



## **Dosthill Park Pre-School Playgroup**

Inspection report for early years provision

**Unique Reference Number** 218132  
**Inspection date** 01 March 2006  
**Inspector** Sally Ann Smith

**Setting Address** Dorcas Centre, off Blackwood Road, Tamworth, Staffordshire, B77 1JE  
**Telephone number** 01827 260527  
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**Registered person** DOSTHILL PARK PRE - SCHOOL PLAYGROUP COMMITTEE  
**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](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?

Dosthill Park Pre-school Playgroup opened in 1992. It operates from a community centre in Tamworth. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday morning from 09:30 to 12:00 and from 13:00 to 15:30 on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

There are currently 60 children on roll aged from 2 years to under 5 years. Of these

34 children receive funding for nursery education.

The pre-school employs 13 staff in total who work with the children. All staff hold an early years qualification to NVQ level 2 or 3.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of good hygiene routines and demonstrate their understanding of these as they independently wash their hands after cooking, painting and visiting the toilet. They know that they must put their hands to their mouth when coughing to stop germs spreading. They help themselves to paper towels to wipe their hands and tissues to blow their nose without prompting and dispose of these in the numerous covered bins around the room. Children have discussions about healthy routines and talk about washing their face and brushing their teeth at bedtime. Staff follow policies and procedures to ensure that appropriate hygiene practices are implemented for the well-being of the children. Consent is obtained from parents for transporting children to hospital if necessary. However, the written procedure does not include permission for the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment to protect children in an emergency.

Children can regularly access drinking water throughout the session and independently pour drinks of water, milk or juice at snack times. Planned activities develop their awareness of healthy eating and they enjoy food tasting sessions. Children's interest in food is encouraged through daily cooking sessions as they make cakes and prepare fruit salads. They discuss foods which are healthy, nutritious and good for their skin, hair and teeth. However, this is not reinforced as staff provide a tuck shop selling sweets and crisps at the end of sessions. Consequently, children's understanding of healthy eating is compromised.

Children are able to rest and be active according to their individual needs. They experience a wide and varied range of physical play activities which they enjoy, such as obstacle races, music and movement sessions and action songs. Children enjoy using their imagination as they devise their own games when playing outside such as races and circle games. They have fun as they conjure up different ways to use a camouflage net or chase each other's shadow.

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

The provision is good.

Children benefit from space which is well organised and planned to enable them to move around the room safely. Tables and floor activities are positioned in a way to ensure that the safety of children and adults with specific needs is paramount. Staff are effectively deployed to make the best use of the available space. Children have access to well maintained furniture, equipment and toys which conform to safety standards.

Children learn about good procedures to keep them safe, such as crossing the road and stranger danger. They understand that they must take care when using scissors or knives. Children enjoy listening to stories that specifically address different safety issues. Children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe, such as not running around the room or climbing on furniture in case they fall. Fire drills are practised on a regular basis to take account of the patterns of attendance of children and staff.

Children are well protected as staff have a sound understanding of child protection procedures. They are aware of signs and symptoms of abuse and the appropriate responses to protect children in their care. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the implications for children, parents and staff should an allegation of abuse be made against themselves. Parents are made aware of the child protection procedure.

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

The provision is good.

Children enter the pre-school enthusiastically and select activities and resources that they enjoy. Children are provided with a wide range of activities to promote all aspects of their development. These are planned to take account of the age and stage of each child to ensure that they are involved in their play and learning. Staff incorporate the 'Birth to three matters' framework to enhance the younger children's individuality, recognise their achievements and develop their self-assurance. Staff encourage the children to be interested in what they are doing and motivated to learn. They provide help and support and interact positively with the children to encourage their confidence and emotional well-being. Children learn social skills such as being caring towards each other as they share toys and resources. They form relationships with staff and other children by learning to play cooperatively. Children's personal independence is nurtured well and children are keen to demonstrate their skills such as pouring drinks at snack time. Children know how to behave appropriately and listen carefully to instructions from staff.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the Foundation Stage for children's learning and they capture the children's imagination and interest by providing a range of activities to cover the six areas of learning. Activities are adapted so that all children are provided with sufficient challenge and yet move at their own pace. Staff work well as a team to create an environment which is stimulating and fun. Deployment of staff is very effective to ensure that children are purposefully engaged and get the most out of activities. Staff provide frequent opportunities for children to become independent learners but also plan more focused activities to observe children in their play and extend their knowledge and understanding. These observations are used to complete profiles for each child to assess what they can do and identify areas for development. Expectations for children's learning are high and staff know the children well so that their individual needs are met. Staff employ positive methods to ensure that children respond appropriately to instruction and behave well.

