



## **Alderley Edge Pre-School Playgroup**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	304948
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 January 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Joan Isabel Madden
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<b>Registered person</b>	Alderley Edge Pre-School Playgroup
<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 satisfactory. 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?

Alderley Edge Pre-School Playgroup opened in 1976. It operates from one main room in a single-storey listed-building situated on the grounds of Alderley Edge Primary School, Cheshire. The pre-school shares the room with a separately run out of school club. It uses the school playground, field, environmental area and computer suite. The pre-school is a charitable trust managed by a committee and serves both local children and some from a wider area.

There are 48 children from 2.5 years to 4 years on-roll and of these 21 are funded. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children who speak English as an additional language. The group opens five days a week during school term-times. Sessions are from 09.00 until 11.55, and from 12.30 until 15.00.

A total of seven part-time staff work with the children. Over half of the staff have early years qualifications to level two or three. The setting receives support from Cheshire Sure Start Early Years and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning sensible health and hygiene practices. They wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water as part of the toileting routine and before handling food. Generally staff follow sensible procedures to protect the children from illness and infection. They have qualifications in food hygiene. However, they are unable to demonstrate that they are meeting the Environmental Health Department requirements or keeping up-to-date with the latest recommendations. Documentation relating to accidents and medication are appropriately maintained helping to underpin sensible procedures that are followed in the event of incident. Children are treated appropriately for minor injuries as staff are appropriately qualified in first aid.

By eating nutritious snacks, children are developing an awareness of a healthy diet. They particularly enjoy cucumber and bread sticks. The older children confidently pour themselves beakers of water and the younger children are supported well by staff as they practise developing this skill. In accessing and drinking water throughout the session, children are learning the importance of remaining hydrated and about healthy options. All staff are very aware of children's dietary needs and respect the wishes of the parents. The information is regularly updated, recorded and shared with all the staff.

Daily routines include activities to help children develop physical skills and a healthy life style. They make good use of the school playground and the wide range of outdoor equipment helping them to gain control of their bodies and develop large physical skills. They enjoy walks into the local area and to the park where they use the large equipment. Children are developing self-care skills as they are encouraged to use the toilet independently and to dress themselves for the outdoors and in dressing-up clothes. The book area is comfortable, enabling the children to rest and relax should they wish to do so.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel welcome in a warm, brightly decorated and stimulating room where the furniture is of good quality and an appropriate size. There are many interesting displays reflecting themes, but children's individual work is not sufficiently promoted.

The toilet facilities are child friendly helping to promote the children's independence skills and allowing them privacy. The room is organised into learning areas and each area is well stocked with resources. This ensures that the children experience a broad range of activities. Children make confident use of equipment moving it into different areas and returning it when they have finished. This develops their decision making skills and encourages them to respect their environment.

There are satisfactory processes in place to keep the children safe, although a safety issue relating to hazardous materials has been identified. Staff are vigilant about the security of the premises to protect the children. The toys and equipment are well maintained, safe and clean, ensuring the children's wellbeing. However, staff do not have procedures in place to regularly conduct risk assessments, in order to identify risks, and the action to be taken to minimise risks to children.

Children are learning to keep themselves safe as part of a transport theme. Through role-play, adult-led activities and an outing to the pelican crossing, they enjoy practising road safety. The children are kept safe on outings. Staff carefully explain the rules for outings to the children; i.e. listening, looking, staying in two's and holding hands. Once at the crossing the children practise looking left and right before crossing; listening for cars and they cross quickly, but do not run.

Children are suitably protected regarding child protection as staff are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. The Child Protection Officer has a very clear understanding of her responsibilities regarding child protection, although this is not reflected in the policy for parents.

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

The provision is good.

