

Eggbuckland Royal Naval Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	117183
Inspection date	07 March 2008
Inspector	Heather Morgan
Setting Address	29 Bellamy Close, Eggbuckland, Plymouth, Devon, PL6 5LG
Telephone number	01752 796079
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Registered person	The Trustees of The Royal Naval Pre School Learning Organisation
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 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?

Eggbuckland Royal Naval Pre-school opened in 1987. It operates from a semi-detached converted Royal Naval married quarter, on a Royal Naval housing estate on the outskirts of Plymouth city centre. The group has access to two main play rooms, a conservatory, kitchen and toilets. There is a secure garden at the rear of the premises.

The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Morning sessions for funded children are held between 09:00 and 11.30. Afternoon sessions for children aged two years and above run between 12.20 and 14.50. Children can also attend a lunch club from 11.30 to 12.30. There are currently 21 children on roll, 11 of whom are in receipt of nursery education funding.

There are four permanent members of staff employed to work with the children, all of whom hold a relevant qualification. They are managed by the Royal Naval Under Fives Co-ordinator. The group receives support from the Local Authority, and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The setting is working towards the Bristol Standards quality assurance award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children develop healthy eating habits as they enjoy a wide range of nutritious snacks, such as fresh or dried fruit, crunchy vegetables and yoghurt. They are encouraged to drink milk with their snack and can access additional drinks of water through the session to keep them well hydrated, particularly during hot weather.

Children learn about the importance of good hygiene as they become familiar with the daily routines of washing their hands before eating and after using the toilet. They use liquid soap and paper towels to limit the risk of cross infection. Parents are well informed about the pre-school sickness policy and the importance of keeping children at home when they are unwell.

Children are well cared for in the event of an accident. All staff maintain current first aid qualifications and can easily access a well stocked first aid kit which is checked regularly to ensure the contents are up to date. Children's continuity of care is supported effectively by the consistent implementation of clear recording procedures for injuries and the safe administration of medications; all records are countersigned by parents.

Children learn the importance of exercising to keep themselves fit and healthy. They do simple exercises at the beginning of each session and have regular opportunities to play outdoors in the fresh air. They develop increasing control over their large muscles as they learn to balance on beams, manoeuvre wheeled toys, manipulate a large parachute and learn to throw, catch and kick balls.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe and secure at pre-school because the staff undertake regular checks of the premises and take steps to ensure that the indoor and outdoor environments provide appropriate play spaces. Children are encouraged to have regard for their own safety, for example they are familiar with the temporary boundaries in place when they play on the paved area at the side of the building.

The building is securely locked when children are present to prevent unauthorised access and to ensure that children cannot leave the premises unsupervised. Effective procedures are in place to ensure that children are only collected by persons who are authorised to do so. Visitors to the building are monitored and not left unsupervised with children.

Children learn to use tools such as scissors and pencil sharpeners with increasing control and safety under the close supervision of staff. They can safely access resources for themselves as they are stored or presented at a low level. Children regularly practise fire drills to ensure they can access the building quickly and safely in the event of an emergency.

Children's welfare is given good priority as staff are able to access child protection to keep their knowledge and awareness up to date. They have a secure understanding of child protection issues and their responsibility to record and refer concerns. There are clear policies and reference materials in place to support staff in implementing appropriate procedures in the event of any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children of all ages arrive happily at pre-school and quickly settle to an activity of their choice. They are able to choose from a wide range of activities and staff ensure that they can access resources that are appropriate for their stage of development. Afternoon sessions are particularly designed for children under three years, although older children also enjoy interesting and varied activities at these sessions. The younger children have opportunities to explore different materials and experiences, such as playing in the sand, experimenting with craft materials and developing their imaginative play using role play and small world resources. They enjoy constructing models with different resources, then incorporate them in their play as they use them to represent other objects, for example, joining blocks together to make a large whistle.

