

# Costessey Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY350641
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 March 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Julie Denise Edmonds
<b>Setting Address</b>	Costessey County Infant School, Beaumont Road, NORWICH, NR5 0HG
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<b>Registered person</b>	Costessey Pre-school Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Out of School 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?

Costessey Pre-School Playgroup registered in its current premises in July 2007 and operates from a classroom in Costessey Infant School. It is run by a voluntary committee and is part of an outreach Sure Start programme. A maximum of 26 children aged from two years to under eight years may attend at any one time. The provision offers full day care from 09:00 to 14:45 during school term times. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area adjoining the building.

There are currently 66 children on roll. This includes 49 children who receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting serves the local area. Costessey Pre-School Playgroup supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and who have English as an additional language.

The group employs nine members of staff, many of whom have experience. Of these, six hold relevant early years qualifications equivalent to NVQ Level 3. The pre-school receives support from the local authority and was accredited with the Norfolk Quality Assurance Scheme in December 2007.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean premises, promoting their good health. Effective hygiene practice includes staff wearing disposable gloves when changing children and cleaning the changing mat with anti-bacterial spray after each use. Children are developing independence as they follow simple hygiene routines and access the toilet and hand washing facilities. They learn to wash their hands at appropriate times, such as after using the toilet, without reminders being given by staff. They know where tissues are kept, help themselves and put their dirty tissues into the bin. Communicable disease information is shared with parents to support exclusion of children when ill and to help prevent the spread of infection. Children are cared for appropriately in the event of an accident, as first aid trained staff are present. Children's individual health and dietary needs are met, with information gained from parents and shared between staff.

Children help themselves to a variety of nourishing foods from serving bowls at the 'snack bar'. Food offered includes grapes, apple, cheese, strawberries and bread sticks. They eat together in small groups sitting at tables and pour their own drink from jugs. Healthy eating is well promoted, with staff instigating discussion about the food the children are eating at snack time. They ask the children about what fruit they prefer and talk to them about different types of fruit and vegetables. The children respond correctly when a staff member asks if sweets are a healthy food. Children have access to fresh drinking water, with cups provided at the drinking fountain. They enjoy packed lunches provided by their parents. Healthy contents are encouraged with 'five-a-day' information displayed at the group.

Children take part in activities that help them to develop physical skills. They enjoy regular outdoor play opportunities in the fresh air. They crawl through tunnels, balance and walk along tracks and stepping stones, and push along and pedal wheeled toys. They throw bean bags into the tyre on the playground and learn to catch. They run at speed and negotiate obstacles as they move around freely. The children have opportunities to practise climbing on equipment in the nearby 'Sure Start room'. They gain confidence as they use scramble ropes and slide or climb down the other side. Children are able to rest according to their individual needs.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in suitable and attractive premises, with much natural light from the large windows. They benefit from the child-centred environment created, with colourful displays and posters. 'Our gallery' gives children pride in their artwork. They use child-size furniture and toilets and hand washing facilities. The appealing layout gives children choices from an inviting range of activities set out on table tops and around the room. They access books freely and help themselves from the low-level storage in the pre-school room. For example, a child chooses additional farm vehicles. Children rest and relax in the comfortable book corner. A variety of toys and activities set out for the children in the adjoining play area outdoors gives them additional choices.

Comprehensive risk assessments promote children's safety. This includes assessing the safety of the layout of the pre-school room and use of equipment in different areas. Safety is monitored well at arrival and departure times, with a staff member located at the door. Effective systems ensure access to the premises is managed successfully, with a bolt in use on the door. A high

number of staff present ensures good supervision of children both indoors and out. Children use climbing equipment with safety mats in place. They learn about keeping themselves safe, with reminders given by staff. Emergency escape plan practice raises children's awareness and supports safe evacuation.

Children are safeguarded because staff understand their roles and responsibilities to protect children and are able to put procedures into practice. The group is committed to ensuring staff have up-to-date knowledge and has recently completed the 'Norfolk Safeguarding Children Programme'. Staff attend training and have access to safeguarding children information.

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

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed by friendly and caring staff. They are very well settled and confident as they receive positive responses from the staff, who listen to what they say and maintain good eye contact with them. The staff are interested in what the children are doing. This promotes the children's self-esteem. The children play happily, independently making choices. They play alongside each other and together. For example, at the Lego table, two children play co-operatively. They talk about the pieces of Lego they are using and lean across and add to each other's models.

The children take part in a variety of craft work. This includes painting and printing pictures. They enjoy colouring and drawing. A variety of messy play includes with sand and water. The children access a wall-mounted sensory board and pretend play with small world vehicles and roadways. They enjoy completing table top puzzles. Activities link to the current theme. They make 'fire' pictures and dress up in fire-fighter tabards and hats. They pretend play at the 'pet shop', with pet carriers, animal feed and a display of prices. They play happily and use the scales to weigh the dog biscuits. Activities and play experiences meet the needs of younger children attending in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Effective systems are in place for observation and assessment of children and valuable planning generally promotes children's learning and development. Children's recorded next steps inform planning to support children's individual progress and provide some challenge. Regular staff meetings ensure key workers have the opportunity to contribute to planning. However, short term planning of focused activities is limited to support staff to make the best use of activities and experiences to fully promote the learning of all children.