Staff establish positive relationships with children who are happy and settled. Younger children attend the afternoon session that is appropriately geared to them. It is a shorter session and the activities from the morning session, that the older children attend, are adapted to suit the younger children. For example, in the model making activity the younger children are given a large box to work with as a group rather than creating their own individual models. Children benefit from a broad range of activities where learning outcomes are identified and beginning to link in with the Birth to three matters guidance. Staff are not yet fully confident and secure in using this guidance. However, strong emphasis is put upon developing the children's language and cognitive skills. Children listen attentively to stories and engage in imaginative play. They become engrossed on the car mat with various forms of small world transport. As they play together they express their thoughts and begin to make simple connections, such as cars having wheels at each corner. In joining train carriages together they learn about magnets attracting and repelling and associate these with their magnets on the fridge at home. They are also learning new words associated with transport. Children have good opportunities to develop their creative skills as they contribute towards making the large model of a car using paints and collage materials. Additionally they confidently initiate creating pictures using a variety of media.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Staff are very enthusiastic and confident, thereby inspiring the children to become involved and interested in the wide range of activities on offer. Planning of the curriculum and assessments of the children clearly demonstrate that the staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Children learn through a thematic approach and there are long, medium and short-term plans in place. The present theme is 'Transport and Movement' which the children are gripped by. Plans are effectively put into practice and are evaluated to plan the next steps in the children's learning. From these specific learning intentions are identified on a weekly basis. Children are assessed by staff observing and recording their achievements. These observations are regularly transferred onto individual Foundation Stage profiles that give the staff a clear picture of the children's progress. Staff skilfully promote the children's progress along the stepping stones by providing a wide range of stimulating activities. They support the children very well in their chosen activity, helping to extend their learning and acquisition of skills. For example, to begin with staff join in with the zebra-crossing role-play to ensure that children get value from activity. They also judge perceptively when to leave children to play independently. A group of children play happily under the climbing frame as they become fire fighters, read books and have a picnic without any adult support.

Children have very good opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world. Through the present theme of transport, they learn about different modes of transport and how things work. They discuss how a sailing boat is driven by the wind as the children draw sailing boats. Children have opportunities to perform simple operations on the school's computers, however, these opportunities are limited. In observing the weather and recording the date, children are becoming aware of changes and patterns. Photographs show that children enjoy people from the community visiting them and visits they make into the local environment. This helps them to learn about the world around them. They handle guinea pigs, help to bath a baby, explore a fire engine, plant seeds, go pond dipping for tadpoles and learn about the jobs of a milkman and postman. Model making activities encourage the children to solve problems, and in particular, how to join things together. They learn the best way to fix wheels and funnels to their trains. Staff continuously promote discussion with open-ended questions encouraging the children to think things through. Staff give clear explanations to fill in gaps in the children's knowledge.

Children's mathematical knowledge is developing well through play activities and daily routines. They are learning to recognise numbers as they complete the daily calendar and refer to the number line displayed around the room. Children complete puzzles that promote counting and number recognition. As children sing number rhymes, such as, 'Five little men in a flying saucer' they learn to calculate how many are left as one flies away. They are challenged to solve everyday problems, such as, how to stop a long strip of paper rolling back up. Children enjoy the challenge and enthusiastically try objects of different weights until they find things heavy enough to hold down the paper. During model making children discuss shapes. They identify round wheels, count the wheels and calculate how many more are needed as they fix the wheels on. They are able to compare their height to that of their model using

words like 'bigger' 'smaller' and 'taller'.

Children's language and literacy are progressing well. Staff and children talk to each other throughout the session. As children play, they tell their news and happily join in with rhymes and songs at the end of the session. They listen attentively to stories and respond appropriately to questions during the story; a favourite one is 'Bruno and the old car'. Children take part in self-registration system as they put their named apple on the apple tree helping them to recognise that print carries meaning and individual letter sounds. They spontaneously share books with one another developing an enjoyment of reading. Children initiate drawing and writing using a range of mark making materials however insufficient emphasis is put upon children learning about the different reasons for writing. Children have good opportunities to develop their creative skills. High priority is put upon the children engaging in imaginative play. They use a wide range of musical instruments to explore and learn about different sounds. Children are able to express themselves using chalks, paints, play-dough and other materials.

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

The provision is good.

Staff demonstrate a sound awareness of equal opportunities and special needs issues. Children are warmly greeted by staff who are interested in what the children have to say helping them to feel secure and a sense of belonging. At the end of the sessions children review what they have done. They talk about the models that they have made and receive plenty of praise for their efforts, giving them a sense of pride. Children are given roles of responsibility helping to promote their self-esteem. Children are becoming aware of wider society and developing positive attitudes. They use resources that promote equal opportunities that include multicultural puzzles, books, small world play, dressing-up clothes and role-play materials. Photographs show the children learn about the Japanese culture as they dress up in kimonos, use chopsticks and eat sushi.

