

Debenham Roundabout Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY362395
Inspection date	01 July 2008
Inspector	Lesley Gadd
Setting Address	Sir Robert Hitchams Primary School, School Corner, Debenham, STOWMARKET, Suffolk, IP14 6PL
Telephone number	01728 861769
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Registered person	The Trustees of Debenham Roundabout 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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Debenham Roundabout Pre-school is run by a committee of parents and carers. It opened originally in 1987 and at its current premises in 2007. The setting operates from a purpose built log cabin, in the grounds of Sir Robert Hitcham Primary School, in Debenham Suffolk. There is an outdoor area for physical play. The setting is registered to care for a maximum of 23 children at any one time. The pre-school opens three full days on a Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 09:00-15:00 and two morning only sessions on Tuesday and Friday from 09:00-11:30 during term time.

There are currently 53 children aged from two to four years on roll. Of these 35 children receive funding for early education. Children attend the setting for a variety of sessions throughout the week. The pre-school welcomes children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or English as an additional language.

The setting employs six members of staff and four of these hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority and has completed a local authority quality assurance scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is very well promoted by staff and children who are actively encouraged to take an increasing role in caring for their bodies and all round physical health.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming and clean environment. Rigorous standards of cleanliness within the playrooms and thorough hygiene practices minimise the risk of infection. Regular cleaning schedules are in place to maintain the bathroom facilities, kitchen and sturdy equipment. The staff use anti-bacterial spray when wiping tables and cleaning equipment is readily used by the children to help mop up spillages of water. Children are very clear about why they need to wash their hands before eating to stop germs making them ill. If children become unwell the setting ensures parents know that children need to stay at home to avoid them passing on infections to other children. Children's welfare in case of accidents is actively supported. Staff are trained to administer first aid, a well stocked first aid kit is easily accessible and the setting holds parental consent to seek advice in a medical emergency.

Children's growth is positively supported and they enjoy a nutritious diet. Children are able to attend the welcoming snack table when they are ready throughout the morning or sit in small groups at regular intervals to refresh themselves. They competently help to prepare and select their snacks and pour their own drinks of water or milk demonstrating their excellent independence skills. Children discuss the types of fruit they are eating and staff seize the children's interest in the 'crunchy' apple to talk about the benefits of healthy eating to help the body grow strong. As a result of this and gardening projects, where children grow food to eat such as beans, they have a strong awareness about food origins and the benefits of a healthy diet. Children enjoy a diverse range of celebratory refreshments which stimulate their taste buds, such as spicy curry foods for Divali celebrations. Children attend a lunch session as part of the pre-school. They sit together and unpack their food carefully from their lunch boxes enjoying the social occasion of eating with everyone and displaying positive social skills as they routinely say 'Please' and 'Thank you'. Children's individual dietary requirements are met as their needs are discussed with parents before care is provided and details are kept to remind staff of their allergies.

All children enjoy a rich variety of active play which fosters their interest and enjoyment of exercise and promotes their physical health. Children are able to enjoy routine play in the accessible outside play area in most weathers, benefiting from daily fresh air to exercise their lungs. Children delight in the opportunities offered to strengthen their large muscle tone as they balance on the tyre trail, climb on the activity frame, manoeuvre boxes around to transport the soil from the digging zone and build their bodies into robots using discarded cardboard tubes. Children show great skill at manoeuvring around objects as they run freely and use their bodies well to jump up and down, skip, throw and catch during a gym session acting out the role of jelly beans in the main school hall. The effects of exercise are noted by the children who comment that 'you can feel your heart beating'. The opportunity is then taken by staff to develop children's understanding about the effects and benefits of exercise. Children show competent small muscle control when digging with spades outside and using small tools during craft projects. Children take part in regular gardening and nature activities and have a rich understanding about the environment. They are keen to help sweep leaves in Autumn and water the growing beans, pumpkins and sunflower plants.

Children take the opportunity to rest and recuperate when needed, supporting their sense of well-being. They relax on the cushions in the small quiet room and enjoy a story with staff.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children play safely at the pre-school as staff give extremely high priority to minimising hazards. Cleaning products are stored securely, fire exits are clear and an accurate register of attendance is kept for children, staff and visitors to ensure all can be accounted for in the event of an emergency evacuation. The play equipment used by the children is checked before they arrive to ensure it is safe and the setting holds relevant insurance. Comprehensive risk assessments have been conducted of the premises, activities and outings to reduce the risk of accidents to the children and the setting is vigilant in completing daily checks to maintain safety levels throughout the facility. The pre-school is set within school grounds which are enclosed and entrances to the building are secure to prevent children escaping. Approaching visitors can be seen for verification through the glass doors to reduce the risks of uninvited guests and critical incident response systems are tested to ensure the setting is prepared in the event of a high risk situation.

