



Fordcombe Pre-School Group

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127194
Inspection date	26 January 2006
Inspector	Melissa Tickner
Setting Address	Fordcombe Village Hall, The Green, Fordcombe, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN3 0RD
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Registered person	Doris Punnett
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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Fordcombe Pre-school is privately owned and run, and opened in 1978. It operates from 2 rooms in the village hall in the centre of Fordcombe village. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The group opens Monday to Friday from 09:15 - 12:00. Children share access to the outdoor play area.

There are currently 13 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 11 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and

surrounding areas. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs, and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 3 staff. There are 2 staff, including the manager, who hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing a good understanding of keeping themselves healthy. They blow their own noses and dispose of the tissue appropriately, they wash their hands at appropriate times and understand why they need to do this. They recognise their own needs, and tell staff when they need to go to the toilet. Staff support children well, giving very clear explanations about why they need to stay healthy. For example, they talk about why they need to cover their mouths with their hands when they cough. Children bring their own healthy snacks, such as apple, grapes and banana. Staff talk with children about their healthy options at snack time. Children drink milk or water at snack time, and at other times they independently help themselves to their labelled cup and a jug of water. This helps ensure they stay hydrated. These aspects result in children taking responsible action to help keep themselves healthy.

Children are kept safe as staff have completed appropriate training should they need to administer life saving treatment. There are clear procedures to care for ill or injured children, and relevant documentation is in place to support this. All staff are first aid trained. Consequently, children's health and safety is considered a high priority.

Children are able to make good progress in physical development. They use the outdoor area on occasions and indoors every day. Children delight as they use ride on toys indoors, navigating around one another. They enjoy balancing beams, climbing in and out of a barrel, and moving around the room with confidence to music. They pretend to walk tall like a giraffe, to stamp like an elephant and walk lightly and flutter like a butterfly. They understand they need to open the windows for fresh air as they exercise.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed in to a safe, bright and attractively presented pre-school. A good variety of posters and wall displays are presented, at a low level for children to appreciate. However, there is little evidence of children's own work on display. Children are able to access an extremely good range of well presented resources throughout the session which are rotated regularly. Children are kept safe through staff being vigilant and working in a safe environment. Children are encouraged to be careful with their toys and staff remove toys that might trip them up. Safety is considered appropriately, staff maintain security well and supervise the children

carefully. However, the radiators are extremely hot and present a hazard to children.

A simple risk assessment is in place and staff have clear systems in place to help safeguard children when outdoors or on outings. Staff have a clear understanding of their duty to safeguard children and the need to record existing injuries. A clear knowledge of child protection issues helps ensure that children are safe whilst in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the setting with confidence. Staff help them settle, and encourage them to wave goodbye to their parents. Children move with enthusiasm around the pre-school and chat with the staff about what choices they are making. They are offered a variety of interesting activities which cater for all ages and abilities. Staff are able to offer children good one-to-one care and small group support due to the numbers attending. Staff are extremely caring and enthusiastic; they support the children well and encourage them. Children are confident and familiar in their surroundings. Staff care for the younger children extremely well. They have not yet implemented the Birth to Three Matters framework but are due to attend training in this aspect. The younger children are well supported and activities are adapted for them appropriately.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff are developing their planning and observation system to ensure they offer children a good range of activities in line with the six areas of learning. Observation records require some development to support staff in planning for children's next steps. Staff plan a wide range of activities for children to choose from on a daily basis. However, the structure of the session is such that it leaves children less time to explore and play freely, as they move on to planned music sessions and other group times. Resources and activities could be developed to offer children greater choices and encourage child led work, such as arts and crafts created by the child; ensuring painting is regularly available and allowing children to pour their own drinks.

Children enjoy with enthusiasm the well resourced topics; for example, they delight as they explore the sounds that blackbirds, robins and owls make. They refer to the birds in books to see what they look like. Staff have paid great attention to offering children attractively presented and planned activities. They offer children opportunities to learn and make progress as they play. However, they do not always sufficiently extend children, for example, talking to them about what they have made with the play dough and offering them appropriate and related challenges, questioning them about the activity of their choice.

Children are able to make progress throughout all areas of learning. For example, they talk with confidence about their news, which staff thank them for. They do not pour their own drinks, but show good levels of independence in other ways, such as recognising their own needs. Children show enthusiasm and confidence. They tell

staff that they 'love pre-school' and show they have developed secure relationships with one another and staff. Children have some opportunities to count, and are able to learn about shape. They understand some size language. However, they are presented with insufficient challenge in this area.

Children have a good range of opportunities for mark making, and enjoy using a range of resources on the writing table, as well as chalk boards, painting and focussed writing activities. Children enjoy 'hunting' for their names, and recognise the initial letters of their names. They enjoy story time and independently use the welcoming book corner at other times. They listen and communicate well, and are beginning to understand new words, for example 'Inuit' and 'igloo'.

Children have a good range of opportunities to explore. For example, they talk about birds with enthusiasm and look at items on their topic table with interest. They have enjoyed other aspects such as a nature walk, and exploring items on the interest table. Children are learning about diversity through topics such as France, Spain and the Chinese New Year. They indicate they are doing 'their office work' as they enjoy playing with the telephones, the fax machine and calculators. Children enjoy their creative activities, although many of these are predominantly adult led activities with many aspects already completed for them, such as pre-cut animals and shapes to stick on them. Children join in music activities with enthusiasm and enjoy playing the instruments and taking turns on the piano. They play imaginatively in a satisfactorily resourced home corner.

