

3-2-5 Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY285836
Inspection date	15 February 2008
Inspector	Penny Wood
Setting Address	Burghclere Down Community Centre, Berry Way, Andover, Hampshire, SP10 3RZ
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Registered person	3-2-5 Preschool
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?

3-2-5 Pre-school has operated from Burghclere Down Community Centre since 2004. It is situated within a residential area in Andover, Hampshire. A maximum of 26 children may attend the group at any one time and there are currently 41 children on roll, of which 30 are funded to receive nursery education.

The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:30 to 12:30, with a lunch club provided on Monday and Thursdays until 13:15. The pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school employs six members of staff, five of which hold an appropriate early year's qualification and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing an appropriate understanding of personal hygiene through the daily routines, although not all children are aware of why good hygiene is important. They readily wash their hands after visiting the toilet and rub anti-bacterial gel into their hands prior to eating, in order to restrict the spread of germs and infections. However, water in a bowl used to wash following the completion of painting activities is not changed frequently enough in order for children to sufficiently clean their hands.

Children's physical health is protected because of the emphasis within the group on maintaining high levels of staff qualified in first aid. A well-stocked first aid kit enables staff to administer appropriate care in the event of a minor accident. Written consent from parents and carers allow the group to seek further professional treatment in the event of a major accident or illness. Accident and medication records contain clear information and are shared with parents to ensure they are informed of the care their children receive. Staff monitor the accident records to assess no common factor is causing a hazard. In the event of sickness, exclusion times adopted by the group limit the spread of contagious illnesses. Notices displayed in the foyer inform parents of when to be vigilant regarding conditions such as head lice, chicken pox or sickness and diarrhoea.

Children are physically active. They enjoy access to the outdoor area and adjoining play park during set times within the session. They enjoy opportunities to run around, to climb and pedal bicycles. They are learning to throw and catch balls with skill. They move spontaneously, with confidence and are developing good control over their large muscles.

The premises and resources are regularly cleaned in order to remain suitable for children's use. Staff adopt good hygiene procedures when changing children and preparing foods. Children enjoy a healthy range of snacks from the snack bar, which include apple, carrot, cheese and raisins, in addition to a biscuit. Children are gaining in independence. They enjoy helping themselves to snacks and pouring their own drinks of milk or water. Records of children's allergies ensure children only receive snacks which are suitable for their individual dietary needs. During the lunch club, children enjoy a social time where they sit together as a group to eat.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy plenty of space to play freely. The bright colourful room presents displays of children's work and promotes a welcoming environment for them to enter. Activities are well organised within the room to ensure children have room to play safely. Children enjoy access to a good range of toys, all of which are checked for hazards and to ensure all pieces are present.

The premises are maintained in good condition, with safety measures in place to reduce the risk of harm to children. For example, plug sockets are covered and children do not have access to the storage areas. Outside, children benefit from direct access into a secure play area, which is thoroughly checked prior to use to ensure no risks remain from other users of the facilities.

Children enjoy an interesting range of outings during the school year, such as trips to a local theatre and a farm park. During such outings, children's well-being and safety is promoted

through the strategies adopted by staff, such as ensuring sufficient emergency equipment is to hand and higher ratios of staff to children apply.

Children are developing a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe through daily discussions about the group's rules, such as not running within the hall. Rules are consistently applied, with staff gently reminding children when necessary. Children participate in regular emergency evacuations of the premises, ensuring both staff and children are aware of the action to take should the fire alarm be triggered.

Clear child protection procedures are in place to promote children's welfare and safety. Good systems to identify and record concerns ensure staff are able to monitor children prior to referring to the relevant authority if required.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the group with ease and confidence. They eagerly choose their name cards and enjoy posting them in a post box in order to self-register. Staff ensure they are readily available upon children's arrival in order to support parents in settling their children and to discuss issues as required.

The hall is laid out ready for children's arrival, ensuring they quickly settle into their play. Children enjoy a good range of age appropriate activities and play opportunities. However, the group do not regularly update an appropriate development system to record the younger children's progress prior to them receiving funded nursery education.

Children benefit from the high levels of support they receive from staff, who deploy themselves effectively to support and engage children in play. Children are confident in approaching staff for assistance, with many accessing the resource trays independently and seeing to their own needs. Consistent praise and encouragement ensure children are developing high levels of confidence and self-esteem.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from the staff's clear understanding of how children learn. They experience a good range of activities both adult led and those which they may initiate themselves. Written plans for activities are readily available within the hall for staff's reference. Children experience all areas of learning through the continuous provision of daily activities, although staff do not routinely cover all aspects of learning within the newly initiated planning system for child-led nursery education.

Staff consistently complete both spontaneous and detailed observations on children, which are regularly recorded within their development records. Staff take into consideration children's stages of development when planning future activities. During activities, staff refer to activity sheets and maintain records on how children achieve the intended learning. Staff have a good understanding of how to adapt activities in order to provide children with appropriate challenge.

Children participate willingly in the activities provided. Good systems ensure all children experience the range available, rather than engaging in their favourite play for the whole session. Children enjoy time to participate to their full satisfaction and often persevere until activities, such as jigsaws, are complete. Children are developing good relationships with each other, excitedly coming together at the beginning of the day and saying goodbye at the end.

They are developing good use of their language skills through spontaneous discussions during play and with the staff. Systems in place with external agencies support children's speech and language development as required.