Children are emotionally secure as they receive a warm welcome from staff and come into an extremely well prepared, light and cosy setting happily. The setting is accessible to all children as there is ramp access for wheelchair users and parents needing to bring in pushchairs. The play rooms are very child-centred and the colourful, accessible toys, displays of children's art work, positive posters and child-sized furniture all help children to feel at home in the setting and settle quickly. Children are actively encouraged to learn about keeping themselves safe for future independence. Pre-school children practise how to get out of the building in the event of a fire, have visits from the local police to talk about personal safety and know how to use scissors and woodworking tools safely to avoid injuring themselves. Younger children are positively encouraged and supported in taking safe risks to promote their confidence and awareness. They climb the activity frame, balance on block trails and help with preparation of snacks using sharp tools. Staff are close at hand to assist children during these activities to keep them safe.

Children's welfare and protection is given robust support. Adults managing, working in and visiting the setting are checked and children are not released to adults unless parents have given permission. Children are facilitated during the routines of the day to talk about feelings and share any concerns or worries with staff. Safeguarding children procedures held are up-to-date and parents are advised about the setting's child protection responsibilities. The staff demonstrate that they are able to recognise signs and symptoms of child abuse and everyone connected with the setting is clear about whom they need to contact if they have concerns to protect children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

All children are extremely happy in this supportive, caring setting. They enjoy the company and warmth of staff which ensures they are very self-assured from an early age. Staff are consistently attentive, kind and show a genuine interest in the children. Precious toys brought in to show friends at circle time are enthusiastically accepted by staff and discussed, with children visibly growing in stature and pride as they talk eloquently about their special soft

monkey, plastic blow up aeroplane and pop up musical clown. Staff readily offer cuddles and reassurance to children who are temporarily upset and all children are well supported. Communication between children and staff is actively encouraged. Younger children make their needs known using gestures and simple signs and staff are quick to respond and skilfully support children sounding out letters and words fostering their confidence in the use of language. Older children talk easily, brimming with confidence as they describe how the train moves around the board, what the baby needs to sleep and how much it costs to eat at their pretend cafe. All children are keen to talk about their lives; what the family dog likes to do, how they take younger siblings on outings with their parents, what sort of cat lives next door to them and they listen when others speak exceptionally well.

Children experience a rich, diverse range of interesting activities that are enjoyable and actively foster their skills and development. Staff have a secure knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and embrace these principles when planning activities to provide a positive range of new experiences that stimulate the children's senses. Children enthusiastically explore soil, wet and dry sand, water, clay and paint with their fingers. They enjoy the sensation of squeezing the paint through their fingers, patting it on the table and exploring the texture of the 'cold', 'sticky' paint, making connections in their play. Older children take great care with their paintings, selecting and choosing colours to create their pictures and enthusiastically describing to staff what they are creating. Children delight in the opportunities provided to unpack treasure boxes of interesting objects that promote conversation and exploration such as shiny materials and fir cones. They focus well as they concentrate on using tools with the clay and smile with pleasure when they show finished creations to staff who respond enthusiastically, reaffirming children's delight. All children co-operate exceptionally well and engage readily with friends. They pretend to make tea in the house, drive trucks to deliver soil to the farm and giggle with joy when they play a chasing game outside, running freely around the pathway trail. Children competently make marks on paper with crayons and pencils and are keen to look at photographs displayed around the room which positively reinforces their sense of self, promoting their confidence.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. All children are enthusiastic learners in this setting and are quickly developing skills in all areas. All staff have an excellent knowledge of the Foundation Stage and know how young children learn best. They provide a rich play environment where they observe children, keep detailed developmental records of children's interests, skills and use this information very effectively to evaluate, make individual play plans and robustly support children's learning. Activities planned are developed through children's interests at any one time which harnesses children's enthusiasm for new experiences and maximises the benefits for learning. Children are beginning to be active participants in their own learning in this setting and are involved in decisions about activities and future plans. Staff make wholly effective use of open-ended questions to challenge, stimulate and extend children's thinking as illustrated by staff's comment about 'What material is this aeroplane made of?'. This leads to a full discussion on types of materials, wood, plastic and discussions about size, colour, shape and purpose. Staff know when to sit quietly alongside children reinforcing their confidence in making their own links and discoveries in learning and are quick to praise children for their achievements however small.

