

# Exminster Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106118
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 May 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Christine Slaney

<b>Setting Address</b>	Deepway Centre, Deepway Lane, Exminster, Exeter, Devon, EX6 8BG
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<b>Telephone number</b>	01392 833320
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<b>Registered person</b>	Exminster Pre School
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
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<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care
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## 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?

Exminster Pre-school was registered in 1981. It is a parent committee run group which operates from the village hall in Exminster, Exeter, Devon. The group have access to the main hall, with kitchen and toilet facilities. There is an enclosed garden available for outside play. The pre-school is open from Monday to Friday during term times. Sessions run from 09.15 to 11.45, with a lunch club offered until 13.30 during the winter term, and 12.45 during spring and summer terms.

On Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons, during spring and summer terms only, afternoon sessions are offered at the nearby primary school. This group is known as 'Cygnets' and is a separate registration. Many children attend both groups.

A maximum of 30 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 43 children on roll. Of these, 41 receive funding for early education.

There are 12 members of staff employed to work with the children. Of these, most hold, or are working towards, relevant early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children have good opportunities to enjoy a healthy lifestyle. They take pleasure in healthy snacks like tea cake and grapes, which they access independently. They skilfully use equipment buttering their own tea bread and successfully pouring their own drinks. In addition, staff are responsible for the snack time budget and work hard to ensure this area is well maintained and attractive for children. This means refreshments and drinks are continually replenished. Parents supply packed lunches and the setting works closely with them to ensure they are nutritious. Most packed lunches include an ice block to ensure they remain fresh. There is a separate area for outside play. Staff understand the value of outdoor play. They are keen to extend learning opportunities both for the children and themselves. This means children can freely access both indoor and outside activities. Children thoroughly enjoy playing outside where a range of resources are attractively provided. As a result, children squeal with delight as they play supervised running games and quieter craft play activities. Furthermore, children's activities include a range of equipment, such as push-a-long toys, balls and hoops. This ensures they have regular opportunities to exercise. In addition, they are developing good control and move with confidence, safely negotiating obstacles, including equipment like tables and chairs.

Children play in a clean setting where good standards of hygiene are implemented. This includes thoroughly cleaning tables before children sit down for snack time. Children are developing an understanding of the importance of washing their own hands. They use running water, liquid soap and paper towels. This helps protect them from the risk of infection. All necessary consents are in place to enable staff to respond appropriately, for example, consents for emergency medical treatment and advice, plus administration of medication. Children are well cared for in the event of an accident as staff have appropriate knowledge and understanding of first aid and update their training regularly. In addition, there is a well stocked first aid kit. Accidents are clearly recorded and the information is shared with parents to promote children's continuity of care.

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

The provision is good.

Children play within the limitations of using a community hall. The hall is spacious, and staff work very hard to ensure it is welcoming and well organised for their play. The whole premises are secured by a buzzer which very quickly alerts staff. Visitors are expected to sign in and do not have unsupervised access to the children. This means it is always possible to tell who is on the premises, for example, in the event of an emergency. Risk assessments have been used well to identify and monitor the hygiene and safety of the premises and as a result the hazardous trailing wires have been addressed. Children frequently practise the fire drills to ensure that they can evacuate the building quickly and safely in the event of an emergency. Children are kept safe on outings through staff routine procedures which include an increased adult-to-child ratio, using high-visibility tabards and wrist straps. Children learn to be aware of safe routines for crossing roads, as they are involved in looking and listening for traffic.

Children select toys and games, which have been attractively presented from the wide range that is set out for them. Toys are regularly rotated according to the needs and interests of the children from the storage area, and are well maintained. Resources include role and craft play, construction bricks, books and puzzles. Children are learning to use equipment, such as scissors,

play dough tools and writing materials. They do this with increasing skill and safety under close supervision.

Children's welfare is safeguarded appropriately. This is because staff are fully aware of their role in contributing to keeping them safe from harm. Staff have undertaken training in this area and have correctly identified that they need to up date their understanding of the local area child protection procedures. Furthermore, there is a comprehensive child protection policy which clearly sets out an appropriate procedure to follow should there be any concerns.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and well occupied. They benefit from the friendly and welcoming atmosphere and as a result settle quickly to play. There is good interaction between staff and children, for example, children became engrossed during a circle time activity looking at ice cubes. Children are developing in confidence. As a result they freely access resources and are encouraged to develop independence in practical skills, such as managing their own snacks, hand washing and clothing. Children use a good range of equipment and resources which are arranged so that they can select for themselves. This means they show interest in their surroundings, including an attractive interest table about Australia.

#### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. This results in children enjoying learning through a wide range of interesting activities. Effective teaching helps children make good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning. There is a suitable key worker system and a good balance of adult-led and self-chosen activities. Staff know the children well as individuals through observations, which are effectively recorded on each child. In addition, staff have identified the importance of observations and are presently evaluating the system to ensure it fully supports children's learning and informs planning. Children are challenged appropriately, and therefore, make good progress in their learning. The 'Cygnet' session offered to children's who are starting school provides more structured activities in the school environment. Furthermore children have opportunities to experience parts of school life, for example, share some play times. This helps children make a smooth transition to the school.

Children are confident and eager to learn, and as a consequence they settle happily and quickly to play. They have good relationships with the staff and with each other and are developing an understanding of the concept of sharing and taking turns. Most children use language well to communicate. This includes 'chatting' freely with unfamiliar adults, like the inspector. They proudly show their postcards and explain who they going to send them too. Children learn to recognise their written name through regular daily routines. As a result they confidently self-register and select their name card at snack time. Some children are writing their names using recognisable letters. This is because staff use meaningful opportunities like 'writing' their own name on drawings and painting to reinforce children's pre writing skills. Therefore, children proudly show off their achievements.

