

# Holmer Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY356893
<b>Inspection date</b>	10 April 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Janette Elizabeth Owen
<b>Setting Address</b>	Holmer C of E Junior School, Holmer Road, HEREFORD, HR4 9RX
<b>Telephone number</b>	07796204133
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Holmer Pre-School
<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?

Holmer Pre-School was registered for full daycare in 2007 and runs from premises within Holmer Church of England Junior School. A maximum of 32 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.00 to 12.30 and 12.30 to 15.00 term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 28 children aged four to eleven years attending the out of school club and 51 children aged from two years to under eight years on roll in the pre-school. Of these, 48 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local and wider area. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs eight members of staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority and is member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance. The setting holds a Quality Assurance Bronze award and is working towards the Silver level.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted very effectively as the setting takes positive steps to promote children's good health. They practise self-care routines with support and encouragement and take part in discussions about the importance of good hygiene routines. All children are provided with their own tooth brush which they use to clean their teeth after lunch. This enables them learn about personal hygiene and to begin to take responsibility of meeting their own health needs. Positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures taken when children are ill so that the risk of cross-infection is minimised. Staff follow effective cleaning procedures such as using colour coded clothes and chopping boards and toys and equipment are regularly cleaned. Children who are unwell or infectious are well cared for and parents are provided with information on infectious diseases so they understand the exclusion periods. This ensures children are protected from cross-infection and helps them to remain healthy. Procedures for administering medication are sound, although medication is not normally administered unless there is a medical reason to do so. Children receive suitable care in the event of an accident because there are trained first aid staff available each session and records are kept, signed by parents, of any accidents that occur.

Children are well-nourished and have excellent opportunities to learn about healthy eating because the setting provides children with regular drinks and food that are nutritious and complies with their dietary and religious needs. Parents' wishes are taken into consideration when deciding on the menu for children attending the out of school club. There are good arrangements in place for managing snack and meal times in relation to children with food allergies. All children are learning to wash their hands after lunch so that they do not cross-contaminate any food consumed by children with allergies. This helps protect children's good health. Children are learning where their food comes from as they help make bread for the toast they eat at snack time. They are growing tomatoes which they will also eat later in the year. The children have been involved in deciding how snack time is organised. They have their snacks picnic style seated on the floor. Children are able to access bottles of drinking water throughout the day ensuring they are not thirsty.

All children benefit from regular daily access to fresh air and exercise, either indoors or outside whether pre-school children or those attending the out of school club. A range of activities take place indoors, allowing children to develop their physical skills, for example, their co-ordination and dexterity as they build with wooden blocks or lego. Children are able to use a variety of tools and activities which promotes their small muscle movements. They use cutters and rolling pins with play dough and a range of craft materials and tools at the craft table. Children have access to outside play using different areas such as the sensory areas where they can play imaginatively and explore the different area such as the trees or wooden structures. They practise their balancing, climbing and co-ordination using the wooden physical play apparatus. The main play ground enables children to run freely, developing their sense of movement and control or to use the activities painted on the floor to enhance their games and learning. Children have time to be active and quiet times. Staff recognising when children need to burn off energy or to calm down and respond appropriately by providing quiet activities such as stories, tapes or access to a computer in the quiet room. Children attending the out of school club are able to use this space to relax and rest after their day at school.

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

The provision is good.

Children are safe and very well cared for in premises that are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose because the setting ensures that the environment gives children very good access to a extensive range of facilities that effectively promote children's development. The organisation of the space used by children is very good. The good quality activities and resources are set out so that they are easily accessible and attractive to the children. Children are self-reliant and able to exercise their independence in choosing activities which interest them. They show respect for the resources provided using them appropriately and with care. Space is used flexibly, allowing children to make choices about where they play and how they use the space. They can use the outside play space for activities when they want to or participate in quiet activities or enjoy a book in the quiet room. Children always use an excellent range of good quality resources and equipment that is suitable and safe. This is because the setting provides furniture equipment and toys which are appropriate for their purpose. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards. The safety and cleanliness of toys is ensured by good cleaning regimes, all toys sanitised termly and any damaged or dirty toys are dealt with immediately. This protects children from harm and helps them stay safe.

Children's safety is promoted because the registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents. Risk assessments and formal checks are carried out generally well. Robust collection procedures are implemented to ensure children are only given into the care of authorised persons. Children are well supervised, the adult to child ratio is generally good. Security arrangements are good and access to the premises is monitored. Fire safety is promoted effectively in the setting through monthly evacuation drills which help children understand how to respond to the evacuation procedure. Staff have attended fire marshal training and are knowledgeable in how to manage an emergency situation. Consequently, children able to play safely.

