



First Friends Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY301142
Inspection date	29 September 2005
Inspector	Nicola Mary Eileen Matthews
Setting Address	Great Waldingford VC Primary School, Folly Road, Great Waldingfield, Sudbury, Suffolk, CO10 0RR
Telephone number	01787 374055
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Registered person	First Friends Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

First Friends Pre-School is run by a voluntary committee. It opened in February 2005 and operates from a classroom in Great Waldingfield Voluntary Controlled Primary School. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each week day from 09:00 until 12:55 during term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 25 children from 2 to 5 years on roll, of these 14 children receive

funding for nursery education. Children come from the village of Great Waldingfield and surrounding areas. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with Special Educational Needs.

The nursery employs five staff. There are four of the staff, including the manager, who hold an appropriate early years qualifications. There is one member of staff working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are looked after in a clean and hygienic environment. They receive good support and guidance from the staff to help them become increasingly independent in their personal care. For example, the older children tell the staff they want to use the toilet and are then reminded to flush the toilet and wash their hands. Children know that their hands are dirty and they must wash them after toileting and before meals. Their snack is prepared following appropriate basic food hygiene rules to prevent cross contamination.

The children's dietary needs are well met. Their snack, which consists of mainly fruit and toast, is healthy and nutritious. Children's packed lunch is provided by the parents and staff monitor what the children eat to ensure they receive a healthy balanced meal. They have a drink at snack and lunchtime, however children cannot independently access fresh drinking water throughout the session.

Children have an assigned key worker throughout their time at preschool. However, their emotional needs are not always met when they very first start. Very young children are not supported effectively to be able to cope with the change of routine within the session. For example, from free play to a large group activity they feel insecure and do not get individual attention until they become tearful. Children's experiences at home are explored as they start attending the setting. This is being developed further to enable staff to know the child well before being left in their care to foster feelings of security and well-being. Young children demonstrate individual preferences. They make independent choices as to what to play with and who to share their experiences with.

Children's physical play outdoors is programmed in the colder weather. They enjoy and show good levels of enthusiasm playing with the parachute in the spacious assembly hall. They run underneath the canopy and expertly negotiate the space as they develop their balance and coordination. Children experience a variety of wheeled toys outside where they confidently manoeuvre between the spaces and successfully manage to stop before crashing into each other.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and secure environment where all visitors are monitored. Children are able to play safely indoors as staff complete a well documented risk assessment. However, not all hazards have been minimised outside. They have adequate space indoors and outdoors, in a pleasing location at the local primary school, to experience a good range of activities to promote their overall development. Children are able to freely move around the setting which supports their developing independence.

Children's welfare is safe guarded and promoted by clear policies and procedures to follow if concerns are raised about a child's welfare outside the preschool setting.

Children experience a good range of safe, suitable and good quality play equipment, which is stored in boxes on low level shelving. They also see some resources attractively and safely laid out on table tops to stimulate their interest in exploring the items.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children confidently enter the playroom with their parent. They are mostly happy to be left by their parents once they have said their good byes. Children have opportunities to participate in activities straight away or sit on the carpet with an adult until registration time which helps them to settle quickly. They interact with staff who are kind and supportive in helping them independently access the play resources. Children who get over enthusiastic during their play are calmed down by sensitive intervention by the adults who suggest ways they can extend their play. For example, saying that the ride in the 'space rocket' has now landed so they need to set the picnic up and encouraging the doll play to move on by giving the child a pushchair to put dolly in.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities and play resources to support their overall development. They show good levels of interest as they independently explore the available resources. Children express delight as they make marks when printing with fruit and vegetables and tell their parents the potato was a triangle. They develop their independence as they freely choose activities and spend time to complete a task successfully. For example, children look through a book from beginning to the end.

All children are developing good social skills and they spontaneously say please and thank you. Their behaviour is very good as they share and take turns amicably and negotiate roles during pretend play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. The development of recording children's next step will provide staff with more insight as to what a child needs to work on to help promote their successful progress through the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Children's self initiated play is well supported by the staff who use open ended questions to enable them to demonstrate what they know and challenge some thinking. Each child has an assessment record which is being developed so it is effectively updated using the newly developed key worker system. This will enable staff to provide an appropriate challenge for individual children to help them progress in their learning.

Children experience activities planned around a topic or theme helping them to make links in their learning and explore the environment using their senses. They have good levels of confidence and are eager to participate in new activities such as smelling dried herbs, flowers and vegetables. Children use descriptive language to explore their feelings. For example, it smelt horrible and yucky, or in the case of the lavender, lovely.

