

Upton Meadows Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY359831
Inspection date	04 July 2008
Inspector	Andrea Ewer
Setting Address	Upton Meadow Primary School, The Square, Upton, NORTHAMPTON, NN5 4EZ
Telephone number	07780 718171
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Registered person	New Duston Pre-School Ltd
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 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?

Upton Meadows Pre-School opened in 2007 and operates from Upton Meadows Primary School, in the area of Upton, Northamptonshire. A maximum of 50 children may attend the provision at any one time. There are currently 46 children on roll, 28 of whom receive funding for nursery education. The setting also operates a breakfast and after school club.

Care is provided in two classrooms and children share access to the school playground for outdoor play. The pre-school is open each weekday from 08:00 to 16:00 and the out of school club opens from 08:00 until 08:50 before school and 15:15 until 18:00 for after school care during term time only. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are learning to speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs seven members of staff, of whom six, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school receives support from a local authority advisory teacher.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted well throughout the pre-school. The premises are clean and tidy and staff carry out regular hygiene routines that prevent the spread of infection. Tables are cleaned before snacks are served and clear nappy changing routines are in place. Staff set a good example to children by washing their own hands before handling food. Posters displayed in the bathrooms remind children to wash and dry their hands and activities about how the body works help children understand the importance of good personal hygiene, cleanliness and how to stay healthy. Children readily wash their hands at appropriate times and brush their teeth after eating lunch. They talk about the importance of sleep and eating healthily and paint pictures of the bones in their body after looking at pictures of x-rays. Children receive appropriate care in the event of minor accidents or illness because all staff hold an up-to-date paediatric first aid qualification and a well stocked first aid kit is readily accessible. Records that support staff to maintain children's good health are well maintained. Care plans developed with parents support staff to care for children who have medical conditions such as asthma. Written consent is obtained to seek emergency medical advice or treatment and accident and medicine records are well kept. Children learn about staying safe in the sun as sun cream is applied appropriately during very warm weather.

Information is obtained about children from their parents to ensure the meals and snacks provided meets their specific dietary needs. Children choose from various fruits for their snack, bring packed lunches or eat school dinners and readily help themselves to fresh drinking water throughout the day. This ensures children benefit from well-balanced, nutritious meals and snacks that promotes their healthy growth and development.

Children regularly participate in active play outdoors where they develop their physical skills, improve fitness levels and benefit from fresh air. They move around the premises confidently, negotiating space well and consistently improve control of their bodies. Children throw and catch balls with increasing skill, climb up the climbing frame and bounce around energetically on space hoppers.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play safely in the well-organised and welcoming environment. Attractive displays of their artwork, photographs and posters, help children feel a sense of belonging. Space is used effectively and allows children to move around freely as they participate in the wide range of activities. Creative use of the outdoor area allows children to explore and extends their play and learning experiences. Children roll balls down the gutter pipes attached to the fence, make sounds as they bang on the pans and colander with large utensils and grow vegetables in pots. Children use a wide range of suitable equipment that conforms to safety standards and meets their play and development needs well. Furniture, toys and resources are clean, well maintained and meet children's play and development needs well.

Overall active steps are taken to promote children's safety. Effective measures are in place to prevent accidents and ensure children are safe both in the pre-school and during outings. Regular risk assessments ensure furniture, equipment and resources are in good condition and are suitable for their purpose. Potential hazards are clearly identified including before outings.

Access to the premises is closely monitored by the school receptionist and closed circuit television, unused electrical sockets are covered and suitable fire safety equipment is in place and checked regularly. The set up of the small climbing frame, however, does not fully promote children's safety. Children's welfare and safety are further promoted because staff have secure knowledge of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and implement procedures confidently. The designated person for safeguarding children has a good understanding of local recording and referral procedures and staff show good awareness of their responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are extremely confident and have a very positive attitude to learning. They approach activities with enthusiasm and play purposefully throughout the day. They choose which activity to join and become increasingly confident in the stimulating environment that supports them well to become independent. Children are very well behaved and respond to the consistent strategies for managing their behaviour. Records of children's achievements are well maintained. Information about what children can do is obtained when they start at the pre-school and staff use this information to plan and provide suitable activities. Regular observations are carried out on children and the next steps for their learning is clearly identified and used to inform planning. This ensures children benefit from suitable activities that meet their individual needs and helps them to make good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children who attend the out of school club enter enthusiastically and settle quickly. They benefit from a relaxed environment where they share friendly relationships with staff and each other. Children choose which activity to join from the range of activities that meets their play and development needs well. They choose to play outdoors where they expend excess energy or engage in quieter activities. Children have fun singing popular songs, decorate biscuits, enjoy craft activities and play team games with effective support from staff.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make very good progress towards the early learning goals because staff have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage and are skilled in promoting children's learning using a variety of teaching methods. Indoor activities are set up outdoors to ensure all children access all areas of the curriculum. They plan and provide a stimulating range of activities around each area of learning, with clear learning intentions identified and successfully utilise opportunities for unplanned learning. For example, children enthusiastically say 'that was very fun' when after playing with musical instruments, they make shakers which they go on to use during group time to make music. Records of children's achievements are clearly linked to the stepping stones and show their progress. Staff effectively use information from these records to support children to build on skills they already have and subsequently they make very good progress. Children are very well supported in their transition to school. They meet reception class teachers who spend time in the pre-school getting to know them and visit the classroom where they become familiar with their new environment.

