

Gooseberry Green Pre school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY355238
Inspection date	11 June 2008
Inspector	Lisa Paisley
Setting Address	Hogarth Primary School, Riseway, Brentwood, Essex, CM15 8BG
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Registered person	Gooseberry Green Pre-School
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?

Gooseberry Green Pre-School is privately owned and is one of two provisions run by Gooseberry Green Pre-Schools within the region. It was registered in 2007 and operates from a refurbished classroom within a local primary school in Brentwood, Essex. A maximum of 26 children from two years to under five years may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.00 to 15.00 during term times only. Children attend for a variety of sessions. All children share access to a small enclosed and secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 51 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 42 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs seven staff. All of the staff, including both managers, hold appropriate early years qualifications. One staff member is currently updating their training. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning about the importance of good personal hygiene through established daily routines such as washing their hands after creative activities and before snack time. Children have access to warm running water and liquid soap, however, they use a shared hand towel to dry their hands, increasing the risk of cross-infection. All documentation in relation to children's health is obtained and medical and accident forms are in place and signed by the parents. Over half of the staff hold current first aid certificates and they have a clear understanding of how to manage children who have an accident or are unwell. This ensures children receive individual care and attention in the event of an accident, incident or administering medication.

Children are suitably nourished as they are provided with a variety of food at snack and meal times. This is usually crackers, apples, crumpets and raisins and during the winter months warm food is provided. This ensures children receive healthy foods all year round. They learn about foods that are good for them through everyday discussions. Occasionally the food offered is linked to themes, for example, Indian sweets with regards to Eid. Snack times are generally a social occasion, however, there are limited learning opportunities hindering children's choice and independence. Drinking water is available to the children, to ensure children remain hydrated, however, systems have not yet been developed, limiting, choice and independence. The staff are fully aware of any allergies or special dietary requirements and preferences so that individual needs are met.

All children enjoy opportunities to engage in physical activities such as physical exercise sessions. However, the outdoor area has not yet been fully developed to provide children with an extensive range of outdoor play activities and experiences. Children use a range of tools and equipment to promote their finer manipulative skills, for example, scissors, puzzles and threading activities. As a result, children are making secure progress in all aspects of physical development and their skills are challenged appropriately.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

All areas of the provision are risk assessed by the staff so that any potential hazards to children are identified and appropriate action is taken to minimise or remove the hazard. This ensures each play area is safe before children arrive, for example, the main entrance is secure, the fire exit is in working order, all low-level electrical sockets are protected and the kitchen is inaccessible to children. There are clear procedures for the arrival and departure of children, ensuring children arrive and leave the premises safely. Fire evacuation procedures are in place ensuring children and staff know how to evacuate the building quickly and safely. Children learn about keeping themselves safe as staff provide consistent, gentle reminders such as tidying away toys, lining up sensibly and using resources and play equipment safely.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment which is brightly decorated with children's art work, displays and notices. There are clear designated play areas for children, for example, the book corner and role play. Staff have a secure awareness of how to organise space, furniture and equipment effectively enabling children to move freely with independence around activities and different play areas. As a result, children feel confident within the pre-school and are safe and secure. Children benefit from using a suitable range of toys and play equipment

which are maintained to a good standard. Children are able to generally self-select their own play resources which are appropriate to their ages and stages of development, fostering choice and independence.

Children are safeguarded because staff are fully aware of their child protection responsibilities. This ensures that they act in the best interests of children. There is a clearly written child protection policy and staff have access to the new guidelines from the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). Parents are informed of the group's responsibility regarding child protection reassuring parents of their child's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at the pre-school and are happy and settled due to staff relating to them sensitively and providing a suitable range of activities which are interesting and stimulating. Staff know the children well, they greet them warmly on arrival at the pre-school, which makes them feel safe and secure. Routines provide opportunities for children to socialise with each other on a regular basis. Staff set out a range of activities, toys and equipment for the children, for example, water, play dough, role play, book corner, puzzles and drawing activities. However, creative activities can be repetitive, limiting young children's opportunity for self-expression and imagination. The pre-school has successfully implemented the 'Birth to three matters' framework, ensuring activities and play experiences match young children's developmental progress.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. Staff use a limited range of teaching methods, as a result, there are missed learning opportunities. Planning sufficiently covers the six areas of learning, differentiation and evaluations of activities are included. However, focus activities do not provide clear learning intentions and outcomes, as a result children's learning is not being consistently assessed and planning for children's next steps in their learning is not being identified. Activities available to children sufficiently covers the six areas of learning, however, they tend to be repetitive and on occasions lack imagination. As a result there are some missed learning opportunities. Children's individual progress is extensively observed and documented. Information gained from these assessments is generally used to identify and plan for the next stage of children's development. A secure key person system is in place. Staff use individual development profiles to assess children's development and initial assessment profiles are in place for new children. Consequently, staff have a clear understanding of all the children's developmental progress.

