

Tregadillett Pre-School & Toddler Group

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY239307
Inspection date	06 February 2008
Inspector	Christine Powlesland
Setting Address	Community Centre, Tregadillett, Launceston, Cornwall, PL15 7EU
Telephone number	07800 605457
E-mail	tregadilletpreschool@hotmail.co.uk
Registered person	The Trustees of Tregadillett Under Fives Pre-School Playgroup
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 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?

A voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children at the preschool and members of the local community, manages Tregadillett preschool. It opened in 1972 and operates from two rooms in the community centre in the village of Tregadillett near Launceston in Cornwall. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The provision serves the local area and outlying villages.

A maximum of 20 children may attend the preschool at any one time. Children from the age of two years to five years attend. The preschool is open each weekday from 09:15 to 11:45, during school term times.

There are currently 27 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, seven children receive funding for early education. The preschool currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The preschool employs four members of staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for in bright clean playrooms. They learn about health and hygiene through established daily routines such as washing hands before eating. The preschool implement their policy of ensuring that children who are sick or infectious do not attend and they share information with parents to help maintain the health of the children. For example, displaying a notice to inform parents head lice 'are visiting'. However, children's continuity of care is compromised as parents do not consistently countersign records of accidents and incidents and although records are kept when medication is to be administered these are not always complete.

Children benefit from daily access to a generally healthy range of mid-morning snack items. For example they are offered a selection of pieces of cheese, apple, tomato, plum, mangetout and croissant with jam. Children eat and enjoy a good range of fruits, many preferring the healthy option of fresh fruit to that of croissant and jam. They have a choice of milk or water to drink. However, children do not have the opportunity to pour their own drinks to help them develop independence. All children eat together at snack time but staff do not sit with the children to encourage conversation and make this a social occasion. Children are not routinely offered a drink after physical exercise, such as playing outdoors or dancing to music, to ensure they remain hydrated.

Children enjoy daily access to a good-sized outdoor play area. They gain coordination and control of large muscles as they play with hoops and kick footballs. They particularly delight in jumping in large puddles. Children gain fine muscle control as they use a range of one handed tools such as felt tips and wax crayons. Most children enjoy moving and dancing to music tapes, although some prefer to sit and watch.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an orderly and spacious environment, which is carefully planned by adults in order to maximise children's free movement and use of space. Children use toys and resources that are in good condition and rotated regularly to give variety.

Children are kept safe by staff who are vigilant in their supervision of children and who maintain high ratios of adults to children at all times. They benefit from being cared for in a secure environment as the entrance doors are locked and staff ask visitors to record their presence to help keep children safe. Daily risk assessment checks are made and staff take action to minimise hazards to children throughout the session. For example, a spilt drink is immediately mopped up to prevent slipping and staff check the doorbell works before they lock the door to prevent unauthorised access. Children are encouraged to participate in keeping themselves safe by taking part in regular fire drills.

Children's welfare is effectively promoted by staff as they have a secure understanding of their child protection responsibilities. There is an adequate written policy in place and staff are aware of agencies to contact if concerned about a child at the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Young children are happy and settled at the preschool. They enter confidently and quickly become involved to activities. They are cared for by warm and caring staff that show genuine affection for the children and their well-being. Staff have an awareness of the Birth to three matters framework and this helps to inform planning and enrich the experiences of the children. For example, children enjoy a new activity of the hairdressers in the imaginative area, talking with a staff member about this and exploring the different equipment. A varied range of play activities is available for the children to access daily and they know the routines of the morning well. However, some younger children find it hard to concentrate during whole group adult-led activities, such as circle time and story time, and become a distraction for the older children. Children are caring and helpful towards each other, one child fastening the coat of another at home time.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making sound progress towards the early learning goals in the six areas of learning. They enjoy their activities and are interested and able to concentrate. Records are kept regarding children's progress, however, individual education plans are not always available on the premises.

Staff, overall, have a satisfactory understanding of the Foundation Stage. They have a sound awareness of how children learn and provide an interesting and practical range of age appropriate activities, which are rotated to offer the children variety. They follow the children during free play to join with them to extend their learning. Observations and assessments are completed, but staff do not set individual targets for development to ensure all children are receiving sufficient challenge.

Most children are lively communicators and independently look at books in a suitable manner, holding the book the right way up, starting at the front and turning the pages correctly. They are gaining independence as they put their own coats on before going outside and make choices about their play. They approach staff freely to ask for help when this is needed. Children enjoy making marks on small white boards and older children are encouraged to write their names on to their pictures. They have the opportunity to recognise their name during circle time and staff use their first letter sound to help children with this as they self register.