Children are able to choose from the activities available and initiate their own play. They are confident, happy and demonstrate cooperative skills in all areas of their play. They work effectively both individually and as part of a group. Children enjoy using the well organised book area where they curl up on cushions or sit on chairs reading books of their choice. They show respect for books turning the pages carefully and putting the books away after use. Children develop their understanding of the elements of stories such as the title, author, illustrator, beginnings and ends and rhyming words. Whilst children see some labels and captions in their environment, the print is small making these difficult to read. Children enjoy making marks in a variety of ways and regularly paint. They recognise and write their names and some children are able to recognise their middle and surnames. Children write shopping lists or send letters and have many opportunities to write for a purpose in their general play. They write appointments whilst in the 'opticians' and recognise letters as they look at the sight chart. Children interact well and are happy to share personal experiences such as one child seeing her daddy on the television at a football match.

Children are able to count reliably up to ten and enjoy singing songs such as 'Five little monkeys' which introduce children to the concept of counting back. Regular activities are used to develop children's awareness of simple number operations in addition and subtraction, for example building towers with the bricks. Children know which tower is bigger, smaller, taller or shorter. Children learn about prepositions such as inside and outside, over and under and top, bottom and middle. Children enjoy playing in the role play area using the washing line where they match socks into pairs, colours and patterns. Children pretend their room is a spaceship as they journey into outer space. Children are allowed to bring anything they want on their trip but firstly have to calculate whether it will fit through the door for example, an elephant, the dining room table or a moon buggy. The computer is particularly well used to further consolidate mathematical concepts such as matching, sorting and sequencing.

Children are introduced to a range of topics that help to develop their awareness of their environment and the world in which they live. Children learn about the significance of different festivals and customs and taste foods from various countries. The children go on bug hunts and have fun scrutinising and comparing their finds using magnifying glasses. They learn about living things as they feed the birds and tend the flowers and plants in their garden. Children take an interest in different animals and their habitats and are beginning to recognise which animals or mammals live in the jungle, desert or ocean. They know that some animals live in hot countries, whilst animals such as polar bears live in very cold places. Children recount animals they have previously discussed such as kangaroos and remember that they live in Australia. Children are competent when using the computer, independently selecting programmes and manipulating the mouse with increasing control.

Children look at how things work, such as programmable toys, magnets and cameras becoming adept at taking photographs that are clear and in focus. They play games which are fun and make them laugh to identify why things will not work such as a car with square wheels or a telephone with a 'cucumber' receiver.

Children move confidently and imaginatively both indoors and outdoors. Children use

a range of small and large equipment to develop various skills. Children particularly enjoy woodwork activities where they use a real hammer and nails under the direct supervision of a member of staff. Balls, hoops and beanbags help to develop their throwing, catching and general coordination and they learn how to peddle a variety of wheeled toys. A range of balancing and climbing equipment is available to test the children's skills. Children particularly enjoy action rhymes or singing songs that involve moving their bodies in different ways such 'Head, shoulders, knees and toes'. Children and staff respond spontaneously to events as they happen such as a change in the weather. For example, they go outside and use the parachute to catch snowflakes as they fall from the sky.

Children use a variety of different materials, painting and printing techniques to develop their creativity and imagination. They particularly enjoy making their own play dough using different colours, textures and smells of their choice. Different scenarios such as the opticians, travel agents or doctors surgery are planned in the role play area to stimulate children's interest.

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

The provision is good.