Children are well protected because staff have a good understanding of their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice. The written child protection polices ensures that staff and parents are aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of child protection concerns being raised. There are suitable arrangements in place to ensure that Criminal Record Bureau checks are carried out on all staff and that adults are not allowed unsupervised access to children unless checks are carried out.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children throughout the pre-school and out of school club settle well into the welcoming environment and begin to form close relationships with each other and with staff. The provision is extremely well organised and managed and the daily routines provide a structure to the day which helps children to feel secure and to develop their self-assurance. Children play with an extensive range of high quality toys and activities which are used effectively by staff to engage children's interest and provide meaningful learning experiences which are often practical and thoroughly enjoyed by the children. All children are fully engaged in the provision, they are able to concentrate well on activities because they are interested and at times show sustained concentration, absorbed in what they are doing. For example, setting up a ramp for small vehicles to run down, watching how far they will travel across the room and down the hallway. Children under three-years-old take part in the same activities as the older children but staff

are aware of their particular learning needs and differentiate appropriately. Staff have begun to use the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure all children are provided with appropriate activities and opportunities which enable them to make excellent developmental progress.

The recent addition of an out of school club provides older children with a safe environment in which to be cared for and a good range of activities. Children's views are sought on aspects of the provision such as discussing the rules and codes of behaviour and the type of activities offered. Themed activity nights are used to provide more interest for the children and enable them to spend more time on specific activities.

#### Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff have the necessary training, experience and understanding of child development to ensure all children are provided with excellent learning experiences which enable them to make very good progress in all areas of their development. All staff play an effective role in supporting children's learning. They provide learning experiences which clearly reflect children's interests and areas for development identified through the children's individual profiles. For example, a fruit tasting activity was set up, this enabled children to use their senses, to explore different textures and tastes and to expand their vocabulary and communication skills. The children were able to describe what they saw and tasted, they talked about the different fruits they could identify and discussed healthy eating. Written plans provide clear guidance for staff delivering the adult directed activities and also enable staff to provide an extensive range of activities and experiences which children can use independently.

Teaching methods are exemplary. Children are taken on a journey of exploration and learning which enables them to become independent learners. Staff are skilled in understanding what works best for individual children. The robust key worker system means that staff are able to talk to parents and carers to find out about children's individual needs and interests. This helps them in supporting the child's learning and development taking into account children's age, any special educational needs, home language and any other relevant factors. The positive interaction between staff and children creates an atmosphere which encourages children to be self-reliant, enthusiastic and independent learners. Children's language and communication skills are highly developed. They are confident talkers ready to share their ideas and experiences. Children are developing their use of a wide range of vocabulary in their play. A mixed age group of children using construction resources use descriptive words as they talk about size, shapes and position as they build models of people and animals. This helps them to develop their use and understanding of mathematical language and concepts. Interesting practical experiences are provided which help children to develop a very good knowledge and understanding of the world. Children have planted seeds and are watching them grow. During this activity children begin to observe creatures and insects which develop into a topic on mini beast. Children are encouraged to be autonomous learners, to be involved in planning the activities they are to be involved in and to extend their learning in ways which meet their individual needs.

The atmosphere of the pre-school is of busy, happy children. There is a good relationship between children and staff who have realistic expectations for behaviour and use effective methods to encourage good behaviour. Children are very well behaved because staff are excellent role models who promote positive attitudes in children by showing them respect and helping them understand the need for self-discipline and consideration for others. Children are rewarded with constructive praise and children who have been seen to be very well behaved or who have

done something well are selected to sit in the “beautiful chair”. This promotes their self-esteem and sense of self-worth.

The learning environment is well organised enabling children to be resourceful, independent and self-sufficient. Good quality resources are used to enrich the experiences the children have. Children’s personal, social and emotional development is exceedingly well promoted because they are able to make independent choices about what they do. They select activities they want to play with, settle well to play independently or with other children and when they have finished they help to put away what they have played with. Children move freely around the rooms used and are able to independently access the outside environment at set times. Children choose from activities such as they writing and craft table where they can use a range of tools such as writing implements, scissors, glues stick, hole punch and stapler to create models. They practise their emergent writing skills as they write letters and post them in the post box. Children are able to explore messy play experimenting with water play or flour and water. They learn concepts such as how to pour and fill containers. They learn about texture and consistency as they mix flour and water together to fill baking cases. The children noted that the mixture needed to be thick to fill the cases. The children are acquiring new skills as they participate in meaningful, practical activities which help them learn by experimenting with and exploring new ideas. The outside play space is used on a daily basis to enable children to participate in a range of experiences outside. They are able to develop their physical skills, co-ordination and muscle control as they run around or use wheeled toys. Resources such as magnifying glasses, binoculars and cameras are used by the children to extend their play as they look at insects or other children, remarking that they look either bigger or smaller depending in which way up they are holding the binoculars. Mathematical activities also take place as part of physical play. Children learn to recognise numbers and shapes as they hunt for posters placed around the play area.

