



Sticky Fingers Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	303832
Inspection date	07 November 2005
Inspector	Helene Anne Terry
Setting Address	Copley Junior & Infant School, Wakefield Road, Copley, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX3 0TP
Telephone number	01422 340555
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Registered person	Sticky Fingers 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 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?

Sticky Fingers Pre-School opened in 1999 and operates in the grounds of Copley Primary School near the town of Halifax, West Yorkshire. It serves children within the local community and surrounding residential area. The setting comprises of two play rooms, and has an outdoor play area. A maximum of 24 children may attend the preschool at any one time. The setting operates during term time only Monday to Friday from 09.15 until 11.45 for children aged 2 and a half to 5 years, and Monday

to Thursday from 12.35 until 15.05 for children over 3 years of age. A lunch club also operates from 11.45 until 12.30.

There are currently 55 children aged 2 to 5 years on roll. Of these 24 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school employs four staff and operates a parent's rota for volunteers. Three of the staff, including the manager hold early years qualifications equivalent to level 3. One staff member is currently working towards a qualification. The pre-school has completed the Pre-School Learning Alliance Accreditation scheme, and receives support from the Pre-School Learning Alliance and the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and well maintained environment where effective procedures and practices ensure that children's physical, nutritional and health needs are addressed in most areas. The staff provide good support and guidance to ensure that children develop a good understanding of hygiene, such as encouraging them to wash their hands after toileting, before eating and baking. However, in the playroom children use the one towel to dry their hands, which leaves children susceptible to cross infection. Children are protected from infection by other means. For example, they do have access to individual paper towels in the bathroom, staff regularly wipe down surfaces and there is a good sickness policy that parents are made aware of. Records to protect children's health are satisfactorily maintained. However, there is no provision for parents to sign medication records to confirm that they are aware of when medication was given to their child.

A good balanced healthy diet is promoted to foster children's health and development. They are offered drinks and snacks regularly throughout the session and children learn about foods that are good for them. Parents provide a packed lunch for children staying over lunch time and this is stored appropriately in a large fridge to preserve nutrition value. Individual dietary needs are fully considered to promote children's well being.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities which contribute to their good health. They have regular access to physical activities both indoors and outdoors, such as the use of balancing equipment, climbing frame, slide, bikes, scooters, bats and balls.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children move around safely and freely in the very well organised setting, where risks are identified and minimised by staff through very good practices. Regular risk assessments are done by staff both inside and outside the building to ensure safety.

Access to the provision is monitored very well. Doors are locked at the start of the sessions and staff ensure children leave at the end of sessions with a known adult in order to protect children. Staff fully comply with health and safety requirements to keep children safe. Children are also learning well about their own personal safety, for example, they are reminded not to lay in front of the door, because when it is opened it will hit them. They also seek support to have laces on shoes fastened, so that they do not trip up.

Children use a broad range of good quality, developmentally appropriate resources that foster all areas of their development. Most resources are very well organised into specific areas of learning within the playroom at child height; encouraging children to make choices and promote their independence skills. Other items are stored neatly in the storage container. This enables staff to ensure that children play with developmentally appropriate resources.

Children are well protected and their well being is enhanced, owing to staff having attended child protection and first aid training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff provide a very good range of activities and play opportunities to foster all areas of children's development. They make effective use of the Birth to three matters framework to improve young children's achievements. Planning and children's assessments are used clearly to extend learning. Activities and resources in the playroom are age specific for children attending and these are all easily accessible ensuring children have free choice, which promotes independence. Children were observed to move between activities freely spending as much or as little time as they wished, depending on their interests. Children concentrate well, demonstrated by the way in which they enjoyed mixing icing sugar to ice their biscuits. They persevered squeezing the icing from the tubes and carefully, using good hand and eye coordination, decorated the biscuits with smarties and chocolate drops. The daily routine is varied and flexible with times for children to have snacks and take part in activities both indoors and outdoors. Children benefit from free access to the outdoor play area, which they enjoy in all weather.

The interaction between staff and children is very good, ensuring that warm trusting relationships are developed and that children are happy and settled. Staff spend all of their time playing with the children, giving support, using playful talk and encouraging them to explore their environment. Staff are interested in what children do and say and respect their views and wishes, which impacts on children's sense of well-being.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning are good. Staff have good knowledge of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage and of how children learn effectively. The good planning and children's assessments enable staff to provide many challenging, interesting, practical activities to extend learning. Staff are also adept at

using incidental activities to develop learning opportunities, such as providing child sized umbrellas for the children to play with in the rain. Children delighted in hiding underneath the umbrellas, listening to the sound of the rain, watching the drips and looking at the world through the orange coloured plastic of some of the umbrellas.

Staff have high expectations of the children and challenges set are appropriate for their differing abilities. Staff use children's assessments to inform future planning, ensuring that individual development needs are effectively addressed. Methods used to engage children in the activities are very good. Staff are patient, they listen to the children, respect their views and create warm caring relationships, which gives children a sense of belonging and boosts self esteem.

