



Trinity Road Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	402239
Inspection date	10 March 2006
Inspector	Anita Bartram / Suzanne Joyce Stedman
Setting Address	Holy Trinity Church Hall, Trinity Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 6HS
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Registered person	Judith Barbara Hancock
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 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?

Trinity Road Preschool opened in 1967 and operates from rooms within the church hall buildings of Holy Trinity Church. It is situated in the centre of Chelmsford. A maximum of 25 children may attend the preschool at any one time. The group is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings from 09.30 to 12.00, school term time only. All children have access to an outdoor play area.

There are currently 20 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 11

children receive funding for nursery education. Children come mainly from the local catchment area. The preschool supports a small number of children with special educational needs, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The preschool employs five staff. Four of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay suitably healthy because staff follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. For example, staff are vigilant about any allergies children may have and respect children's food likes and dislikes. Children are taken to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. As a result, children are beginning to understand simple good health and hygiene practices through basic routines. Snack time provides a healthy variety of nutritious food and drink. Children enjoy eating fresh fruit, cheese and crackers. Drinking water is readily available throughout the session. Consequently, children are very well nourished. Staff do not always seize ready opportunities to discuss healthy foods with children at snack time. As a result, more able or older children are not sufficiently aware of healthy eating, for example, what foods are good to help bones grow or what effect lots of sugar has on teeth.

Children fully enjoy physical activity. The organisation of the setting provides large physical climbing apparatus, and staff aim to take the children outside in warmer weather. As a result, children are becoming very accomplished at using large physical skills such as climbing, running, balancing and jumping. Children are able to rest and sleep according to their needs. Appropriate medical consent from parents and suitable procedures are followed by staff. This enables children to have their health and dietary needs suitably met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff are vigilant at the start and end of session times to ensure no child leaves the premises unsupervised. All hazards in the hall have been minimised and a written safety checklist is completed by staff daily. Children are able to use toys and equipment which are in good condition. During warmer weather children use the available space to play outside. Staff closely supervise the children as the area is not fully enclosed. As a result, children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe indoor environment.

Children are beginning to learn about keeping themselves safe through effective teaching from staff. As children are reminded not to run, climb or throw sand, staff explain that it is dangerous, or that they might fall or get sand in other children's eyes. This enables children to think about the consequences of their actions and how

this can affect their own or other's safety. All staff have attended recent child protection training and all have an appropriate knowledge of how to safeguard children. This ensures children are protected because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's development in care, learning and play is enhanced by the sound knowledge senior staff have of child development and how children learn.

Staff have taken active steps to increase their knowledge and skills to support younger children's care and learning. Staff have begun to include the 'Birth to three matters' framework in planning the activities children will follow. As a result, some activities are planned to support the specific developmental needs of children under three. For example, younger children are able to continue to play or have stories read on a smaller scale rather than in the larger group time at the end of the session. As a result, children aged two have their emotional needs very well met. This enables them to feel secure and content in the setting, enabling them to develop in confidence. They are developing good communication skills and are very keen and curious to learn and explore.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals is adequate, although the depth of knowledge is inconsistent across the staff group. More senior staff have a good understanding of the purpose of activities and use valuable open-ended questioning to extend children's learning. This is particularly noticeable during group story time. However, some staff are more passive in their interactions to initiate conversation with the children. This limits the effectiveness teaching has on the pace of children's progress. Some staff show great delight in working with the children, and this has a very positive effect on the children's enthusiasm to learn.

Staff manage the children's behaviour positively. This enables children to begin to learn right from wrong. As a result, a calm and busy atmosphere is created where children are keen and curious to explore and find out. There is a valuable amount of time allocated to free-play. This enables children to become involved in activities that they enjoy and as a result are developing good levels of concentration as they sit engrossed in their favoured activity. The range of resources covers the six areas of learning. However, their limited variation or organisation sometimes hampers the extent to which children can extend their skills.

Planning of the curriculum is sound. All areas of learning are covered and the children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals. Senior staff have given thought as to how they could support younger or less able children and also how they could extend more able or older children. However, not all staff are sufficiently aware of the differentiation in the planning to help them in their direct

practice with the children. Relevant assessment is in place to record children's achievements through the stepping stones. However, planning is not rigorously informed by assessments to address the identified next steps in different children's learning.

Children are confident to try new activities, suggest ideas and speak in a familiar group. They respond to significant experiences with a range of feelings and have a developing awareness of their own needs, views and feelings. They form good relationships with staff and many more able children work as part of a group, taking turns and sharing fairly. Older children are aware that print carries meaning and many are beginning to 'write' words from left to right. More able children show an awareness of correct letter formation and can recognise familiar words. For example, through the transport project, older children recognise the word 'STOP' on the road sign. Children are not sufficiently aware of and use letter sounds to help them in their early reading skills.

Children use appropriate mathematical language such as most, more than and a lot of. Staff are not fully confident in seizing opportunities to develop the children's appreciation of what purpose numbers have in everyday activities, such as recording numbers and labelling. All children show a good appreciation and understanding of shape. Children are keen and curious to find out about their immediate environment. Many children eagerly touch and explore the unfamiliar computer brought into the group and are keen to find out what it does. The opportunities for children to design and make are not always sufficient. Children have an appropriate sense of time. They talk knowledgeably about past events and what future outings they have planned with their families.