Children with special needs and English as an additional language are welcomed into the playgroup. Staff work effectively with outside agencies to meet the needs of the children. Extra members of staff are employed to offer additional support to children with additional needs, thereby helping them to be included in all activities.

The children are very well-behaved. Staff have a secure knowledge of how to promote positive behaviour and deal with challenging behaviour. They use consistent strategies, such as rewarding and praising children for good behaviour and intervene in situations that are unacceptable. This helps the children to understand responsible behaviour and work harmoniously with one another. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

Children benefit from the positive partnership staff have developed with parents. They are cared for by the staff that work with parents to meet individual children's needs and ensure that they are included fully in the life of the setting. Parents speak very highly of the staff and the setting. They find staff approachable and welcoming. They are provided with good quality information about the setting and its provision

through newsletters, display boards, prospectus and policies. They are aware of the theme that the children are following and the activities that take place. Parents are involved in running the playgroup as committee members and volunteers during the sessions and on outings. There is a key-worker system established and they are responsible for keeping parents informed about their children's progress, however, not all parents are aware of the assessment system and accessibility of records.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management of the nursery education positively contributes to children's progress towards the early learning goals. Senior staff work directly with the children, and as they do so they monitor the nursery provision. They are good role-models, confident, secure in their knowledge of the Foundation Stage, enthusiastic and conscientious. Staff respond well to their lead. Roles of responsibility are delegated for aspects of care, such as behaviour management and child protection. This helps to raise the standard of care for the children. There are formal procedures in place for evaluating curriculum plans, ensuring that the staff are able to carefully monitor the children's progress towards the early learning goals. As a result, they are able to identify and target gaps in the children's learning. Staff work closely with the parents and receive regular feedback from them regarding the provision. Action plans devised by the staff demonstrate that they are committed to continually improving the provision.

Staff have a high regard for the wellbeing of all the children, however, recruitment and vetting procedures do not ensure that children are well protected. Effective vetting procedures are not yet established following recent revisions to the standards.

Organisation is good resulting in positive outcomes for children. Group sizes and staff deployment contribute to children's good health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting. Staff limit the number of children who attend to a level that is appropriate for the effective running of the group. This ensures that the adult-child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play. Generally, the key-worker system works well and parents are clear who to approach regarding the care of their children. Children follow a sensible routine that includes a free-play session, snacks, adult-led activity singing and circle time, review time and story time.

In the main, policies and procedures work in practice to underpin the care of the children, although some issues have been identified. Staff are aware of the latest revisions relating to complaints and have procedures in place to appropriately log, investigate and respond to complaints, although the complaints procedure has not been updated to reflect this. There is no incident book in place and the sick child policy lacks details.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

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

Three recommendations were raised at the last inspection relating to care. The staff were required to improve behaviour management and documentation. There is now a member of staff responsible for behaviour management and the policy now includes a reference to 'bullying'. The accident records have been altered to include more details on specific injuries. The daily register records times of arrival and departure of staff, children and visitors. These improvements in documentation contribute towards underpinning the care of the children.

Three key issues were raised at the last inspection relating to the nursery education. Staff were required to improve planning to more effectively identify the next stage in the children's learning and individual children's particular needs. They were also required to provide more regular formal feedback to parents and provide a special needs policy.

Plans are effectively put into practice and are now evaluated to identify the next steps in the children's learning. Children are now assessed by staff observing and recording their achievements. These observations are transferred onto a Foundation Stage Profile. The staff are able to plan the next stages in the children's learning and identify any gaps. There is now a special educational needs policy in place to help staff work more effectively with children that they have concerns about, or who have been identified with special educational needs. Whilst some parents are aware of being able to access and read children's records, not all parents are aware that they can receive formal feedback on progress.

### **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 satisfactory. 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):

- continue to develop Birth to three matters to promote effective practice in the care and education of the children up to three years old
- establish an effective vetting procedure for all levels of staff and the committee and include evidence of checks in the individual staff records
- ensure that health and hygiene routines comply with Environmental Health requirements
- improve documentation in relation to the following: complaints policy, sick child policy and behaviour incident book
- assess the risks to children in relation to safety and take action to minimise these particularly relating to cleaning materials

### **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):

- promote mark making by incorporating it into play situations to help the children become more aware of the reasons for writing
- ensure all parents are aware that they are able to receive information on their child's achievements and progress towards the early learning goals.

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)