Children play in a supportive and caring environment where they respond well to the clear routines and boundaries which instill in them a sense of security and confidence. They know that when staff flick the lights on and off that they must listen carefully to instructions. This prompts the children, for example to help with tidying away the toys or getting ready to play outside. Children are given clear explanations so that they know what is expected of them and they respond well to these. They make many decisions about their play and staff are keen to take the lead from the children. This enables the children to develop their imagination and express their feelings in different ways. For example, they have made a fire and hearth for their role play area and have decided that they now need to make a fireguard. They play cooperatively and take turns to put their ideas into practice, seeking the help and support of each other.

Children have a good level of personal independence and are keen to demonstrate that they can pour their own drinks and dress themselves before going outside to play.

Children are made to feel valued and part of the group. They see their creative work displayed around the room and take pride in their achievements, showing them to the other children. They take advantage of the library service that the pre-school offers, enabling them to select books to share with their parents and carers at home. Parents receive good quality information regarding the pre-school. Staff endeavour to create positive and professional partnerships with parents to ensure that they are well informed of their child's progress. They are informed of how to make a complaint although the information lacks all the necessary detail.

All children are made welcome and staff ensure that their individual needs are met. Children, through discussions and observations, learn that everyone is different. For example, they learn that people with visual impairments use Braille to read and

people with hearing difficulties use sign language to help them communicate. They develop their sensitivity as they talk about feelings and what makes them happy or sad. Through stories they learn that it is unkind to say hurtful things about other people because this makes the person unhappy. Children learn about different cultures and festivals through a range of planned activities. They taste a variety of foods from around the world. A good range of resources to depict positive images of race, culture, gender and disability support children's learning. This means that children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents whose children receive nursery education are good. Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress and regularly discuss the educational programme with staff. Information regarding the Foundation Stage and six areas of learning is included in a handbook for parents and plans are displayed on the notice board. Planning is comprehensive and informs parents of the stepping stones and how these are linked to their child's learning. Each child has their own individual play plan which is shared with their parents. This enables parents to share what they know about their child and together with staff help to plan the next steps for their child's learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by staff who have relevant experience and qualifications and demonstrate a good understanding of the needs of all children to promote their well-being. All staff have been appropriately vetted. Staff work well together to ensure that the routines run smoothly and children feel settled and secure. Children make decisions regarding their play and the routine is flexible to enable staff to respond to children's interests. Staff have a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters framework' and the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and implementing these in practice. Relevant policies and procedures are in place to support the care, safety and welfare of the children although some lack all the necessary written detail. An accurate record is maintained of children's attendance.

Leadership and management is good and the manager ensures that staff feel valued and included in all aspects of decision making regarding the running of the pre-school. The manager provides a positive role model and motivates the staff with her enthusiasm. She gives staff a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and how they are to be effectively deployed throughout each session. The manager encourages all staff to be involved in decision making to enhance the play and learning environment for the children. Staff regularly discuss and share ideas for children's learning so that the activities are varied, fun and stimulate their interest. Each member of staff is given responsibility to organise and plan a daily activity which covers one of the six areas of learning. They rigorously evaluate their practice to determine which activities have been successful or unsuccessful so that improvements can be made for the future. Staff are committed to developing and improving all areas of their practice. Consequently, there is a very cohesive staff team who work together well. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

At the last inspection the pre-school were required to revise and amend their policies and procedures. The pre-school reviewed, amended and adopted the policies in September 2004. These are now in the process of being reviewed again in line with new guidance and legislation.

Staff were required to use daily activities and routines to consolidate children's understanding of calculation. Staff incorporate various strategies to encourage calculation for example, at discussion time staff ask the children how many seats are at a table and how many children can sit there. Children play games where they have to work out how many footprints it will take to reach the door. Activities to promote calculation are planned into term plans and all staff are aware of the need to place emphasis on this area.

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

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

The provider is required to keep a copy 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 good.

### **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 children's understanding of healthy eating
- improve first aid procedures to request parental permission for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment
- revise the complaints procedure

#### **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 opportunities for children to see print and numerals in their environment

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)