



Devonshire Rooms Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY303225
Inspection date 16 January 2006
Inspector Mary Van De Peer

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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?

Devonshire Rooms Pre-School opened in 2005 and operates from one room on the ground floor in a council office building. It is located in the town of Snodland, Kent. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday, term time only, from 09:30 to 12:00, except on a Monday when it is open from 09:15 to 11:45 then 12:15 to 14:45. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 26 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 12 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local catchment area. The pre-school currently supports children with special educational needs and no children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six staff who work with the children. The supervisor and deputy hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are two members of staff who are currently working towards a qualification. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PLA). They also receive support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of appropriate personal hygiene through organised activities and routines. They wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating their snack. The children are protected from infection because the pre-school staff make sure they keep well informed about children's health and illnesses. The required documentation and paperwork is in place. At least three members of staff hold first aid certificates which are regularly updated. If children have any minor accidents, these are adequately dealt with, recorded and parents informed.

Children use a range of small tools when playing with the play dough and painting activity. They demonstrate a good sense of space and move confidently during physical activities. Some of the children respond and move enthusiastically during a short music and movement session. However, there are limited opportunities for children to use equipment which helps develop balancing skills. Children use pens and pencils effectively and hold them correctly. They show imagination and creativity when playing independently and together, especially in the role play area. Children are able to choose from healthy options as well as biscuits at snack time. Staff use the Birth to three matters framework to support children's development so they gain strength and co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The toys and equipment that the children use are appropriate to their ages, safe, checked regularly for hygiene and cleaned when necessary. The children are able to make some choices in their play. However, there is a lack of child-friendly and accessible storage, this limits the opportunities for them to self-select. Appropriate safety equipment is in place, such as electrical socket covers and door-jammers. A fire drill for the hall is displayed. The children practise an emergency evacuation procedure on a regular basis. These are assessed and recorded. Children are able to keep themselves safe in an emergency. There is an effective system in place for the safe arrival and departure of children. Children only leave the pre-school with known

and approved adults. Effective child protection procedures help safeguard children's welfare within the setting. If any of the children require medication for their well-being, there are the required administration records in place. Staff are careful about their knowledge of any allergies or intolerances children may have. Children's welfare is being effectively promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The children enjoy their time at each session and the company of the staff. Children smile, laugh and interact well with them, often exchanging hugs. There is an appropriate selection of toys for the children to play with. This helps to ensure the six areas of development are covered, such as the role play area for imaginary play and a quiet area where the children can relax and read books. Activities are usually laid out for the children but they can ask about other toys and resources that are not readily available. However, the play space is not being used to its best advantage. The atmosphere is relaxed and happy, which helps children develop at their own pace. All the children benefit from outings and visitors to the group.

Once a week the younger children have their own session. This enables them to play with a wider range of toys and activities more suited to their age and stage of development. The staff ratio is higher which means that the 2-year-olds gain confidence in the setting and in their relationships with each other and the staff. They play happily and take turns and respond to others as they use puzzles, games and books. Younger children are able to make themselves understood through language and actions. Staff awareness and use of the Birth to three matters framework is assisting in children's achievements.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff understand children's needs and provide a variety of activities and experiences. They have a basic knowledge of the Foundation Stage, a reasonable range of teaching methods and an adequate understanding of how young children learn and progress. The level of play is sufficient to interest most children in the activities and enable them to make satisfactory progress. Observation and the information gained from it are satisfactory. Although development records on individual children include assessments for children's next steps, these are not used consistently when activities are planned and children are not always effectively challenged. Staff manage the children and their behaviour well.

Children show a sense of belonging as they greet each other and staff on arrival. They get involved in play and activities throughout the session. Although children are becoming more independent, there are missed opportunities in allowing them to make some decisions for themselves and act on them. The 3 and 4-year-old children take turns in games and give each other space. Children are confident speakers. The conversation between some of the children is very clear and meaningful. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories. More able children are beginning to form the letters in their names. However, there is very little variety in the mark-making

resources made available to children. Although they are able to count correctly to at least ten, there are limited opportunities for children to learn about quantity and size. Children are beginning to understand past and present. They discuss people, places and events in their own lives. They recognise photographs of themselves as babies. Communication and information technology resources are not readily available at the moment. This means that children are not consistently developing these skills. There are some activities which enable children to use their senses and imagination, for example role play, painting and snack time. However, these are not always extended to further improve children's creative skills. Children's co-ordination and fine motor skills are being promoted. However, other skills, balancing for example, are not regularly catered for. Overall, staff provide a secure environment which reflects the background of the children attending and the wider community in which they live.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Staff gather all relevant information before children are placed in the pre-school. This helps to ensure that children's individual routines are in place immediately. Children receive continuity of care. Parents are able to contribute to their child's assessment at open days. Relationships with parents are friendly and supportive. Written policies and procedures as well as a regular newsletters, keep parents informed about how the pre-school operates and the early learning goals. Parents feel welcome and staff encourage them to become involved with their child's learning and development. Staff ensure parents know how their children are progressing with daily verbal contact.

Staff use appropriate behaviour management strategies and children respond well. Staff offer good support for children with special needs. They are secure in their understanding of the code of practice, which means they are able to meet and plan for children's individual needs. Topics such as holidays and other countries, help children understand other cultures. Also, activities such as homes, ourselves, transport and shopping, enable children to begin to understand the differences within their immediate community. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The pre-school is owned by a co-operative management committee. The supervisor is a member of this. She is very enthusiastic and committed to providing quality care and education for the children attending the pre-school. Her keen attitude helps to motivate staff. She is continually working towards new and effective ways to develop and improve the pre-school in all areas. This includes staff appraisals and a review of the resources and activities presented to the children. This will help improve the learning

experiences for all children.

The setting displays their registration document. The supervisor ensures that the staff are suitable to work with the children by following a robust recruitment and vetting procedure. All staff have been vetted and hold Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks. The group's organisational plan is currently under review to ensure it meets the needs of the children and staff, for example, taking into account the new Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage. Staff hold regular meetings to discuss the routines and planning for the pre-school. The manager and deputy hold appropriate childcare qualifications and two other members of staff are currently on training. A current paediatric first aid course certificate is held by at least one member of staff per session. All documentation required for the safe and effective management of the nursery is in place. This contributes to the welfare of the children. Children are well grouped and the key worker system helps to ensure they receive appropriate support and care throughout the session. The provider meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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.

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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):

- plan additional activities to extend children's physical skills

- review how the available space can be used more effectively

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):

- further develop the range of resources and choices in children's free-play
- extend children's knowledge and the opportunities to challenge them, so that they can progress more effectively in all six areas of learning
- review and extend the opportunities which promote children's independence

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