Children play purposefully with the wide range of worthwhile activities provided. They are forming friendships with each other, often seeking out others to share experiences and play very well both independently or with their peers. Children make decisions confidently as they choose what to play with, whether to play inside or outside and select additional resources to develop their play and ideas. They display high levels of involvement as they play at their chosen

activity for sustained periods of time and benefit from the consistent interaction with staff who skilfully guide their play to promote learning outcomes and extend children's learning. Children speak confidently and contribute to discussions enthusiastically. They feel valued as staff interact warmly with them, showing interest in what children do and say. Children freely access a wide range of mark-making materials set out in various areas of the pre-school where they write letters and start to understand that print carries meaning and writing can be used for various purposes. For example, they use the notepad and pencil in the outdoor area to imitate the inspector observing and writing about the children. Many older children write their own name confidently, forming clearly recognisable letters and some write their friends names with little support from staff. Children develop their early reading skills as they find their name label before having their snack. They often look at books for enjoyment in the cosy book area and listen to stories with interest.

Children are making good progress in mathematics particularly counting. They regularly count spontaneously during their play and at times, with adult support which helps to develop their confidence in numbers and counting. Children start to understand simple calculation during simple number songs and rhymes such as five currant buns, match and sort items using their own criteria including size, shape or colour. Children enjoy exploring and investigating. They readily access the computer where they use the mouse confidently to operate simple programmes. Children gain a good understanding of growth and change as they plant vegetables and care for them as they grow and enjoy simple cooking activities where they observe what happens when water is added to the flour and knead the dough to make bread rolls. Children have fun playing with ice cubes and dried pasta where they observe the ice melting and the pasta softening. They use their imagination well during role play. For example, children imitate adult behaviour as they set the table and prepare tea and have their hair styled at the hairdressers. Children express themselves creatively as they create models using recycled materials and make musical sounds by tapping the pots and pans on the musical frame.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They enter the nursery happily and are welcomed warmly by consistent staff which helps them to feel secure. Staff work effectively with parents to make sure individual children's needs are met and that they are happy with the service provided. For example, positive responses to regular parent questionnaires are used to obtain parents' views about the care and nursery education their children receive and to develop practice. Useful information is obtained from parents about their children when they start the pre-school and is shared regularly thereafter to ensure children receive consistent care.

Children develop a positive self-esteem as they readily access the wide range of resources that positively represents themselves and people of other cultures, races, religions and abilities which helps them start to appreciate diversity. They learn about the wider world as they dress up in outfits from around the world, complete puzzles that show positive images of people from a variety of backgrounds and play with dolls of various skin colours. Active steps are taken to ensure the needs of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are met. Staff implement the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice confidently and work closely with outside agencies and parents. This enables staff to provide care and activities that help children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve their potential.

Children are very well behaved. They respond extremely well to the frequent praise and support given and look forward to receiving a sticker for using 'kind hands'. Close monitoring through observation and record keeping helps staff monitor children who present challenging behaviour. They skilfully identify triggers and adapt activities and/or routines to support children to improve their behaviour. This boosts children's self-esteem and contributes to them behaving very well.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Staff develop a strong partnership with parents where information is shared regularly to promote children's learning. Parents receive useful information about the Foundation Stage and the activities their children are involved in, including newsletters and weekly communication sheets, which helps them to support their children's learning at home. Staff make time to talk to parents daily about activities their children have enjoyed and to share information about their progress during meetings which are held at least twice each year. Parents' contributions to children's records are valued by staff who use the information to provide activities that help children develop new skills. This keeps both staff and parents fully informed about children's progress and supports children to achieve their potential and make good progress towards the early learning goals.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management is good. Children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to take an active part in the life of the nursery are promoted extremely well because overall effective systems are in place to ensure and maintain good practice. Staff work very well as a team, have clear roles and responsibilities and are committed to ensuring children enjoy their time in the pre-school. Staff meetings are held regularly to plan the curriculum and share information about children. Annual appraisals and the clear commitment to staff's professional development through regular training contributes successfully to children making good progress towards the early learning goals. Although there is some use of evaluation such as parent questionnaires and support from local authority advisory teachers, it is not yet fully developed to identify clearly what is being done well and areas to be developed.

Space, staff and resources are organised effectively and allows children to play and develop their ideas in a safe, stimulating environment. Children gain a strong sense of security as they are grouped with a key-worker who works in partnership with their parents and knows them well. This contributes successfully to children's needs being met both individually and as a group. There is, however, no named deputy to take charge in the absence of the manager which does not fully support children's welfare. Regular daily routines ensure children's needs for rest, active play, meals and enjoyment are met.

Robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are cared for by appropriately qualified and experienced adults who are suitable to have regular contact with them. For example, all potential staff are interviewed and criminal records bureau checks and references are carried out. Clear induction procedures support new staff to understand what is expected of them and how the pre-school operates. Clearly written policies and procedures that staff understand and implement consistently, underpin the day-to-day practices in the pre-school. Record keeping systems are well maintained and effectively contribute to the welfare, care and safety of all children. Overall children's needs are met.

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

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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):

- improve children's safety while using the climbing frame
- ensure there is a named deputy who is able to take responsibility in the absence of the manager.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop the use of evaluation to show clearly what is being done well and areas to be improved.

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