



## **Eaton Socon Pre-School**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	221749
<b>Inspection date</b>	23 November 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Clare Elizabeth Pook
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<b>Registered person</b>	Eaton Socon 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 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?

Eaton Socon Pre-school opened in 1979 and registered in 1992. It operates from its own premises consisting of two joined mobile rooms. It is situated in Eaton Socon on the edge of the town of St Neots. A maximum of 44 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre school is open each weekday from 09:00 until 11:30 and 12:30 until 15:00. A lunch club from 11:30 until 12:15 is also provided term time only. All children have access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 52 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. Of these children most receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The pre-school supports a number of children with special educational needs, and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 10 staff all of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The setting receive support from Local Authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in light, airy, clean surroundings where they learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care within the daily routines, for example they understand why they should wash their hands before preparing or eating food to stop germs spreading. They independently use tissues to wipe noses and dispose of hygienically in the bin. Children are encouraged to wash hands after sneezing on them. Clear and effective systems are in place for the recording of accidents and the administration of medication. Additional systems are in place to evaluate potential risk to other children.

Children are well nourished and their dietary needs are catered for, promoting growth and development. Staff have excellent understanding of healthy eating. Displays and posters reinforce healthy foods and outline the importance of eating 5 pieces of fruit and vegetables a day. Snacks offered are varied and nutritious and include foods such as raw vegetables, yoghurt or fruit. Children talk about healthy foods and know that it keeps the body healthy and teeth in good condition.

Children enjoy physical exercise and are developing positive attitudes. They are aware of the importance of physical exercise to stay healthy. Children are regularly offered appropriate and extensive physical challenges in a safe and very well planned environment for example using nails to hammer, different types of scissors available for various levels of ability, threading on a large scale on the fences outside or modelling dough. During outside play children take part in a wide and varied range of well organised activities such as using beams to balance, balls to kick, or take part in parachute games to enhance physical abilities.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a very safe and secure setting which puts children first and their safety is of utmost priority. The children are kept extremely safe within the setting as the access to the premises is closely monitored and effective systems are in place for managing arrival and departure of children and visitors. Staff are exceptionally vigilant and let everyone know how many children, staff and visitors are

present. They inform each other when leaving the room and communicate between the rooms by a walkie talkie. Fire practices are regularly carried and impromptu practices are instigated by staff in addition, so children and staff are confident and clear about how to leave the building in an emergency.

The rooms are organised exceedingly well so that children can safely move around and easily access toys and activities. Robust risk assessments are in place including daily checks inside and out which help to reduce hazards and keep children safe. Toys are well maintained and checked regularly for safety ensuring they remain suitable and safe for the children to play with. Children are learning to keep themselves safe when crossing the road and have been looking at their own personal circles of people who they feel safe with.

Children are protected because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Children are cared for by adults who are vetted and have relevant experience, excellent knowledge and skills

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy coming to the setting and have a positive attitude to learning. They are content to play on their own or with others. They are keen to take part in activities and concentrate and persevere well. They behave well and have a secure awareness of right and wrong. They know not to run and to use small voices whilst playing inside. Children play an active part in the setting and make choices about what they do. They are confident to ask for additional resources for example different colours of paint or other resources for the water tray. Children's independent skills are shown through routine tasks such as hanging up their coats after outside play and accessing resources. Children demonstrate good control and co-ordination when pouring drinks.

Children work well alongside each other, sharing and taking turns fairly. They use the sand timer to assist them in deciding how long they have to play on the computer before letting someone else have a go. They co-operate well together building train track and painting together at the easel.

Staff know children extremely well and use skilful questioning at all times to encourage children to think and extend their learning. Staff have a good understanding of how to accommodate younger children providing them with space and to rest and sleep if needed. Staff are aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and are beginning to implement it in their practice.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

All of the staff working with funded children are well qualified and have a very good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They plan

meaningful activities that build on children's interests and enable children to learn across all areas. Key workers observe children each day and use their observations at key activities to assess children's progress towards the early learning goals. Staff do not use other experiences throughout the day to assess children for example at snack or circle time. Staff clearly explain at the beginning of the session to the children what activities are set out and demonstrate activities so children feel confident to try new things. Staff support children well, interact and have fun playing alongside children.

Children are confident speakers who chat happily to their peers and staff. They listen attentively to stories and join in repeating the familiar line within the stories. For example 'I don't want to' in 'Tiger's Bath time.' Children are learning letter sounds through weekly introduction of different letters. These are linked to the activities. For example 'ducks' are put in the water tray and 'dinosaurs' in the sand. Extensive labelling around the room helps children to understand that print carries meaning as well as being able to find resources easily. Children utilise the graphics area well using various tools to draw and write on paper or white boards.