As a result, children are making satisfactory progress at the setting and enjoy and achieve in all activities in which they take part.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed by staff and extremely well cared for. Staff recognise children's individual needs and are extremely caring and supportive. Children are settled and confident as a result of this. Staff encourage their contributions and help all children to feel valued. Children learn about the diversity of our society through a good range of well integrated resources, posters and displays, and planned topics. A knowledgeable and sensitive Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) ensures that children with special need are well supported and cared for. Children behave well as staff are sensitive and use praise regularly with children, thanking them and praising them for their good behaviour and manners. Children understand the need to share and take turns and work well together as a group. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are worked with closely regarding their children's care, and are extremely positive about the setting and what it offers their children. Each child has a nominated keyworker, who parents know. Parents are welcome to discuss their children's progress towards the Foundation Stage at any time but there are no set sessions or time to do this. Staff keep them informed about the Foundation Stage through discussions, and are considering providing parents with a greater range of information. Parents are kept informed of news and

pre-school information through an informative parent notice board and a whiteboard which indicates the planned topic for the following week. Systems to work with parents are satisfactory and help to keep them informed about their children's care and education.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Organisation is satisfactory. Staff are working hard at their paperwork to update and develop it, and have most required documentation in place. However, they need to update some aspects to bring them in line with the legal changes. Staff maintain very good ratios, and deploy themselves effectively around the room, supporting children in their play. They supervise children well and offer them a varied morning. This could however be looked at to offer children greater opportunity to make decisions for themselves about what activities they wish to do next.

Satisfactory procedures for the recruitment and vetting of staff are in place, and systems for induction are appropriate. These aspects could be developed to ensure supporting paperwork is up- to-date and complete. All staff have been police checked and two have appropriate childcare qualifications. These aspects ensure children are safe and well cared for.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. A well established staff team work well together and support one another closely. There are no real systems in place to identify staff training needs, to appraise or evaluate staff and to review strengths and weaknesses. Whilst staff discuss these aspects informally, these need to be developed to help ensure the setting are able to review themselves and make progress. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last education inspection in October 2004, the pre-school were set five key issues to develop. The first related to activity sheets to ensure they were reviewed and contained information to fully challenge all children. They were asked to ensure planning places emphasis on all six areas of learning. To ensure all opportunities were explored to further link topic themes in practical play activities, they were asked to develop children's assessments. This was to identify their stages and what they needed to do next and to ensure that children are given opportunities to develop an awareness of different cultures, views and beliefs.

Some progress has been made towards these aspects, resulting in children now making satisfactory progress towards the Foundation Stage. Activity sheets now refer to specific children and identify the stages they are at. If any needs are identified, activity sheets are used to focus on those and help support the children in areas needed. Planning for the short term has been developed and relates to all six areas of learning appropriately. Medium term and long term plans are still being developed. Staff refer to their planned topic throughout the session well. For example, the topic

of birds is explored as they look out the windows to see if the birds are feeding from the bird feeder they have made, they look at birds and the sounds they make, check them in reference books and look at pictures of them. They look for pictures of birds on the writing table to cut and stick and talk about what they are called. Staff refer to their topic throughout the morning, and children are encouraged to bring in related objects to support this.

Assessments have been developed to link very clearly in with the six areas of learning. It identifies the stages children are at but is not always fully supported by clear and detailed evaluative observations of the children's progress. Staff are in the process of building and developing this. Staff bring in opportunities for children to learn about other cultures' views and beliefs, through topics such as Chinese New Year and looking at other countries and accessing resources such as books, dressing up and activity books.

At the last care inspection in June 2004, the setting were asked to ensure that environmental health recommendations were met and to consider how children's independence could be promoted when using the toilets. They were asked to conduct a risk assessment on the premises and outside play area and to comply with environmental health recommendations when preparing food. They were also asked to look at how parents can view their children's records and to look at organising their documentation.

The staff ensure that children wash their hands frequently and are able to visit the toilet when needed. Staff support children in escorting them to the toilets, but do offer them the privacy and independence that they need. Staff do not handle any food as all children bring in their own snack on a daily basis. However, staff are considering that at least one of them may attend a food hygiene course as good practice. These aspects ensure the good health and hygiene of children is appropriately promoted. A simple risk assessment is now completed briefly. The supervisor also reports that a more extensive one is available and is due to be completed by all staff. This helps ensure the safety of the children.

Parents are encouraged to speak to staff at any time about their children's records. This is also now recorded by staff at the bottom of the enrolment forms to remind parents of this. Parents are also involved in completing the initial assessments, and staff liaise with parents if there is any concern or positive feedback to share. This helps ensure that parents are worked with in partnership. Staff have worked hard at developing their operational plan and organising all other documentation. They are still working at some of it, but have ensured that it is well organised, ordered and accessible, whilst being safely and confidentially stored.

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

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 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):

- ensure the temperature of the radiators is monitored so as not to cause a risk to children
- develop and expand documentation, including reference to recent changes in legislation

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 and extend activities, discussions and challenges to encourage children to think and make good progress in all areas of learning
- organise time and resources effectively to encourage children greater opportunities to make free and independent choices
- develop and improve systems for planning, observation and assessment
- develop and implement systems to effectively identify the setting and the staff's strengths and weaknesses to ensure positive changes

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