Overall the children are making good progress in all areas of learning. They are happy to attend the setting and enter the playroom confidently. They display high levels of involvement in the activities and spend a good deal of time sat at their chosen activities, interacting with staff. For example, when they bake ginger bread men and build and create bridges form a variety of resources. Children operate independently within the pre-school, seeing to their own personal hygiene, choosing activities and helping staff tidy activities away. They are learning to share, take turns and be co-operative. This was demonstrated when children helped one another to carry large cushions and the road mat as they tidied the playroom. Children are beginning to make good attachments to others in the group and have friends they like to be with. They speak clearly, confidently and have the self confidence to speak with others about their wants and needs. Children's emergent reading and writing skills are developing well. They know how to handle books appropriately, turning pages from left to right. They are beginning to understand that writing carries meaning, when they look at the recipe card when baking and make labels for their creations. Some children are beginning to write recognisable letters of the alphabet, particularly when they write their own names.

Children are beginning to develop a good interest in numbers. They count well and more able children can recognise some numbers. They talk about numbers of personal significance to them; such as their age and how many days it is until Christmas. However, the children are not regularly using simple problem solving skills in everyday activities, such as comparing how many boys and girls are present or how many cups they need at snack time.

Children are beginning to find out more about the world in which they live. They enjoy looking at changes to materials, for example, as they mix the flour and margarine whilst baking. They are beginning to use tools effectively and safely; when they use scissors to effect changes to materials. They construct well with a purpose in mind, as they build bridges and people from construction materials. They talk about their home life demonstrating that they can recall significant things that have happened to them using past and present terms. Children regularly access information and technology equipment, such as the computer, enabling them to learn how to operate simple equipment.

Children move freely with pleasure and confidence both indoors and outdoors. They negotiate space well and can adjust their speed to avoid obstacles when chasing one another outdoors. They show increasing control when they balance on apparatus and

have good access to climbing equipment and wheeled toys. Children confidently explore a very good range of creative materials, such as paint, malleable materials, collage, sand and water. They freely access these materials to represent their feelings, thoughts and ideas and staff effectively support them to extend learning as children enter in dialogue about what they have created.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are very effectively met through a variety of means including information received from parents at the gradual induction of the child. Staff also do home visits to ensure children have a smooth transition from home to the preschool. Staff are proactive in identifying areas of development in which some children may need extra help and discuss issues with parents to enhance development. Equal opportunities are promoted very well. A very good range of resources positively represent diversity in society and children celebrate a variety of festivals from around the world. Boys and girls are encouraged to take part in all activities and some of the children's dads help out on the parent rota, enhancing positive role modelling. This enables children to develop a positive attitude towards others and enables them to make connections between different parts of their lives.

The staff have a very good awareness of positive behaviour management techniques to enhance children's well being. Children learn to share, take turns and learn about the consequences of their behaviour on others. Lots of praise and encouragement was observed to be offered to children; boosting confidence and self esteem. This fosters their spiritual, moral and social development.

Children benefit from the very good partnership developed between staff and parents. Children are cared for according to parent's wishes which promote continuity of care and their well being. There are very effective systems in place to ensure information is shared on a regular basis about the child's progress and daily activities, for example through daily chats with staff, access to the child's key person, and written reports about children's progress. Policies and procedures are available to parents about the setting and a newsletter is used to update on any changes and forthcoming events. However, there is limited information in the prospectus to inform parents about the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage. Parents are involved in the setting's committee and attend sessions as part of the helper rota. This promotes the two way process in enhancing children's progress. Parents are also actively encouraged to be involved in their child's learning by bringing in items related to themes being followed and they also receive information on how to extend their child's learning at home. This enriches their child's development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Space, resources and deployment of staff are used very effectively to meet the needs of the children and enhance their well being. Adult child ratios are consistently

maintained and children benefit from the experience of good qualified staff, most of whom hold a level 3 qualification in care and education. The very good range of policies and procedures effectively underpin the setting. Most documentation is in place apart from minor omissions; such as the times children attend, if these differ from the start and finish times of the sessions. Parents' signatures to confirm that they are aware of when medication is given to their child are also currently omitted.

Leadership and management within the setting are good. Management is motivated and enthusiastic and all staff take full advantage of the training opportunities available to them. Managers reflect effectively on their practice within the setting, which enables them to identify the settings strengths and weaknesses and implement beneficial plans to make changes. The setting is accredited with the Preschool Learning Alliance. Staff work very well as a team and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Everyone is committed to the continued improvement of the care and education of the children. Overall the provision meets the needs of the children who attend well.

Improvements since the last inspection

The previous care and nursery education inspections recommended that the setting improve staff's first aid training and update the complaints procedure. To improve nursery education it was recommended that staff effectively link children's assessments in their learning to the planning of the activities. Good improvements have been made. Children's well being is protected owing to staff updating their first aid training and the complaints procedure has been amended to contain the regulators details. Children's assessments are now fully linked to the planning. Staff have introduced focus group activities, which concentrate on enhancing individual children's learning in specific areas.

Complaints 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.

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):

- ensure that the children access a more hygienic method of drying their hands in between activities
- ensure that parents sign the medication records to confirm that they are aware of when medication was given to their child
- improve the system for recording the times that children attend the sessions.

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):

- ensure that parents receive information about the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage as part of the prospectus
- provide more opportunities for children to use simple calculation and problem solving skills during daily activities.

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