

St. Osmunds Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY357437
Inspection date	25 June 2008
Inspector	Susan Mann
Setting Address	St. Osmunds School, Exeter Street, SALISBURY, SP1 2SG
Telephone number	07988574206
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Registered person	St Osmunds Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 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?

St. Osmund's Pre-School is a committee run group and first opened in 1985. They registered in the existing premises in 2007. The pre-school operates from a classroom in the grounds of St Osmund's School in central Salisbury. A maximum of 26 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 46 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 35 receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school is open five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9.00 to 15.00. Children use the school playground at times when school children are not using it.

Children from the local community attend the pre-school. The pre-school currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. There are five staff working with the children, including the manager. The manager has Early Years Professional Status and all staff hold a relevant early years qualification and a current first aid certificate.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well by a wide range of effective routines. For example, staff use colour coded cloths for cleaning to ensure good hygiene is maintained. Children are very confident in washing their hands after using the toilet and before they eat snack. Photographs of effective hand washing are displayed at child height to remind children to do this. All staff hold a current first aid certificate which means that children receive a good level of care should they become unwell or injured whilst at the setting.

Children thoroughly enjoy their snack and meal times. Staff always sit with the children and they talk together about what they have done, or discuss news from home. Children may choose when to have their snack during the times that the snack bar is open. This means that children can eat and drink when it suits them which meets their individual needs. They enjoy choosing from a range of nutritious foods such as crackers and cheese, or fruit. Children learn to develop their independence because they prepare their own snack, spreading butter on the crackers and pouring their drinks of milk and water.

Children benefit from plenty of fresh air and exercise. They play in the school playground each day. Children demonstrate good balancing skills as they walk across the playground on stilts. They enjoy pedalling tricycles, or climbing on the climbing frame, as well as quieter activities such as playing at the water tray.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe in this pleasant and welcoming environment. They have lots of space to play, eat and rest in the purpose built setting. There is a great deal of natural daylight, and colourful wall displays create a bright setting for children to enjoy. The organisation of the premises allows children to become more self assured. They use low level toilets and hand basins, and use sinks at their height to clean up after messy play. Toys and resources are presented at their height so that children may choose what they wish to use. All equipment is clean and well maintained. Toys are of a good quality so they are robust and safe for children to use.

Children's safety is assured because staff are vigilant in their care. Regular risk assessments are done to identify any potential dangers and these are dealt with efficiently to minimise hazards. Children have regular opportunities to practise the emergency evacuation procedures. This means that they would know what to do in the event of a real emergency and would be able to leave the building safely. Children learn how to keep themselves safe. They take care when passing scissors to one another, and know not to run unless outdoors. Children also know that they should wear a hat when the sun is shining in order to protect themselves.

A number of visitors enter the setting to use the private office area for planned meetings. Their names and time spent on the premises are recorded, although they are not asked to provide further details. This means that a sufficiently robust record of visitors entering the premises is not maintained.

Children are protected from harm and neglect because the pre-school has comprehensive procedures in place to safeguard their welfare. This element of the provision is overseen by

the manager who has attended a great deal of relevant training. All staff are aware of the setting's child protection policy, and know how to record and report any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled. They demonstrate strong relationships with one another as they play. Children choose what they wish to play with, and staff are skilled at guiding children who are not yet confident to make these choices. Younger children benefit from playing alongside older children who act as very good role models for them to follow. Older children are sensitive to the needs of younger children and show care and consideration towards them.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are progressing well towards the early learning goals. They enjoy a rich curriculum of exciting activities which cover all areas of learning. Children's next steps of learning are identified through an effective system of observation and assessment. This information is then used to plan a curriculum that will provide opportunities for children to develop in these identified areas. This method is successful because it ensures that each child progresses at their own pace, and that their learning is tailored to their own needs.

A high proportion of learning is child led. Staff help children to seize the opportunity to expand on things that ignite their curiosity. Children show enthusiasm for a task or an activity, and staff use this to extend their learning. For example, children enjoy opening a package that has been delivered to the pre-school. It is a new tool bench. They make guesses about what it might be, and then help the members of staff assemble it, cooperating well and showing great interest. Children may also choose to access focussed activities that have been planned with a specific learning intention in mind. For example, children play with different sized frogs at a mathematical matching activity. They count the frogs and make comparisons about size as they match the frogs to the symbols on their cards.

