



Cuckoo Meadow Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY254143
Inspection date	22 September 2005
Inspector	Carol Patricia Willett
Setting Address	Rathbone Pavillion, North Waltham, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG25 2BL
Telephone number	01256 398172
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Registered person	Cuckoo Meadow Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of 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?

Cuckoo Meadow Pre-school has been open since 2003. It was formerly Dummer Pre-school and has been in operation for around thirty years in total. The pre-school is situated in the village of North Waltham near to the infant school on the outskirts of Basingstoke. The children attending come from the village and the surrounding area.

The pre-school operates Monday to Friday from 09:15 till 11:45 and Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 12:30 till 15:00. during term time only.

The pre school is managed by a committee of parents and is registered to provide sessional care for 20 children from 2 to 5 years of age, though children have to be 2 years and 9 months before they attend. At present there are 39 children on roll with 23 of the children aged 3 and 4 years in receipt of nursery funding. The group supports children who have special needs. They can support children for whom English is an additional language though none are attending at present.

Six members of staff are employed with four staff working with the children at each session. Staff attend regular training and more than half of the staff have early years qualifications. The pre-school is an accredited member of a quality assurance scheme and receives support from the early years partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff have a good understanding of health, hygiene and nutrition which effectively promotes children's good health. Children play and learn in a clean, well maintained environment as staff have put very effective procedures in place to ensure the premises, toys and equipment are in a clean and suitable condition. Staff check the premises daily before the children arrive and clean the toys regularly. They wipe the tables before and after snacks.

Children are independent in self care skills as staff support and encourage their development. Most of the children can put on their coats and jumpers for outside play. They learn about personal hygiene as staff gently remind them to wash their hands after the toilet. Children get tissues for their noses and throw them in the bin after use. They put on aprons to protect their clothes when painting. Children freely access water from a jug in the playroom and they choose milk or juice at snack time skilfully pouring drinks for themselves.

Children learn about being healthy as they are given a choice of healthy snacks. They have a piece of fruit or a plain biscuit. The staff and children talk about sweet juicy apples and children discuss what fruit is good for you and which they like. Children's health and dietary needs are met because the staff work closely with parents to ensure they have a sound knowledge of individual needs.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which contribute to their good health and which help them develop their physical skills. They enjoy playing in the fresh air and enthusiastically explore the range of apparatus and ride on toys which are available in the outside play areas and in the playroom. They practice pedalling skills as they skilfully manoeuvre ride-on toys including scooters, trikes and two-wheeled bikes. They join in enthusiastically as a parent helper shows them how to juggle with beanbags and staff practice throwing and catching skills with them. They enjoy parachute games where they develop coordination and control to make the parachute move. Children manipulate a wide range of construction toys and tools such as rolling pins and cutters, paint brushes and pencils to develop their fine motor skills. Staff's consistent support and close supervision develops children's confidence

in using the equipment and resources.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children develop confidence and independence in the pre-school as they are cared for in a warm, welcoming, safe environment where space is organised effectively. Children develop good self esteem and a sense of belonging as the playroom is brightly decorated with children's work and educational posters. They use good quality furniture and equipment which is appropriate to their age and stage of development. Children develop independence skills as there is safe and easy access to a broad range of good quality well-maintained stage appropriate toys. The limited space in the playroom means that not all the resources are freely available to the children.

Children are developing good safety awareness as they learn rules for their own safety, for example staff explain they should not run indoors as they might hurt themselves. They confidently ask for help, approaching all staff with the expectation their needs will be met.

Children's safety is given high priority throughout the environment and is promoted by good safety procedures and practices and close supervision. Staff complete regular risk assessments and check the premises both inside and out before use. Children develop confidence and understanding as they regularly practice fire evacuation. Children are well protected as they are cared for by adults who are vetted and have relevant experience, knowledge and skills. Staff are familiar with issues relating to child protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children receive good quality care and are very happy, developing confidence and self-esteem as they benefit from the warm, caring attitudes of the staff. They are well-motivated to participate and supported to learn by the sensitive, caring staff team who use humour and fun to maintain children's interest and enthusiasm. Children make good progress to the early learning goals as staff have a sound knowledge of the foundation stage curriculum and they plan a range of interesting and varied activities that support the children's development across all areas. Children develop thinking and learning and develop new skills as the staff demonstrate a good variety of teaching methods and skilful questioning techniques. However children's ability to use their own creative imaginations freely in craft and other activities is sometimes limited as they do not freely access tools, materials and resources.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Children join in with enthusiasm and are very cooperative responding well to changes in the session routine. Children