Children are developing a strong sense of personal independence. They separate well from parents on arrival and are keen to come in to play. Children make choices, self-select their toys and older children easily put on their sports kits for physical education in the hall. Younger

children are determined to persevere when faced with the challenge of putting gym shoes on and smile with delight when they are enthusiastically praised by staff. All children help to take some responsibility for tidying up activities after play and show great consideration for others as they help to find toys to comfort younger children who are temporarily upset. Older children can assert and share with staff their ideas for projects during the term. Staff then harness their interests to provide an excellent range of activities in which children gain many skills. Knowledge about the wider world is fostered as staff extend children's interest in cats and later animals, into a project about farms where children enjoy the opportunities to learn about the all features and care of animals. Older children relish opportunities to work alongside younger children supporting them with a variety of projects showing their care and concern for others. Large hand puppets are utilised extremely effectively by the play leader to facilitate children in exploring a range of issues such as, good behaviour and how it feels to leave parents when you attend pre-school for the first time. This further supports children in understanding the required life skills for future independence.

Children have regular access to books and they handle them well. Staff make group stories interesting as they change their voice and use puppets to hold younger children's attention. Older children use books to find out about their particular interests, such as cats and their habits. The clear labelling throughout the setting helps children to understand that print carries meaning and staff make very effective use of phonics within everyday activities to reinforce the initial letters of words and help children link sounds and letters. Staff are actively encouraging children to listen to differentiations within sounds as they use instruments to create loud and soft sounds and they emphasis the formation of sounds such as 'w for washing'. This very effective practice heightens children's awareness of sound differentiations which will provide an excellent basis for future reading and spelling skills. Children are keen to learn new words such as 'stirrup' when discussing farm horses and 'aero dynamic' shapes plastic when looking at aeroplanes. Early writing skills are actively supported by staff. Children make marks within their routine play to represent their ideas, use large wipe easy boards and pens which provide instant rewarding results and many older children are competently writing their names and making labels for the setting office and veterinary area.

Children are developing very good mathematical thinking. They are encouraged to count at every opportunity and older children spontaneously count up to 17 pegs in the boards, recognise written numerals and sequence them correctly when sorting out jelly numbers from the counting resources. Children comment on the square sandwich and circle chalked outside on the pathway demonstrating their knowledge of shapes. Younger children talk about the size of bigger and smaller barrels within the pirate ship, count the number of boats in the water and discuss full and empty concepts when filling cups with water to drink. Older children discuss concepts of weight and size during cooking and enjoy the challenge of more complex problem solving as they add and subtract the number of figures selected in the round trays.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is exceptionally well promoted. They build and design readily using a variety of construction materials, making towers, tunnels and ramps with the large bricks and competently make their own junk model creations from a range of disposable boxes and tubes. Children are keen to help with planting beans and notice the movement of the snails in the tank developing their knowledge about the features of living things and changes that take place. They display great confidence in their use of technology. They work out how to operate the computer, tape recorder and remote control, programmable robot. Children find out why things happen as they watch ice melting in balloons, fix and manipulate cogs to get them to turn and notice how heat from the cooker makes their baking rise.

Children have excellent opportunities to freely express themselves using a rich range of creative materials. They skilfully stick, paint and create their own pictures. Older children comment on the fact they have created 'pink' when mixing red and white paint together enhancing their understanding about colour changes. Children spontaneously 'hum' and sing to themselves, join in rhythmically with group song time and relish the dancing opportunities provided. They use their imagination well to explore a variety of roles. They dress as builders and drive lorries to deliver loads to the farm yard. Children act out what it is like to be a vet attending to the toy dogs and other animals in the imaginary play area.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children from all backgrounds feel at home in the setting as they are very well valued and respected. Staff place a strong emphasis on meeting children's and families' individual care needs and as a result children are confident and sociable. Staff use the children's names and look at them directly when they are speaking to show that they are interested in what they say and do. Consequently, children feel positive about themselves and display a strong sense of self-esteem at the setting. They make decisions about what to play with, when to refresh themselves at snack time, visit the toilet facilities and take safe risks confident in the knowledge that they will be well supported by staff. Children are actively encouraged to develop an understanding of the wider world through planned activities and day-to-day conversations about differences. They celebrate religious festivals from a range of faiths, are developing knowledge about how to talk using

non-hearing sign language and experience an increasing range of resources that positively reflect all members of society. In this way children are positively helped to learn about and respect diversity. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is actively fostered.