Children enjoy plenty of opportunities to develop their mark making skills with pencils, pens and paper readily available. They are developing their small muscle control through access to tools and equipment, such as scissors. They are developing a good understanding of mathematical concepts. For example, when placing small pieces of dough onto weighing scales, one child excitedly stated that her large ball of dough was heavier, when it tipped the balance of the scales. Children experience opportunities to count to high numbers. They are able to calculate that three crayons added to a further two crayons makes five in total.

Staff vary activities to add interest. For example, they add different textures and smells to paint to encourage children to develop their use of senses. Children enjoy art and craft activities. They confidently name their colours and recognise that when two colours are added together they can make a third. Children are creative in their use of imagination. They thoroughly enjoy playing in the home corner, having picnics and compiling shopping lists for items they need.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children actively participate in daily routines, such as helping to tidy up and serving themselves at snack time. Staff deploy themselves well within the group to ensure all children are occupied in activities or play. They listen well to the children during group discussions and encourage the quieter children to contribute. During group activities, for example reading the story 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt', all children eagerly participate in making suggestions on events and predicting the next step in the story.

Children are developing a good awareness of diversity through the celebration of cultural festivals which are relevant to the children within the group, such as Diwali and Christmas. They enjoy access to a good range of resources which depict positive images of people, encouraging children to learn about differences naturally through play. During the inspection children particularly enjoyed playing with a doll with an injured leg and a small wheelchair.

Very good procedures ensure that children with additional needs are included within the group and their individual needs are met. Children benefit from the relationship the group have developed with Acorns Early Years Centre, primarily through the provision of additional support, such as speech and language therapy. Within the group, staff adopt strategies such as visual timetables and sign language, in order to increase children's understanding of the daily plan and activities. When appropriate they seek extra funding in order to engage additional one-to-one support and to purchase further resources which aid children's development and progress. The group's special educational needs co-ordinator attends regular meetings with Acorns staff and other local groups in order to share professional expertise.

Children behave very well. Very good systems, such as clapping in a rhythm, gain children's attention prior to activities such as circle time. Children sit very well within large group activities, crossing their legs and folding their arms. Limited distractions within this area promote children's good behaviour. During circle time staff re-enforce the group's behaviour rules, consistently applying these rules throughout the session. Good strategies ensure children enjoy equal access

to the more popular pieces of equipment, such as the computers. Children enjoy receiving reward stickers, which are presented to promote good behaviour and children's achievements.

Children benefit from the relationships developed between their parents and the staff. Parents talk about feeling confident to approach staff on a daily basis in order to gain further information about their child's day and the progress they are making. Staff value parents' opinion and send out questionnaires in order to address any issues the parents would like to see improved.

Partnership with parents and carers within the provision of nursery education is satisfactory. Parents enjoy access to good information about the group's routines on notice boards within the foyer and through regular newsletters. However, there is limited information given to parents prior to joining the group which they are able to refer to at home, particularly regarding the group's policies, procedures and the provision of nursery education.

Parents appreciate regular opportunities to receive updates on children's progress through a termly report and direct contact with their child's key worker. Staff welcome parents into the group at any time to settle their children and to discuss children's progress or concerns as they arise. Parents are able to support their children within their nursery education by providing items from home for the 'letter of the week' and 'show and tell' activities. However, the group do not currently have systems in place to extend children's learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children benefit from the dedication of the staff, who are committed to providing high quality provision and who work well as a team. Staff regularly undertake training opportunities in order to develop their knowledge of child care and education. Robust recruitment and induction procedures ensure staff are suitable to work with children and aware of their role and responsibilities. The committee take an active role in the management of the setting, monitoring the provision and taking responsibility for the finances of the group.

The group organise the space well within the large hall, where children enjoy a good range of activities and play opportunities. All regulatory documentation is in place and completed with the required detail. Good systems ensure Ofsted is notified of changes within the committee structure and any significant changes or events. The group ensure that all records maintain confidentiality, are stored securely and available for inspection.

The leadership and management of the provision of nursery education is good. The manager takes responsibility for the provision of nursery education with high levels of support from the staff. All staff play an active role in the planning and provision of activities. New initiatives are currently being introduced regarding the emphasis on child-led learning and play and are very much within the development stage. The group receive occasional support from an advisory teacher, with regular visits from a development worker who supports their general provision of care. The committee and manager conduct staff appraisals in order to identify staff's strengths and weaknesses and on which they plan for future training. The team of staff meet regularly in order to discuss future planning, the progress of new initiatives and issues as they arise.

Improvements since the last inspection

Based on the recommendations that were raised at the last inspection, the group have made some improvements within their provision. They were requested to display children's work, to ensure the outside area is used to its full potential and to ensure parents receive an information pack or prospectus outlining the pre-school services and policies. As a result, new display boards have been introduced which enable the group to display some of the children's work. The outside area has been enclosed with a fence and enables children to enjoy physical play within a defined area. However, there is still room to further utilise this area for activities and planned opportunities. Finally, the pre-school have developed an information leaflet for parents, although this does not contain information about the group's policies, procedures or the provision of nursery education and as a result remains an area for ongoing improvement.

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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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):

- improve children's understanding of why hygiene routines are important, ensuring appropriate facilities are available at all times
- improve the system for recording the younger children's development and progress and ensure regularly updated
- continue to improve the information given to parents on joining the group regarding the group's policies and procedures

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):

- improve the information provided for parents regarding the provision of nursery education and develop systems to involve parents within children's learning at home
- continue to develop the planning system for child-led nursery education to ensure children enjoy activities based on all aspects of 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