Children develop good knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Topics and themes like other countries results in children's growing understanding of the wider world. Consequently, some children excitedly shout out 'we are an island like Australia but a lot smaller'. In addition, children are able to recall significant events. They chat freely about last week, when they were talking about Dory from Finding Nemo. They use their senses well to explore a broad

range of materials and objects through planned activities, such as messy play, construction, art, craft and cooking. For instance, large circle time activities include looking at melting ice. The whole group becomes totally engrossed as very skilful questioning, ensures children enjoy basic scientific concepts. This includes exploring ideas like sinking, floating and what happens to ice. This is because they are actively encouraged through competent questioning. Consequently, they think about changes that can happen as the ice melts. However, this does become less effective, particularly for some children who struggle in larger groups. As a result, they can become uninterested as the larger group shares experiences like feeling the ice. Children have opportunities to use tools, such as rolling pins and cutters to shape play dough. They have regular opportunities to use technology. This includes use of a computer on both sites. This means they freely use and have good skills like accessing simple programmes and mouse control. Children learn about their local environment through visits and walks around the village including trips to the post office. They thoroughly enjoy the opportunity to send postcards they have just written. This helps them to develop an understanding of the community they live in.

Children have daily opportunities for expressing themselves and being creative. These include using resources like boxes, glue and cellotape. As a result children thoroughly enjoy making space rockets to visit the moon. Everyday routines like registration are used well to enable children to develop an understanding of numbers. Therefore, some children are able to count successfully to large numbers like, 17. Effective questioning ensures children have opportunities to add on or take away. Craft activities like making their own boomerangs are used well to encourage children to look at different patterns and colours. This means children are developing an understanding of shapes and patterns and there are examples of good representation of repeat patterns and colours.

Assessment records are dated and completed regularly. As a consequence, children's learning is effective and this is then used well to inform planning. This ensures that children are able to progress at a suitable pace and receive appropriate support and challenge in their learning.

The setting has a good range of equipment to cover all areas of learning. The area used by children is prepared well and staff have identified they need to continue to develop the learning areas both indoors and outdoors to ensure children have consistent opportunities to access all areas.

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

The provision is good.

Children are valued and included, they are warmly welcomed at each session. Staff get to know children well through effective communication with parents, and as they support their activities. Children quickly develop a strong sense of belonging. There are frequent opportunities for parents and staff to contribute both formally and informally. This includes sharing information about their time at pre school and home experiences through a useful daily diary. In addition, children develop good relationships with key staff members.

Children who have specific needs are well included and supported, staff work very closely with their parents and a wide range of professionals to ensure their needs are met and their independence is promoted. Children learn about their own community when they go on regular walks and visit local shops. Children are learning about diversity and the wider world. This is because there are opportunities for them to learn about beliefs and traditions as they involve

themselves in a variety of activities including celebrating different festivals. This means children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children respond well to effective strategies used by staff, for example, gentle reminders about remembering manners and the reinforcement of positive behaviour with praise and encouragement. This means children's behaviour is good. Staff treat children with respect and they have a good knowledge and understanding of children's individual needs.

The partnership with parents is good. The pre school is committed to working with parents, actively encouraging them to support their children's learning. This includes opportunities to further extend their learning at home, for example, regular newsletters inform parents of themes and topics. Parents are provided with good information regarding day-to-day care and about their children's activities. This ensures there is a good exchange of information from home to enable them to support children effectively. Furthermore, parents are provided with clear information regarding forthcoming programme activities and parents can view their own children's assessment files.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children play in a well organised setting and are cared for by a staff team who are committed in their work with children. The community hall is well organised and provides an attractive environment within the limitations of using a community building. The prepared activities provide a wide level of interest to the children and this means children are engrossed in the wide range of play opportunities. Good ratios are maintained to ensure that children receive prompt support when needed. Staff caring for the children are appropriately vetted to ensure their suitability and have access to a range of training opportunities to support their professional development.

All regulatory documentation is in place and where appropriate stored securely. Important information regarding the conditions and status of registration are clearly displayed. The parental committee is newly formed and are beginning to fully understand their role and responsibilities. This includes an active chairperson who is regularly available to support the management team and liaise with parents. As a result, regulatory requirements are met and attention to gaps in policies like outing policy is successfully identified. In addition, the parental committee have correctly identified they need to continue to develop as a committee to effectively support the management of the pre school.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The setting reviews and evaluates the provision and identifies areas to improve, for example, they are aware of recent government frameworks like letters, sounds and phonics. In addition, they have identified the need to provide a covered area for outside play opportunities all year round. The dedicated staff team and parental committee are working well together. Consequently, they are committed to ongoing professional development. Regular appraisals for all staff members are seen as important for development. Furthermore, they receive regular support from local authority development services. This enhances the experiences of the children in their care. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

At the last inspection the setting was set actions relating written record of medication, obtaining written parental permission to seek medical advice or treatment in an emergency, and the registration system. In addition actions were set in relation to access and availability of paperwork and informing Ofsted about any changes in the registered person. These have now been addressed and as a consequence contribute to keeping children safe.

At the last nursery education inspection, the setting was asked to develop systems to obtain information from parents, to inform children's starting points in the Foundation Stage. The settings management team and parental committee are presently reviewing these systems and this is on going.

### **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.

## **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 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):

- continue to develop the pre school committee to ensure they are fully aware of their role and responsibilities

#### **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):

- consider reviewing the circle time activities to ensure all children fully benefit from pre planned learning experiences.

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)