Well-prepared circle times promote many aspects of children's learning. They enthusiastically join in, such as when they identify shapes and answer questions. They talk about the size of objects, identifying if they are bigger or smaller than other items. Children learn to count to 10 and beyond and to recognise numerals. They are developing independence and learning to manage self-care tasks, such as finding and putting on their own coat and messy play aprons. The children are developing good communication skills. They enjoy sharing books at arrival, with staff members encouraging their interest. They are keen to borrow them to take home in their 'book bags'. They are very at ease with books and are keen to look at them on their own or together with other children or adults. They turn the pages and are learning that print runs from left to right and from top to bottom. They learn to recognise their name and other familiar words. The children practise valuable skills as they write for a purpose in pretend play at the

'office'. They are learning to link sounds and letters. They find items beginning with 'f' in the water tray.

The children develop their large muscle and fine physical skills. They use malleable materials, such as play dough, squeezing, rolling out and making patterns on the surface. They use tools, such as glue sticks and scissors as they make collage pictures. They take part in whole group action rhymes, such as 'head, shoulders, knees and toes' together at circle time. The children learn about the effect that exercise has on their bodies, as they talk about being really hot after 'marching' when they bang and shake musical instruments.

The children push buttons to make things work, using the play telephones, keyboards and cash registers. The children learn about living things. They water plants in pots outdoors to make them grow. They are keen to pet the rabbit brought into the group by a staff member and talk about how to care for it. The children design and make on a large and small scale. They construct with large waffle bricks outdoors on the ground.

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

The provision is good.

Staff know the children very well and provide for their individual preferences. Children learn about celebrations and festivals and use a modern range of books and toys that reflect diversity. They take part in activities linked to Saint George's Day, Diwali and Chinese New Year, including sampling different foods. This supports children's awareness of the wider world and helps them to develop a positive attitude towards others. Links with the local community include walks in the surrounding area, such as to the garden centre to buy plants. Visitors include local musicians, the librarian and a dental hygienist.

The group works in partnership with parents and other professionals to ensure the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are met. Staff are committed to inclusion, adapt sessions and provide support for individual children to enable them to take part. The setting promotes children's well-being in line with the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice, with appropriate and updated individual plans in place. The children benefit from positive behaviour management. They are given reminders to be kind, to share and that they may use loud voices outdoors. They learn to take turns at the craft table, 'when there is a space'. The children learn to adapt their behaviour in response to the routine and listen and respond to instructions at circle time. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The settling-in process is sensitive and flexible to meet children's individual needs. Pre-start visits support gradual settling-in. Parents are welcome to stay with their child at sessions until fully settled and following this. This supports a positive relationship with parents. They are involved in helping on local outings, at sessions and as members of the committee. A large notice board in the pre-school room is used well to display a range of information for parents. However, not all information for parents is up-to-date to enable working together to promote children's well-being. Some welcome pack details are inaccurate. Regular newsletters provide updates and parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have. This supports partnership with parents to provide continuity of care for the children. Ofsted contact details are displayed, supporting exchange of information with the regulator.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. Recently introduced books encourage parents to share information about their child,

such as interests, milestones reached and achievements. These home-link books also indicate that parents may ask questions about their child's progress and achievements at pre-school. Children's individual assessment records are 'parent friendly'. These 'learning stories' are attractive with photographs and descriptions of the child's involvement in activities. However, parents are not routinely accessing the learning stories and some parents indicate that they do not receive sufficient feedback from the group about activities and their child's progress. This does not consistently support individual children's learning and aid progress.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Robust procedures are followed to ensure adults' suitability at the time of recruitment and ensure children's well-being. However, vetting procedures do not include all aspects to confirm ongoing suitability. A range of generally accurate information gives parents an overall picture of how the group operates on a daily basis. Record keeping meets regulations and is well-maintained for the efficient and safe management of the setting.

Children and adults are welcomed into the group by mainly experienced and qualified staff who have a high regard for the well-being of the children. Minimum qualification and ratio requirements are exceeded to ensure children are well supported. The staff team work efficiently together to offer smooth running sessions. Staff responsibilities within the group and a daily rota of roles during sessions, ensures they are valued as individuals and supports their personal development to meet the children's needs. Commitment to the group is reflected in their work to gain accreditation with the Norfolk Quality Assurance Scheme. Familiar routines support children to feel secure and settled.

Leadership and management are good. Staff inductions and comprehensive job descriptions ensure staff have a clear view of their role. Appraisals address staff performance and training needs. Staff are keen to train and develop their practice, with the manager and two further staff currently working towards degree level qualifications. The group evaluate their own practice to maintain standards and ensure they are covering all aspects of the six areas of learning. They have action plans to develop practice at the group and ideas suggested by new staff members are adopted successfully.

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

Not applicable.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since registration 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

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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):

- update the recruitment and vetting procedures to include all aspects of ongoing suitability
- revise information for parents to ensure it is accurate.

#### 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):

- raise the profile of assessment records to inform parents about their child's progress
- develop short term planning to include sufficient detail to enable staff to make the best use of activities and fully promote the learning of all children.

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)