Staff take time to get to know children well. They are clear about the next steps for each child through observation and the system of assessment. This means that children benefit from a high level of interaction which supports their learning and development. It also allows staff to differentiate activities so that each child can be challenged to further their progress. Staff evaluate the curriculum frequently to check that it is meeting children's needs, and that it provides an enjoyable experience for them whilst they are at pre-school. The curriculum is also properly monitored to make sure that all aspects of the Foundation Stage are covered.

Children for whom English is an additional language settle into the pre-school. Staff speak clearly and use gestures to help children communicate. Some of the children who speak English as an additional language do not have sufficient opportunities to hear words, songs and stories in their home language. This means they do not always have enough support to enable them to fully participate in group activities, or to promote the development of their confidence and learning.

Children demonstrate good listening skills and an interest in books. A group of children are enthralled as they listen to a story. They ask questions about the story and make comments which show that they fully understand it. At another time, a child sits on the 'teachers' chair and begins to 'read' a story. She retells the story, turning the pages as she does so. Another

child, and then a pre-school helper come to listen, sitting at her feet as she 'reads' several books. Many children are adept at writing letters and numbers as part of their play. Children demonstrate very good counting skills and can make calculation as to what one more would be.

Children enjoy learning about their environment. They tend to flowers and vegetables they have planted, watering them regularly and watching the plants grow. Children demonstrate skill when using the pre-school computer. They manipulate the mouse well to play games. Children are encouraged to explore. They thoroughly enjoy mixing custard powder and water together, and then walking around in the mixture. They squeal with delight as they feel the texture of the mix, and then extend this by making footprints onto paper alongside.

Children have great fun whilst they play. They learn successfully because staff are knowledgeable about children's learning. Staff are flexible in their approach which creates a happy and purposeful atmosphere that children enjoy.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children demonstrate a strong sense of belonging. They settle quickly when they arrive and enjoy participating in activities. They are confident and self assured, and show consideration to one another. For example, a younger child struggles to turn the tap off after washing his hands. An older child goes over and turns it off for him, smiling as he does so. Children benefit from the inclusive environment. They play with a wide range of resources that reflect our diverse society so that they become familiar. The setting has a strong statement on equality and diversity that underpins practice. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children manage their behaviour well. Staff provide good role models for children to follow because they are calm and cheerful. Staff show children respect, always listening to what they have to say and taking an interest in them. Children's unacceptable behaviour is analysed to discover the cause to help prevent further occurrences. Parents are fully involved with behavioural issues because staff liaise with them openly to promote a consistent approach between home and pre-school. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive effective support to enable them to progress well. Staff are trained and liaise with outside agencies to provide a high level of care. Parents are fully involved in their child's care and education and staff are sensitive to their concerns.

Children settle well because there is a positive relationship between their parents and the pre-school. Parents are very involved in the running of the setting through being members of the management committee. This means that the policies and procedures of the setting reflect the needs of families who use it. Parents are welcomed into the setting to discuss their child's needs. They appreciate these opportunities and find staff friendly and approachable.

Partnership with parents with regard to the provision of nursery education is good. Parents are informed about what their child is learning through regular planned meetings and informal chats. At these, they see their child's assessment records and discuss their next steps. At present, staff give parents some ideas of how to extend children's learning at home on an informal basis, but there is no system in place to ensure that this is done consistently. This means that children do not always have the chance to continue their learning at home and share this with their families.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children enjoy their time at pre-school because the setting is well managed. The management committee is effective in its role. New members are properly inducted so they are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities and this leads to the smooth running of the group. All required documentation is accurately maintained. Children's arrival and departure is recorded in line with regulation. Staff are qualified to a high level and they regularly update their training to further their knowledge and skills. They are supported effectively in their roles by regular appraisals which help them evaluate and develop their practice. Recruitment procedures are robust to ensure that all adults working with children are suitable to do so.

Leadership and management are good. The manager of the setting is forward thinking. She strategically plans future improvement so that children benefit from high quality provision that meets their needs and those of their families. Planning and assessment is rigorously monitored to ensure that the child is always the primary focus. The management committee and the manager cooperate well to promote the best outcomes for children. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for 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):

- ensure all visitors to the setting provide sufficient details

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):

- provide opportunities for children for whom English is an additional language for them to make further progress towards the early learning goals
- continue to enhance children's progress by providing further opportunities for them to extend their learning at home.

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