Children are confident and articulate communicators, initiating conversations with staff and each other. They negotiate roles during pretend play and describe what they are doing, for example, going in a space rocket to the moon. Children also enact this favourite story by following the sequence of the narrative as they use a cardboard box as a space rocket, fill it up with food and have a picnic on the moon. They enjoy listening to stories on a one to one basis and handle books with care. Children recognise their own names and the sound of the first letter. The more able can confidently write their names accurately. However, they are not always encouraged to label their art and craft work and to independently use the writing area to practise their emerging writing skill. Children experience limited resources to choose from in the writing area which does not stimulate their curiosity.

Children demonstrate very good understanding of numbers 1 to 5 as they count every day objects. Some children can accurately count to 20. They spontaneously use their fingers to help count and recognise the total of how many all together. Children's simple calculation skills are developing as they enjoy stories such as a tale of 10 ladybirds. They use mathematical language in their play, for example smaller than and bigger than. Children experience interesting activities to recognise shape confidently. They use cut shapes to make collages such as round ones to join together to make caterpillars.

Children have a good sense of time which is supported by the staff as they discuss what the children have been doing at home. They measure themselves to record how they are growing and help plant tree seeds in the tree nursery just outside the outdoor play area. Children are developing a real sense of the local community as staff organise trips out, one of which is to look at a mural of the village on an office wall.

The more able children independently access the computer and confidently manoeuvre the mouse to place the cursor where they want it. They design bridges using construction bricks and road and train tracks to use with trains and cars.

Children explore colour as they use paint brushes and printing techniques. They mix the colour as they put paint on the paper observing the changes taking place. They use play dough to represent cakes and other interesting items. Children enjoy singing rhymes and often break into song as they play. They explore the rhythm of words by

clapping and using exaggerated hand movements during drama. Children also move with confidence and enjoyment when following actions to favourite songs.

Children enjoy and spend long periods of time playing imaginatively with the small world figures such as cars and in the home corner area enacting familiar scenarios such as eating dinner. They use language well to support their imaginative play to enable cooperation, sharing and taking turns. For example, whilst flying in the space rocket or working in the home corner.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children experience a meaningful range of resources and activities to promote a positive view of the wider world and increase their awareness of diversity and understanding of others. They play with a varying range of small world figures that represent race, colour and ageism. Children learn about their local community by going for walks in the school grounds and to the park.

Children play together harmoniously and alongside each other, amicably sharing and taking turns with all the resources. They see good role models in the staff that treat each other, the children and the environment with respect. Children's behaviour is very good.

Children show a sense of wonder when running under the parachute. They show pleasure and pride in what they are doing. For example, children show their collages and writing to staff who give appropriate praise. The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good. Parents can read about the term's curriculum topic in the newsletter, one of which is posted on the notice board. The parent folder in the playroom includes copies of the policies and procedures to follow for the smooth running of the group. This folder also contains detailed information about the long term planning which explains how each activity supports the Foundation Stage curriculum. Parents have not in the past been encouraged to contribute to their child's assessment records. However, this has been changed recently and parents are now encouraged to comment on the child's next step and inform the key worker of what their child can do at home. This will enable parents to take an active part in their child's early education. Children's parents are expected to participate in the parent helper's scheme which enables them to see their child in action at the preschool.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

All the required documentation which contributes to children's welfare, health, safety and well-being is in place. Staff are aware of the policies and procedures and implement them well. All the staff work well as a team to create and provide a caring,

well maintained environment for children. Training is given high priority so that eventually all staff will have attained at least a level two qualification in child care and education. This enables all staff to provide a stimulating environment for children. All the staff have a good understanding of the play needs of preschool children, however they are not always vigilant about the new and very young child's insecurities. This affects the child's enjoyment of preschool and has an impact on their learning.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The manager is committed to improvement, especially when areas have been identified. She works well with the liaison teacher to improve children's experiences and progress towards the early learning goals. The self assessment form is effectively used to identify areas of weakness and how these might be addressed. The needs of the children for whom the setting provides are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

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

- develop the settling in procedure for very young children so they feel secure and their emotional well-being is supported throughout the session
- ensure hazards are minimised this refers to the metal girders and playhouse door outside to improve children's safety
- enable children to access fresh drinking water all of the session to help maintain their health.

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 large group story session so all children are included and want to listen
- extend the resources to promote children's early writing skills.

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