



## Valley Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	137374
<b>Inspection date</b>	08 November 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Kay Bateson
<b>Setting Address</b>	Beckenham Lane, Bromley, Kent, BR2 0DA
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8460 1121
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	The Valley Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Valley Pre-School opened in 1991. It operates from a self contained building within the grounds of Valley Primary School. The premises consists of two playrooms, with access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area. Some of the school rooms and grounds are also available to the pre-school. The pre-school is open 5 days a week and sessions run between 09:00 to 12:00 and 13:15 to 15:45.

The pre-school cares for a maximum of 16 children aged from 3 to 5 years at any

session from the local area. There are currently 48 children from 3 to 5 years on roll. This includes 34 funded 3-year-olds and 12 funded 4-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports some children with special needs.

There is a team of three staff who work with the children, two of whom work part-time. There are two staff on duty at each session with an additional member for some sessions during a week. All staff have a recognised early years qualification and regularly attend a variety of training courses. The group receive support from the Early Years development and Childcare Partnership.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are able to follow good hygiene practices through their daily routine. They independently wash hands after messy play, going to the toilet and before snack time. Staff members gently remind children when they forget and encourage them to become increasingly independent in their personal care.

Children explore and develop physical control during daily experiences. They are well co-ordinated and confident movers, as seen when they manoeuvre bikes at speed around the outside area, skip, hop or jump across the playground. Children benefit from the staff providing additional activities that support the development of their large physical skills. This is by having regular sessions using large climbing apparatus and participating in yoga exercises with a parent. They are learning about how the body works through their actions and by discussion with adults during play. Staff plan and provide a range of activities that support the development of important fine physical skills. Children are able to cut using a pair of scissors, hold pencils correctly and fix and take apart construction equipment. This is apparent when watching children join mobilo connectors, write the letters of their name and cut pictures into small pieces.

Children learn about healthy eating through discussion and activities. They learn about the importance of eating fruit and drinking milk and water during snack time. They talk readily to adults about what is and what is not good for them to eat. Staff are aware of the individual needs of the children as well as the parental wishes when providing drinks and snacks. They understand the importance of providing more healthy options for children and to incorporate more learning opportunities into snack time. This will help increase the children's independence skills and mathematical language as well as providing children with more choices.

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

The provision is good.

Children play in a secure and safe setting where staff follow good procedures for risk assessment, fire evacuation and recording accidents. There is sufficient room for children to move safely around the furniture and to play on the floor. They play in a

safe, enclosed area for outdoor play, where staff are vigilant and remind them about being aware of the safety of others as they pedal with speed.

Children's welfare is secure as the staff give sound attention and follow clear procedures for child protection. They regularly check children when they play in the playhouse and ensure they do not enter areas unsupervised. Therefore maintaining the safety of the children at all times.

Children enjoy playing with good quality toys, which staff check regularly and are replaced when worn out or broken. They have a wide range of resources that support all areas of learning and are able to access them to use in their play ideas.

Staff help children to learn about keeping safe through discussion and activities. They learn about keeping safe when out and about, by talking about road safety and having the local Policeman in to talk about keeping safe from strangers. They are learning about important social skills as staff discourage children from hurting each other during play.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time in the pre-school. They are happy and settled as the staff members establish secure relationships with them through their sensitive, caring and understanding approach. Children play well together, become interested and involved in their choice of activity for a suitable length of time. Staff members encourage children to develop their ideas through their play by becoming involved, listening, asking questions that promote thinking and providing additional opportunities to support their interests. For example, when children pretend to go shopping they encourage them to write and draw things they want to buy.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making sound progress towards the early learning goals. They are developing a firm understanding of mathematics as the staff plan appropriate activities and opportunities that support and encourage learning. This is apparent when children are encouraged to count each other, put the right number of bears into the correct pot and fill a variety of size containers in the water.

Children like to listen to stories and are beginning to form letters clearly. Some children are able to write their names and identify the letter sounds. The staff members have organised the room with lots of examples of letters and words for the children to see. This is clear from the labels of equipment, children's names, and examples of letters. The staff model writing during whole class sessions and encourage children to write their names on their work. They focus on single letter sounds and names during a week, as well as making children aware of the letter sounds of their names. This supports the children's writing and reading development. Children can express themselves well and are able to use language in different ways. This is apparent when they pretend, negotiate what role each of them will take on as

well as talking to adults about special events which have occurred.

Children have plenty of resources and planned activities that support their creative development. They participate in whole-class music sessions where they explore, play instruments and sing. They enjoy dressing up, using figures and toys to recreate events. Staff plan opportunities to explore paint, glue, and use a variety of materials as seen from the children's work using collage materials and printing, as well as watching them freely paint pictures and explore playdough.

Children have a varied program of activities planned for them that have suitable aims and learning outcomes. Staff plan around themes and incorporate children's ideas into them. This ensures long term aims provide a balance of opportunities and learning experiences for children. Staff observe the children while playing and record learning outcomes using different methods. For example using tick sheets and post it notes. Staff have early systems in place to record progress. However, these do not show clear starting points of the children, in order to continue to track and plan the next steps of learning.