The setting does not provide care for children with identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities however staff are quick to recognise and act upon developmental delay. Close one to one adult support is offered so that all children can actively participate in the rich range of activities on offer and ensure each child is wholly and actively supported in reaching their full potential. Staff embrace partnership working alongside parents and other agencies to ensure that all children's individual needs are robustly met.

Children's behaviour is excellent. The staff praise children frequently when presenting positive behaviour so that they understand what is expected of them and act as exemplarily role models being respectful and courteous towards the children. Younger children are quickly helped to resolve minor conflicts about sharing the same toys and older children learn right from wrong through the clear explanations that they are given when the staff ask them to change their behaviour. All children are courteous and polite.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Children's well-being is actively supported through the positive relationships established with parents. Parents are welcomed and staff make time to talk with them on arrival about their children's needs for the day. Parents have an accessible information booklet to explain the routines and policies to which the pre-school operates. The setting is clear about how they would respond to any parental concerns, clearly display complaint contact numbers and actively seek parents' views formally about the children's care and education on a regular basis. As a result parents are reassured regarding complaint matters and contribute towards the full evaluation of the setting's care and education of their children. Parents receive excellent information about the Foundation Stage and have regular

opportunities to discuss and comment on their children's individual progress to help secure children's learning with their child's key worker staff. Parents attend evening sessions where they can share activities and learning opportunities with the children. Parents are invited to serve on the managing committee and regular letters help to keep them informed about developments at the setting. Parents are supportive of the pre-school and state that the setting shows exceptional care and support for the children. They also comment on the fact that their children 'love attending', are 'developing very well' and 'enjoy the excellent range of activities' provided by the 'approachable', 'friendly' staff.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's welfare is positively safeguarded. The setting have robustly vetted, enthusiastic and capable staff who continue to undertake additional training to ensure they offer exceptional quality care to the children. Staff have an excellent understanding of how to organise the layout of the play areas, both inside and outside, so that children can explore readily, play actively, refresh themselves, eat in comfort and sit quietly when they choose to do so. There are high ratios of staff working directly with the children to ensure they are effectively supervised and supported in their play and learning.

Children are reassured by the familiar routine during sessions because they know what happens next. Their independence is actively fostered because they can freely choose from a variety of toys and equipment that are set out at their level. A comprehensive range of accessible records are in place to guide staff as to operational matters and to reassure parents that their children's well-being is actively considered in all areas.

The leadership and management of the provision are outstanding. The staff, committee members and other interested parties are very clear about their purpose and extremely dedicated to providing a quality service to the children and families who attend the setting. Clear aims help the setting provide a stimulating environment in which children learn through play, as evidenced by the progress that they are making. The voluntary organising committee supports the day-to-day running of the setting very well and with staff, they have been actively involved in working to secure new premises. The setting effectively monitors and evaluates all aspects of the children's education and teaching to ensure children are offered a high quality play and learning environment. The setting make effective use of advisors support and have completed a local authority quality assurance scheme to further develop the service on offer to the children and families who attend. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting were asked to further prepare children for changes in activity. At the last education inspection the setting were asked to encourage children to notice the effects of exercise on their bodies. The setting have made good progress on addressing these points to further improve the children's care and education.

Children are welcomed by staff individually at circle time after initial arrival through clapping of the children's names to affirm who is attending. Children then listen as staff explain what activities they can enjoy during the session. When it is time to clear away the toys staff make effective use of a sand timer to alert children to the fact that when the sand has passed through from one side to the other it will be tidy away time. Children and staff then close the session

with a 'goodbye clapping song' for everyone to ensure children know that the session has finished.

Children enjoy regular physical activity during the sessions with staff. They routinely warm up the children's muscles with the 'bean game' and cool down after sessions with relaxation movements. Staff draw children's attention to the feel of their hot faces and rapidly pulsating heart beat after exercise.

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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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