Children use mathematical language readily talking about 'bigger triangles' and 'more' cups. They freely access the mathematics area to look at the number lines on the wall, use the sand timer or measure objects. They count as part of everyday routines and have opportunities to write corresponding numbers on the board. Children work alone or with friends to problem solve and complete difficult puzzles.

Children show a keen interest in new activities and how things work. Children were intrigued to see how the Braille machine worked and try it for themselves. Children are competent on the computer and at operating the tape recorder and head phones independently. Several opportunities are provided for children to examine objects and living things to find out more about them at the 'hands on' tables. This promotes children's investigative skills and natural curiosity.

Children use their imagination to express their ideas through creating their own pictures and models. Children freely access resources to support their designs and add to their creations. Children experiment with colour mixing and are proud to share that green and red make brown. Various media play is extended and made more interesting by the addition of scents such as cinnamon to play dough and rosemary twigs in the sand.

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

The provision is good.

Staff give clear instructions so that children understand what is expected of them and offer praise and encouragement to reward their efforts. This boosts their self-esteem and ensures that all children feel valued and included. Children enjoy a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities, both indoors and outside. They display high levels of engagement and enthusiasm which indicates that they are motivated. Staff take time to listen to children and value what they say. Children's work is attractively displayed or collated in files to share with parents.

Children are well behaved. Staff demonstrate a consistent approach to challenging behaviour. They are calm and professional in their approach to behaviour. Explanations are at the level the children understand. Clear boundaries are set and children are learning about right and wrong. They know not to run indoors and to talk quietly.

Children who attend with Special Needs are valued and respected. Staff work closely with parents to ensure that the best support and care for their child is provided. Situations are handled sensitively and professionally. Additional help in the form of one to one workers is provided. Information is gathered from other professionals from their visits to the group and shared so that children feel secure and are fully included.

Partnership with parents and carers is good and contributes to the progress and well-being of children, including those who receive funded nursery education. Parents speak highly of the setting. Parents are fully informed about the Foundation Stage at the open evening and are kept updated regularly through newsletters. Parents are able to speak to staff on a daily basis to exchange information and more formal meetings are held on request or at parent's evenings. Children's likes and dislikes are sort when children begin at the group and any additional comments from parents are recognised and acted upon. Notice boards keep parents updated on important issues and general information. Parents opinions and thoughts are sort through questionnaires which the staff act upon to improve their practice.

Children's Spiritual, Moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and settled, enjoy activities and achieve well because staff create an environment where they have appropriate space and resources to do so. Adults working with children show care and concern for their welfare to give them a sense of well-being and regular staff know them well. They have good levels of support to help them feel welcome, comfortable and at ease in the setting because the person in charge has a clear vision of how children thrive and uses her skills, knowledge and experience to lead by example. Robust procedures are in place for ensuring staff are suitable to work with children. Staff are suitably qualified and continue to develop personal and professional skills through training.

Experienced staff show high regard for children's health, well-being and enjoyment. They maintain and use appropriate forms of record keeping and refer to policies and procedures in order to promote children's care and learning. Information gathered from parents is made known to staff to ensure that their wishes are followed. This level of attention contributes to the continuity of children's care so that they feel secure. The rooms are set out attractively and are extremely well organised so that children and staff can move around safely and easily access resources.

The quality of leadership and management is good.

Staff work well as a team are well trained and have good knowledge and

understanding of how children learn. They are an enthusiastic and dedicated staff team who are aware of their roles and responsibilities and share good practices. Staff are carefully monitored and appraisals are in place. Staff are motivated and keen to improve the care and education for all children. They have a clear vision and use their self evaluation forms as a working document to develop practice. Relationships with the committee are good and regular meetings are held to exchange information.

Overall, the provision meets the range of children's needs who attend.

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

At the last inspection it was requested that the arrival and departure times of both children and staff were clearly recorded. An effective system has now been put in place to record these times.

The complaints policy has been amended in line with current legislation.

A point for consideration was raised at the last inspection regarding developing imagination through dance as means for children to express their emotions. This has been implemented an example of which has been demonstrated through the Christmas concert for parents. Further development in this area is planned.

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

There has been one complaint made to Ofsted since April 2004. 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.

A concerns were raised about staff ratios and the hygiene of the toilet facilities. These related to National Standards 2: Organisation, 6: Safety, 7: Health and 9: Equal opportunities. Ofsted made an unannounced visit to the provision on 18th July 2005 and could find no evidence to substantiate the concerns. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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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):

### **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 assessment opportunities to ensure that children's learning and achievements are fully recorded. This also applies to care.

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)