changing aspects of the routine, such as prolonged snack

times, to increase the amount the time children have for spontaneous play and learning. Committee and staff planning meetings mean that staff now share a common understanding of good practice which benefits all the children receiving early education. Staff are appropriately trained and supported in developing their knowledge and skills, which impacts well on children's progress. For example, the new deputy manager is spending three Saturdays in January on training courses and reflects the willingness and eagerness to develop skills. Staff express their high regard for the new manager and state all changes have been positive and they enjoy working in the setting now.

Practitioners are committed to promoting an inclusive environment in which every child matters and this works effectively in practice because each child is acknowledged as individual. Children, therefore, feel valued and supported in their learning.

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 there were seven actions set in order for the provision to meet the National Standards. These related to children's health and privacy when toileting, safety issues, the planning and provision of appropriate activities, managing children's behaviour, staff induction and training, as well as documentation.

A further five actions were made to ensure requirements for the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage were met. These related to planning, observations, assessments, the teaching and learning for children receiving nursery education, partnership with parents, and leadership and management.

All the above actions have been addressed during the past three months when the pre-school commenced the September term, following the inspection at the end of the summer term. Some have been completed and others are still in the early stages of being developed. Documentation now has policies and procedures covering all requirements and the attendance register accurately records all children and staff attendances. Important records relating to accidents, incidents and medication are newly designed to record full information and these are completed appropriately.

Children's safety is enhanced because electrical equipment has been removed until proper storage or furniture is available. Children now attend to their personal needs independently as and when they need to and privacy is afforded to children being changed or using a potty.

Staff awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour, taking into account their age and stage of development, was approached by observing staff in practice and giving individual feedback to them. Training needs have been identified and applications will be made for relevant courses as they become available. The new manager is effectively role modelling various strategies and supporting staff. Positive reinforcement and clear procedures within the behaviour management statement ensure consistency and has reduced unwanted behaviour from children.

Organisation has greatly improved through providing evidence of staff training in first aid. The new manager has recently completed a course and two more staff are booked for training in January. To date staff induction has included child protection, alongside health and safety as required and is being further developed so that formal procedures are in place.

Planning for all children has been addressed with advice and support from the local authority teacher team. Planning meetings are held each week to assist the staff team with the new formats and their implementation so that they are confident in applying them in practice. Observations feed into planning for individual children's learning and development, and assessments are beginning to extend their experiences and cater for next steps in their learning. This results in the provision of activities which are wholly suitable and ensures all children are given full opportunities on the days they attend.

Teaching and learning has been given priority for staff development, and the local authority teacher team has completed in-house training with more training planned. Staff are beginning to link observations to the Foundation Stage framework and refer to the curriculum guidance. The manager is teaching staff 'on the job' as she is well able to share her knowledge and expertise. An initial review has taken place to see how progress is being made.

Partnership with parents has commenced through parents being warmly welcomed into the setting and the key person being available for discussions. This, alongside newsletters, means that communication is much improved and parents know what their child is doing in the setting. Open days, parent questionnaires, meetings and more information available about the nursery education curriculum are planned for the near future.

Leadership and management is the most significant action addressed as all the above improvements would not have been achieved nor implemented in such a short time, or so well. The trustees of the school have appointed a highly qualified manager, who has worked closely with the head teacher, the teacher team and Sure Start to successfully implement major changes which impact positively on the care and education of all children attending the setting. As a result, staff themselves feel valued, managed and purposeful in their work which in turn means that children are happy, well cared for and learning well.

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 satisfactory.

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):

- make suitable provision for children requiring rest
- improve security of the premises so that children cannot leave unattended.

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):

- find out about children's starting points and continue developing partnership with parents to include them in their children's learning and assessment of development
- provide opportunities for children to interest them in ICT
- ensure children have opportunities for joining in with number rhymes and songs
- help children to respond to rhythm, music and story by means of gesture and movement.

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