Children are happy and confident within the pre-school. They separate happily from parents and carers and are keen to participate in the range of activities provided. Children are encouraged to independently self-select resources and initiate their own activities and games. They are learning to share, take turns and be co-operative. For example, sharing the small world play equipment and participating in board games. Children are developing secure communication skills, as they engage in conversation with their friends and staff, who actively listen. The book corner is warm and inviting for children and they very much enjoy sitting in small groups and with staff to share stories. As a result, children are confident at handling books and are developing an appreciation of books and stories. Children confidently use tools and resources to make marks, however, there are limited activities for children to write their own names and

use their name cards. They gain an understanding of early mathematical concepts through counting activities and singing number rhymes such as 'five fat sausages'. Older and more able children can count up to 10 and beyond. Cooking, sand and water activities develop children's sense of size, weight and capacity.

Children have secure opportunities to find out about the natural world through planned activities such as growing broad beans. Children talk with interest about their own lives and learn about the work of people in the community such as the fire safety officer. Children are developing a secure awareness of the uses of information technology in everyday life and are able to operate equipment, for example, simple computer games, keyboards, telephones and domestic items. Children's imaginations and free expression are suitably promoted through a range of activities including playing musical instruments, singing, painting, and craft activities. Children particularly enjoyed the textured painting where they experimented with a range of different textures including sand and rice mixed with paint. There are daily opportunities for children to engage in role play such as the bus station, home corner and shop. Children move around the premises safely avoiding hazards, they find a space on a mat and line up when requested. They enjoy using a range of large scale play equipment, for example, slides, balancing beams, tricycles, balls and hoops. Children use small scale equipment safely and with increasing control.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued as individuals and are able to make choices and decisions while at the pre-school. They develop confidence, self-esteem and respect for others. Children become aware of the wider society as they celebrate festivals and traditions from around the world. For example, Eid, Father's day, Mother's day, Easter and Christmas. A selection of books and play equipment is available to children, however, this is not fully developed limiting children's understanding and learning of the wider community. Systems are in place to support children that may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, ensuring all children feel valued, secure and contented in their surroundings.

Children behave well due to the consistent, positive strategies that staff employ to help them understand right from wrong and how to get along with others. Warm and close friendships are developed. Staff are calm, respectful and provide good role models. As a result children are polite and considerate to their friends and carers. Children help to tidy up, listen attentively and follow instructions carefully. Plenty of praise and encouragement is heard to raise self-esteem. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. The effective key worker system enables frequent exchanges of information so that care is consistent. Each child has a communication book and information about topic work and child's progress is shared and parents are encouraged to become involved in their child's learning. Parents have opportunities to view their child's records and are kept up to date with achievements and progress. The parents' notice board provides parents with all the required information about the pre-school, including staff qualifications, registration certificate and the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. Ensuring parents are fully informed with regard to their child's developmental progress, topic work and any events or celebrations.

Parents are aware of how to make complaints about the provision and these are dealt with in a prompt and professional way. Staff listen to parents' concerns and, where appropriate, adapt their policies and procedures accordingly.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff use the premises effectively to provide children with a suitable range of activities and play experiences. Children receive support through the good adult to child ratios at all times during the session. Staff satisfactorily plan a range of activities to meet the needs of the range of children. However, the organisation of daily routines such as snack time, large group work and physical play opportunities hinders choice and independence and limits children's play and learning opportunities. The pre-school has all the required documentation, including the operational plan, policies and procedures in place. Documentation is regularly updated ensuring that the pre-school continues to meet the National Standards. Written notices are displayed to remind staff and parents to share important information that could affect the children's care. Staff maintain clear registration records, ensuring all children are recorded on arrival. The pre-school uses effective recruitment procedures, which ensures staff are suitably vetted.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The registered providers, manager and staff work hard to ensure children have secure play and learning experiences. There is secure staff team morale and they work closely together to ensure the day to day running of the pre-school. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and they are deployed effectively within the provision. Staff meetings are in place to ensure all staff have a clear understanding of any events or concerns. Professional development is supported through staff appraisals and attending regular training. Consequently, children are cared for by an experienced and knowledgeable staff team and benefit from continuity of care.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children whom it provides.

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.

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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 further hand washing procedures
- develop the range of creative activities to extend young children's imaginations and self-expression
- extend the range of resources and play experiences to reflect positive images of culture, gender and disability
- review the organisation of daily routines to further promote children's play and learning experiences, this includes outdoor play and fostering children's choice and independence.

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):

- develop focus activity planning to ensure clear learning intentions are identified and plan for next steps in children's learning
- develop the range of teaching methods used by the staff
- develop further activities plans to ensure the six areas of learning are extensively covered.

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