Children become skilful communicators as they enthusiastically join in with songs and rhymes or look at books with members of staff. They gradually become familiar with the routines of the group, although these sometimes include times when they are required to sit still and wait for the next event to happen. Children's play is supported well by the sensitive interaction of the staff team. They respond promptly to children's requests to access additional resources and encourage them to try new experiences.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children have a positive attitude towards learning and enthusiastically initiate their own play. They are excited about new activities and keen to explore different play experiences. Staff plan a wide range of activities both indoors and outdoors, that support children's progress in all areas of the curriculum. They have a good understanding of how children learn and make good use of spontaneous play opportunities, daily routines and planned activities to extend children's learning. They closely observe children at play and evaluate their progress. Some of this information is recorded in assessment folders, but is not always used effectively to identify children's next steps for learning. Consequently some opportunities are missed to support the younger, less able children or to challenge and extend the older, more able children. However overall, children make good progress towards the early learning goals as they access a wide range of activities and are supported by a consistent team of staff who know them well.

Children are confident and able to persevere with their chosen tasks in order to develop new skills. For example, they concentrate hard on finding the right shapes to complete a puzzle or to develop the necessary skills to operate scissors. They particularly enjoy listening to stories and looking at books and as a result, they have a good awareness that print carries meaning. Children often incorporate mark making in their play and assign meaning to their emergent writing. Children often practise their number skills as they count how many children are present or how many times they can blow a dandelion 'clock' in the garden. Themed activities support children in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, they investigate the life cycle of frogs, grow and care for plants and observe butterflies when they visit the garden. Children have many opportunities to explore different materials and textures to make attractive two and three-dimensional pictures and models.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children arrive happily and settle quickly at the pre-school. New children are supported well in settling in to the pre-school community and becoming familiar with the routines. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They have opportunities to learn about different cultural and religious festivals and traditions. Children enjoy watching photographs of themselves appear on the computer screen, which supports their sense of belonging and self-esteem. They develop a good awareness of some of the rules for harmonious play. For example, at the beginning of sessions they recall the pre-school's agreed rules, such as sharing their toys, listening to others and not fighting. Children's behaviour is good. They respond well to the regular praise and encouragement they receive from staff and learn to use good manners and speak to others respectfully.

Children are cared for in accordance with their parents' wishes because they have regular opportunities for discussions with staff, clear documentation relating to the operation of the group and also use daily diaries to share information about their children's individual needs. Staff work closely with parents to address any specific needs and access additional support from external agencies when appropriate.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. They receive regular information about the activities their children participate in that support their learning and are knowledgeable about the progress they have made in some areas of the curriculum. For example, they notice progress in speech, counting and writing skills. However, they do not regularly access or contribute to assessment records. Parents value the shared book scheme and regularly enjoy looking at borrowed books with their children. This has a positive impact on children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children are cared for by a well qualified and experienced team of staff who have been vetted to ensure their suitability. Sessions are generally well organised to provide familiar daily routines that provide children with opportunities to access a wide range of play opportunities both indoors and outdoors. High adult ratios ensure children are well supported in accessing the activities.

All regulatory documentation is in place, reviewed regularly and shared with parents and staff. It is supported by a range of additional policies and procedures that are implemented effectively to guide good practice and promote positive outcomes for children.

Leadership and management of the nursery education curriculum are good. The manager works closely with the staff team to monitor and evaluate the success of the activities in delivering learning objectives. Plans are linked to areas of learning and used to ensure that children access all areas of the curriculum. There is a strong commitment to improvement. Staff enthusiastically attend training and implement new ideas to support children's learning. Regular appraisals are used to reflect on the pre-school's practice and to identify training needs and areas for improvement.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection the pre-school has introduced a wide range of nutritious snack items to promote children's healthy eating. They have also introduced daily diaries to support the exchange of information between parents and staff, which has a positive impact on children's learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 2004 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):

- ensure that all activities for younger children are appropriate for their stage of development and that the pace of sessions is maintained

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):

- further develop assessment procedures to identify all children's next steps for learning and use this information to inform planning; involve parents in this process

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