Assessments and observations are begun when children first start pre-school and continue to be carried out regularly by all staff to identify the progress children are making towards the early learning goals. Details are recorded in children’s individual profiles which are constantly referred to by staff to ensure they are providing activities and resources which enable the children to move on to the next stage of their learning journey. These records are available to be shared with parents and carers to ensure they are fully informed of the progress their child is making.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are developing good relationships with adults and other children in a setting where they work with parents and carers to meet individual children’s needs and ensure they are fully included in the life of the setting. Children are developing a strong sense of belonging within the pre-school because they are supported to become familiar with the routines and organisation of the setting. The support children receive from staff is exemplary; this is because staff spend time to get to know each child, their care needs and their individual style of learning. This enables them to provide individual support which meets the child’s needs. Children respond exceedingly well to the staff, they show respect and consideration for other children and the environment they are in. They are very well behaved and listen to instructions and codes of behaviour which positively guide their behaviour and understanding of right and wrong. This helps children feel secure knowing what they can and cannot do. Children are absorbed in the activities provided, are self-reliant and spent time concentrating on activities independently, this means that staff can use their time effectively to support children who need help or input into their activities. The views and suggestions of children are taken into consideration in many

aspects of the setting. Children in the pre-school are involved in planning activities and older children in the out of school club have been able to set the rules for behaviour. This means that children are able to develop a sense of belonging and ownership.

The staff ensure that there is no bias in their practice in relation to gender, race or disability. Children are developing an understanding of the wider society because they are able to learn about and be involved with different people in their local neighbourhood and to the wider multicultural society. Children use local facilities such as going on walks to visit the leisure centre café for tea, enabling them to understand more about the community in which they live. They learn about diversity through activities and access to artefacts and objects from other countries. The children welcome each other at circle time using a welcome in different languages. Children enjoy the circle time because they insist the manger wears a beautiful Mexican hat while greeting the children by saying "Hola". Children and parents who speak English as an additional language receive support enabling them to be fully included in the provision. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children's needs are being met very well because the setting works effectively with parents and carers to enable all children to achieve in their care and learning. Staff promote positive relationships with parents and carers, ensuring they are kept well informed about the provision and children's progress. There are good systems in place for gathering information on children's individual care needs and any specific information required to support any child identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The setting seeks, values and acts on parents' views by ensuring good two-way communication is maintained. The key worker system is working very effectively as a means of contact with parents and children.

Parents are provided with comprehensive details about the provision and their child's progress. Parents' consultation evenings enable parents to discuss their child's progress and share any concerns. Social events such as Harvest festival and Nativity provide a good opportunity for parents and carers to be part of their children's learning and to see what is going on within the pre-school. Details of the educational programme are provided through written details on the blackboard and the lovely displays of photographs around the setting. This gives parents and carers' information on the purpose of the activities provided and how children learn. Although staff discuss children's stage of development and any specific interests the child may have there is yet no formal means to enable parents to contribute more fully to their children's profiles. This means they are not fully involved in their child's learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The pre-school is efficiently managed and well-organised. A high percentage of staff are well qualified. They are able to further develop their knowledge and understanding of childcare and education because they are able to access additional training. This broadens children's experience and increases staff knowledge of childcare issues which contributes to the quality of the care provided. The proprietor and manager are pro-active in addressing any issues identified which need improvement. Such as the organisation of snack time and drinks to ensure all hygiene implications are effectively addressed and the re-organisation of the computer station to ensure children are able to sit correctly. This improves the health and safety of the children. As a result the proprietor has a sound view of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Staff recruitment and employment procedures are not fully effective in ensuring all relevant information is obtained in relation to making decisions about the suitability of any staff or

volunteer. Clear induction processes ensure that new staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities and are well supported by other staff. Documents required for the efficient and safe management of the provision are available although specific policies and procedures relating to the out of school care have yet to be developed. This means that parents are not fully informed about how the out of school club operates. There are suitable arrangements in place to ensure all other policies and procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure they continue to work in practice. Children's well-being is safeguarded because staff obtain all required information and any required consents from parents when children are admitted to the group.

The leadership and management is good. The staff work exceptionally well together as a team, they are well motivated by the inspirational proprietor and enthusiastic manager who have a high regard to the quality of the provision and the care and welfare of the children. There are good systems in place to reflect on the practices used. The proprietor plays a hands on role within the pre-school and is available to monitor the work of staff. This ensures that the practice of all staff contributes positively to children's good health, safety and ability to take an active part in the provision. The professional development of the staff is managed through training with all staff having the opportunity to access a varied range of training. This means that staff are valued and their contribution to the pre-school acknowledged. Children are making excellent progress overall because staff are well motivated, are skilled in providing good learning experiences for the children and make effective use of observations and assessments of children's progress. This enables them to reach their full potential. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

#### **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**

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 review and update policies to ensure they support all aspects of the provision, particularly the out of school care
- improve recruitment and employment procedures.

### **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):

- continue to develop effective practice with parents and carers and enable them to contribute more fully to their children's profiles.

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)