All children use movement boldly and confidently. They weave amongst the tables and hide cheekily under the snack table whilst it's being cleared using the table cloth as cover. Many children's finer physical skills are developing well, although the range of tools, particularly to design and make with, is not always sufficient in offering challenge to children. Many children enjoy using and exploring colour. They make full use of the free painting opportunities to mix and make different colours. Children are eager to join in simple action rhymes and have good recollection of familiar songs. They excitedly sing 'Insy Winsy Spider' as they discuss whether they all like spiders or not.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Overall children's behaviour is good. Staff use positive methods to manage children's unwanted behaviour. They are consistent in their approach and have a sound appreciation of why children show challenging behaviour. The routine staff have established with the children means younger children, who cannot sit still for as long as older ones, are able to play for longer or have stories on a smaller one to one basis. This enables older children to have a story more geared to their stage of development without being distracted by younger ones. As a result, children are calm and show good levels of self-control.

The range of resources to promote positive images of diversity is adequate. Staff introduce different festivals to children throughout the year. As a result, children are beginning to be positively aware of the differences and similarities between themselves and others. Children are cared for by caring staff who work with parents to meet individual children's needs and ensure they are included fully in the life of the setting. Staff consult parents readily about any concerns they have, and seek advice and guidance from parents and outside agencies as to how they can offer support for each child. Consequently, children with special educational needs or those who have English as an additional language are fully supported in the group.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are provided with a reasonable amount of information about the Foundation Stage when their child starts. Parents are informed of the topic children are covering and children are encouraged to bring objects in from home. This helps parents to feel involved and gives some parents indicators as to how to help their child learn at home. Individual children's records are available on request, although there is no written provision for parents to record the achievements or progress their child has shown at home. Parents and staff exchange any specific information verbally at either end of the session. There are strong relationships between most parents and the staff and parents voice positive comments about the group. This provides a secure and consistent environment for the children.

As a result, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Sound vetting procedures ensure children are well protected and cared for by appropriate adults. Volunteers are warmly welcomed into the group and consequently there is a high ratio of adults to children. This means children receive a lot of adult support, which has a positive impact on their care, learning and play. Many children enthusiastically play board games that require adult support to take turns and keep the flow of play without children becoming bored or distracted. Younger children are able to hear one to one stories, and receive good support when upset or in need of reassurance. All required documentation, and most policies and procedures are in place and these are carried out appropriately in practice. The registered provider fully supports staff in improving their knowledge or increasing their core childcare qualifications through local authority courses.

The leadership and management of the nursery is satisfactory. This enables children to make steady progress in the Foundation Stage. The deputy manager provides a good role model for less qualified or junior staff. She has a sound underpinning knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how to implement it. As a result, other staff are gaining in confidence. This has a constructive effect on the quality of education the children receive. The registered provider monitors the effectiveness of the staff informally through observations during the session. This is not yet sufficient in helping less proactive staff develop their skills in delivering the Foundation Stage. The registered provider is committed to providing good quality care and education for the

children. However, there is no written development plan in place. This means it is difficult for the registered provider and staff to rigorously plan, monitor and measure future improvements.

Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the quality of care was judged as inadequate. The setting was required to ensure that staff and volunteers could implement the child protection policies and procedures; to review staff deployment and the policy for emergency cover to ensure a satisfactory level of care is provided for all sessions; and to put in place a suitable range of activities for children under three years of age.

When discussed during this inspection, volunteers, students and staff were very aware of their roles and responsibilities. Unvetted adults were aware that they could not be left alone with children and that this was to protect both the children's and their welfare. Staff have attended some additional child protection training through the Early Years Partnership and now have a sound understanding of their role in safeguarding children. Staff are deployed well, with a high number of adults to children at all sessions. The registered provider now uses volunteers and bank staff to fill any emergency staffing issues. Staff have increased their skills and knowledge of how to support younger children's care, learning and play. They have attended training and have used their new skills to support younger children effectively.

At the last inspection, the quality of nursery education was judged as inadequate. The nursery was required to ensure the whole staff team is well informed about the developmental needs of funded children, so that they are able to support them and provide adequate challenge to help them progress towards the early learning goals; and to ensure all staff have the required knowledge and skills to implement the group's curriculum planning effectively during all sessions, by interacting and questioning the children to enhance their learning.

The staff group has seen some improvement since the last inspection. Senior staff have the knowledge and skills to deliver the Foundation Stage. Curriculum planning is sound, but not all staff refer to it and then purposefully interact with the children to achieve the intended learning outcomes for the children. The recent appointment of the current deputy manager has had a positive impact on the quality of nursery education. The registered provider acknowledges that the deputy is a very positive role model for other staff. Through her commitment to improve the quality of nursery education the children receive, the registered provider now delegates much of the everyday running of the group to the deputy.

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

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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):

- improve the organisation of snacktime to enable staff to seize opportunities to help children learn about healthy foods, model good behaviour and extend children's language and independence skills
- revise the use of space; to increase children's use of all areas of the provision, for example, the book corner and writing table and to enable children to have learning opportunities outside
- vary the resources and the way they are used to provide more depth and challenge to extend children's play, and to provide positive images of race, culture, gender and disability

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):

- improve the presentation of the writing table to encourage children to make fuller use of a wider variety of materials, that also incorporates designing and making
- increase the information parents have about the children's learning in the Foundation Stage and their access to their own child's developmental records
- continue to improve all staff's skills in delivering the Foundation Stage.

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