Children learn about quantity as they skilfully fill containers in the water play. They are able to discuss 'nearly full' and 'empty' as they pour water in and out the various sized plastic bottles. They confidently match items of the same colour and are able to name the colours and count the number of items of each colour. Children have limited access to technology; however, staff show them how to put a CD into a player and to independently switch this on.

Children concentrate for long periods, playing with the fitting bricks on the floor mat to construct various vehicles. Children use their imaginations well, playing with dolls and talking on the telephone. Generally their behaviour is good and stickers are given to all children to positively reinforce what they have done well during the morning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff have a good understanding of children's individual needs. Children are encouraged to be considerate to each other and their esteem is raised when they are given responsibility for simple tasks. Children learn about the local community as they visit the fire station and they learn about other cultures during their activities. Staff members supporting children with learning difficulties and disabilities link closely with other professionals. However, although staff have attended further training to develop their skills in helping these children, these skills are not currently used to improve the care of the children.

Children generally behave well, take turns, and share when playing in popular activities such as the water tray. However, an emphasis on the whole group activities influences some children's ability to concentrate if the activity is not appropriate to their interest and stage of development.

There are weaknesses in the procedure for recording complaints from parents and informing them of the outcome within the time limit. The complaints procedure does not contain the correct address if parents wish to contact Ofsted. This means that children are unable to benefit from effective information sharing between the preschool and their parents.

There is a satisfactory partnership with parents. Children benefit enormously from the lovely start to the day as children and parents congregate in the small playroom before the preschool opens. Activities are provided for them to play with and some parents choose to read books with their children until the preschool session begins. This friendly and supportive start to the session allows children to settle into the group gently. Parents are provided with a welcome pack on entry, which outlines many aspects of the preschool and the Foundation Stage curriculum. Regular newsletters and a parents' notice board are used to inform parents of ongoing topics and information. Parents are offered a consultation session each year to share assessment records and discuss achievements. There is no system in place to assess children's attainment on entry to the setting, making it difficult to adequately plan for their needs. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs are fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for in a suitably organised setting, where staff work well together. The supportive committee will continue to ensure that regulatory checks are completed. They ensure that new staff appointed are suitable to care for children and also make sure Ofsted is kept informed of any staff changes. Staff are deployed appropriately during the session and show a good awareness of their roles and responsibilities. Children have access to sufficient indoor play space, which is organised appropriately. They also have access to the outdoor environment on a daily basis.

Children's records kept on the premises are securely stored and contain all necessary regulatory consents. However, although children's assessment records are available some individual education plans had been taken off the premises to be updated and were not available. There are weaknesses in the recording of accidents, incidents and medication and the complaints policy needs updating.

The leadership and management of the preschool is satisfactory. The setting is managed by a voluntary management committee and they have a good relationship with the preschool staff.

The person in charge of the childcare in the setting is to leave at the end of the week and the committee are currently organising a new leader to take over the following week. Staff make good use of advice from outside agencies to help them focus on areas of improvement. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last care inspection the provider has been required to ensure that first aid certificates are kept up-to-date and at least one member of staff with a current first aid certificate is on the premises or on outings at any one time. They were also required to ensure that the child protection procedure for the playgroup complies with local Area Child Protection Committee procedures.

Two staff now have current first aid certificates and the preschool ensures that one of them is always available on a daily basis. They have updated the child protection policy to ensure it is suitable and meets requirements. These measures help to improve the health and safety of children.

At the last nursery education inspection the preschool was asked to improve the organisation of the environment and resources, to enable children to extend activities for themselves and to develop their own ideas. They were to ensure children are able to develop self-help skills through a variety of daily routines and to improve communication with parents, paying particular attention to using a variety of ways to share information about children's learning and progress.

The environment is now organised with a wide choice of activities available at free playtime at the beginning of the session. However, the many whole group activities limit children's opportunities to extend activities independently. They spend time waiting for everyone to wash their hands or put on their coats. This limits the time they have to develop their own ideas. Children are beginning to develop self-help skills, such as spreading paste on toast at snack time. Notice boards are now in place to help improve communication with parents, one displays individual charts recording the reasons children have received stickers, to help increase positive reinforcement. Regular newsletters are sent home and parents are invited to a yearly consultation to share information. These measures help to improve communications with parents about their child's learning and progress.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 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 incidents and accidents are recorded correctly and include parental signatures of acknowledgement
- ensure detailed records are kept of medication, including parental signatures giving permission to administer
- update complaint policy and ensure correct details are included for parents who wish to contact Ofsted
- ensure any records taken home to be updated are always returned for the next preschool session.

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):

- use information from parents and observations and assessment records to set individual targets for development
- provide children with regular opportunities to access technology.

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