Children have sufficient opportunities for child initiated play indoors and out over a week. They have additional opportunities to use the premises of the school for extending their learning. For example, hall periods for music, yoga sessions, and using climbing apparatus. However sometimes the elements of the daily routine, transitions and the organisation of the adult directed activities can limit the time children spend in child-initiated play. This causes an imbalance of opportunities during a session, therefore children can spend several periods of time engaged in waiting or sitting and listening activities. This in turn causes children to become restless and disinterested. This was apparent when children have registration time, music time, snack time, 'letter of the week' as well as, lining up to wait to go to the toilet, to leave and enter the room during one session.

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

The provision is good.

Children feel valued and individual needs are supported by staff. They help children to learn about their diverse community by providing a good range of resources for them to use. All children are able to play with a variety of figures and dolls. They benefit from looking at the books and posters around, which reflect positive images of people within the wider community. Children with special needs are well supported as the staff follow sound procedures in place to support and monitor their individual needs. Staff are well informed, adapt activities and provide sufficient support so that they are able to participate well with children. This heightens the children's awareness and understanding of the needs of others while they work and play.

Children behave well and play harmoniously together. Staff encourage them to take turns and share while playing or during whole class activities. This is apparent during carpet time where children pass a soft toy rabbit around when they want to speak. This helps children learn important social skills, listening to each other in a conversation as well as allowing all children to have the opportunity to talk. Children benefit from lots of praise and encouragement, as well as sound basic ground rules

that are consistently applied. Staff manage children's behaviour calmly and patiently. This encourages children to respond effectively to any request. Therefore, children are developing a good understanding of right from wrong, to treat each other with respect and kindness. This is clear when watching children play harmoniously together, while they talk to each other and when asked to tidy up. However, behaviour can deteriorate when activities fail to engage them fully. For example, when children wait for others to get ready to go outside or waiting at snack time.

The partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the good working relationships the staff have with their parents. The staff members are accommodating, approachable and friendly. Parents feel welcome and comfortable to approach them about any concerns they might have. Children are quick to settle and enjoy coming to the pre-school. Parents receive good information about the setting and the foundation stage. There are both formal and informal systems in place for staff and parents to share information about children's individual progress and development. This enables parents to know how their child is progressing and to contribute to their learning at home. However, staff have yet to obtain information from parents when their child begins about individual achievements and involve them in the planning of their child's next steps in learning.

Children have a range of opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them. Staff have regular discussions about the day and weather with children. They plan activities about the people who help them, their bodies, different festivals and have occasional outings to local places. Children are encouraged to develop good independence skills through the daily routine and during play. This is apparent as they are able to dress themselves, find their name as they arrive and manage personal care tasks. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. Children benefit from the qualified and experienced team of staff. They work well together, share responsibilities and duties in the day-to-day organisation of the setting. They have a sound understanding of the learning outcomes for children and follow clear written plans. They share ideas, reflect and regularly evaluate their practice. They are able to identify their strengths and weaknesses. This ensures children receive a variety of opportunities, which support the six areas of learning within the foundation stage.

Children play in a organised setting that is bright, welcoming and interesting to them. The staff organise the indoor and outdoor space to accommodate the play needs of the children. They provide a balance of activities each session to support their learning and interests.

Staff give sound attention to the maintenance of all required documentation, which contribute to the children's health, safety and well-being. There are also secure procedures in place that staff members regularly review. Although staffing ratios are sufficient, at some times the number falls below the minimum requirement. This

happens when staff supervise the school gate for the afternoon class to enter while the main school children are using the playground. Therefore, staff and the children's welfare is at risk for a short time until the staff member returns from securing the school premises. The staff are very aware of maintaining the safety of the children at all times, implementing suitable procedures while the matter is being resolved.

Staff are encouraged to attend training sessions of their choice to build on their professional development. There are sound procedures in place for monitoring performance and evaluating the practice of staff. There are suitable contingency arrangements in place for covering the absence of setting staff. However, these are not clear to parents, children or setting staff. Clear arrangements will ensure that they will know who will be working with the children when staff are absent. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

At the last inspection, the pre-school agreed to carry out three recommendations. These were to: provide appropriate employment agreements for staff; improve record keeping of fire drills; the maintenance of medical records, including agreements with parents, to compile procedures for sick child and allegations against staff.

Procedures relating to sick children and allegations against staff are now firm and clearly in place. Employment agreements for the staff have been reviewed and contingency arrangements for covering staff absence is currently being finalised. Records are in place for fire evacuation and administering medication. However, obtaining written consent from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment is not in place for the current children. Therefore, the safety and welfare of children in the event of an accident is at risk. The setting staff agreed to address this matter immediately, reducing the overall risk to the welfare and safety of the children.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

## 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):

- maintain the correct staffing levels to meet the required standard at all times, for example during the start of afternoon session when there are only two members of staff on duty.

### **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 existing systems for recording, evaluating, and planning for each child; in order that they reflect children's attainment on entry, provide a clear picture of progress, and inform the planning of the next stage in their learning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)