confidently engage staff and each other in conversation and are eager to share what they know. They discuss their families and experiences as their communication skills are well supported by interested, caring adults and especially during show and tell sessions. Children's personal social and emotional development is very good. They form good friendships and offer hugs and support to each other. They behave well and are very cooperative. They care about each other and happily share resources. Children have a good knowledge of mathematical concepts. They confidently use mathematical language and problem solve through planned activities and daily routines, for example they compare the number of boys and girls at snack time. They spontaneously use mathematical language in play as they compare their height to the tower of bricks they have constructed. Children's physical skills are developing well as they use a range of large equipment and smaller resources such as balls and beanbags and wheeled toys and have daily access to outdoor facilities. Staff use their knowledge of the children and their observations to plan for the children's development. Evaluation of activities does not effectively identify children's achievements or the next steps in learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children settle well, grow in confidence, develop a sense of belonging and a clear sense of self as they and their parents develop strong relationships with the friendly, caring staff team. The children are warmly greeted on arrival. They rush into the group sharing experiences with staff. They happily leave their parents and carers seeking out their friends and settle quickly into activities that interest them. The staff have a good knowledge of children's individual needs through daily discussions with parents and each other and observations of the children. Children learn about their own and other cultures through a range of resources and activities such as craft, food tasting and show and tell times. They say a thank-you prayer before snack. Children with special needs are fully included because of sensitive adult support for example when using the picture exchange system.

Children behave very well and are very cooperative. They learn what is right and wrong as they respond well to gentle effective reminders from staff about not throwing books and sharing toys for instance. They understand and respond to simple rules such as putting on aprons and stop when the music plays and help to pack away for snack time. Staff are very sensitive to the children's needs gently supporting them when they make mistakes. They act as good role models and offer meaningful praise and encouragement for children's efforts and achievements. They talk calmly to the children treating them with respect. Children become aware of acceptable behaviour such as putting up their hands if they want to speak at show and tell time and listening to others as they are sensitively supported by the staff. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Partnerships with parents are good. Children's well-being and achievements in the setting are significantly supported by a strong relationships with parents. They form a management committee to support the staff and the running of the pre-school. They gain an insight into their children's learning and time at the pre-school as they help on

the well-supported parents' rota. Parents' views are actively sought throughout the child's time at pre-school. They are given regular reports both formally and informally which ensures children's needs are met and parents know how their children are progressing.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are comfortable and at ease in a well-organised environment. Space is used effectively, indoors and outdoors, to meet all children's needs and they are well supported by the high staffing ratio. There are four members of staff at every session and parents come in as voluntary helpers. Leadership and management is good. The supervisors and chair have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and all staff are well deployed and work well together as a team. This ensures children feel confident and secure and their welfare, care and education are well promoted. The staff and committee are keen to improve all aspects of the preschool and have completed accreditation through a quality assurance scheme. Children benefit as the staff are encouraged to develop personally through ongoing training for example special needs training has given staff insight into helping children who need support through the session by the introduction of a picture exchange system. Children are protected by the very good induction procedures that are in place and have access to caring, experienced adults who support their education. This is backed up by relevant policies and procedures and documentation which work well in practice. Committee documentation is exceptionally well organised and there are very effective systems in place to monitor and review and update all policies and staff records. Planning is effectively managed to ensure children make good progress to the early learning goals. Monitoring and evaluation of activities is less effective and does not consistently identify children's next steps to learning. Overall, the setting meets the needs for the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the pre-school were required to make improvements to a range of documentation. They have addressed these issues well. There are suitable procedures in place in the child protection policy if allegations are made against staff. Accident records contain sufficient detail and are recorded in a confidential manner with parents signing the entries. Parents now provide written consent to seek emergency treatment.

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):

- make improvements as indicated in the nursery education section below

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):

- provide more opportunities for children to independently select from a range of resources, tools and media to enable them to develop their own creative imagination
- review and improve systems for the evaluation and monitoring of short term planning activities in order to identify the next steps in children's learning and show how activity learning objectives are met

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