



Jigsaws Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY306874
Inspection date	20 February 2006
Inspector	Elaine Poulton

Setting Address	St. Chads Stowe Primary School, St. Michael Road, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 6SN
Telephone number	01543 512000
E-mail	
Registered person	St Michaels Pre School (1021215)
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Jigsaws Pre-school Playgroup opened in 2005. The pre-school is situated within St. Chads Stowe Primary School in Lichfield. The group have access to a classroom, main hall and outside play area. The playgroup serves the local and surrounding areas.

There are currently 39 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 19 funded 3 and 4 year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting has systems in

place to support children with special needs, and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens each week day 09:30 until 12:00 during school term time only.

The setting employs 9 part-time staff to work directly with the children. There are 5 staff including the manager who hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a teacher mentor from the Local Education Authority and fosters good links with St. Chads Stowe Primary School.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health and general well-being is promoted well in the group. Their individual dietary needs are met effectively as information is shared with parents. Children who arrival early are offered wholemeal toast and at mid-morning the snack is planned to offer a well-balanced selection of healthy foods. Children enjoy pineapple, banana, vegetables, cheese cubes and bread sticks. Regular drinks including milk shakes, juice and squash are offered throughout the session. Children can access drinking water and are able to help themselves if they are thirsty. They are learning about healthy eating through planned topics and themes.

Children understand why they need to wash and dry their hands before they eat their snacks, after taking part in messy activities and after visiting the bathroom. Individual paper towels are provided for the children and hygiene practices are well-established. This helps to prevent any cross contamination.

Staff are effective in ensuring that children are well cared for and that their individual needs are met. There are good procedures for managing accidents and informing parents, giving prescribed medication and caring for children who may become ill whilst in the setting. This means that children are helped to maintain good health.

Children participate in a variety of physical activities and exercise. They can rest or take part in quiet activities if they wish. They take part in well planned movement sessions which encourages them to be active and to move in a variety of different ways. They have good opportunities to develop their physical skills and enjoy taking part in 'Busy Brains and Busy Bodies'. The outdoor play area is accessed regularly and children get involved in planned activities, such as planting pansy's in the raised flower beds and walking and exploring the grounds.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The safety of the children is a high priority in this pre-school setting. Security is good with staff being vigilant with external exits ensuring that all visitors are greeted but do not gain access to the setting or present a risk to the children.

The pre-school classroom is warm and well ventilated and staff set up the area prior to children's arrival, which means they quickly choose a toy or game to play with and settle well. There is sufficient space and an adequate number of toilets and hand-wash facilities available.

Children use a wide range of safe, good quality and developmentally appropriate resources. They can access toys and games themselves, easily and safely from a wide selection available. Equipment such as tables, chairs and furniture are all at suitable child height to ensure that children of all ages can use them move around safely and sit down comfortably.

The children practise emergency evacuations regularly and are beginning to understand why they need to exit the building quickly and safely when the alarm is raised. There are fire precaution signs displayed and risk assessments are in place to minimise hazards and prevent accidents to children. Safety equipment such as, safety gates and plug sockets help keep children safe in the setting.

Staff have a good understanding of child protection and reporting concerns in line with local Area Child Protection Committee guidelines. There is a child protection policy in place and staff are aware of the signs of abuse and the procedures to follow if they suspect a child is at risk. All staff are clear about the settings procedure should an allegation be made against them. This means that staff have a good understanding of their role and responsibility in child protection issues.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The care, learning and play experiences planned for children in this setting are excellent and therefore children are making notable progress. The pre-school group uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework successfully. The planning and assessment systems are excellent and link together well. Young children experience a first-rate balance of activities that are planned for accordingly, to ensure they become competent, confident young learners.

Plans and assessments are professionally produced and displayed for staff and parents to follow. There is a prominent pictorial plan posted on the wall by the entrance and this demonstrates activities that support children's all round learning and development.

Children settle well and enjoy good relationships with the staff. Regular discussions with parents ensure that children are helped to feel safe and secure.

Children take pleasure in experimenting with different textures such as, paint. They take great pleasure in rolling, swirling and twisting painted string into different patterns and shapes. They are beginning to find out about likes and dislikes and are eager to talk about their own ideas and interests.

Older children are encouraged to think through problems and about how they can remember ten different items on a tray during a memory game. Younger children are

asked to remember five items. Staff skilfully support children's learning and discuss and explain to them some different ways of remembering. Some children remember through use of colour, some remember shapes and some see 'pictures in their mind'. Children are good at putting their ideas and suggestions forward and this helps them feel a great sense of success and achievement. They are praised consistently and this in turn supports their continued learning.

They create patterns enjoy discovering how to dip a roller into black paint to make stripes on zebras. They listen with interest to stories introduced via staff using puppets and other mediums. They watch intently as staff paint patterns with white paint on black paper and then guess what the end product will be. They are excited to find out what happens when one colour is mixed with another colour and what shades are being created.

Small world resources, sequencing cards and board games encourage children to concentrate, participate and work together well. They take pleasure in sitting together turning pages over carefully and describing the exciting parts of the story book to their peers, often making up story-lines from the pictures.

Children delight in dressing up to enter into imaginary play. They dress up in different costumes to enter the 'dark tunnel' they have created from a piece of black material covering a wooden stacker box. They enter with their torches switched on so that they can 'light-up the dark places'.

They watch and listen to each other and as a result they are beginning to learn how to share resources in a small group situation. They are building good relationships with staff and peers and are helped to understand what is right and wrong through well planned activities and routines.

Funded Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff ensure that resources are accessible to all children and activities are stimulating. Staff are knowledgeable about how children develop and support children's learning across all areas of the Foundation Stage. Some staff are further developing their skills and understanding of the stepping stones, through taking up appropriate early years training. Most staff are clear about offering appropriate challenges to extend and reinforce children's learning. They support children's good behaviour well and they consistently praise and reward children for their achievements. There is a good system for assessing children's progress based on observations of what children can do. They use this information to provide activities built on what children like, are interested in and need to do next in their learning.

Children are interested and motivated to learn. They sit quietly during circle time concentrating well and they answer to their names. They are well behaved because they are interested in a range of activities. They are developing their independence through routine activities and are able to make their immediate needs known. Their self confidence is growing and they talk excitedly about things that have happened to them and what is of interest to them.

Children respond well to stories and enjoy exploring real and imagined experiences, through role play, using puppets and a good range of well presented resources. They are beginning to use different mediums to practise mark making. They can recognise their registration name card and have good opportunities to hear, say and link sounds and letters to the alphabet. They enjoy using puppets and dolls. They take home a personal doll to share with their parents and bring her back into the setting to tell the others of her adventures. Not all children's learning is reinforced fully through use of resources such as letter lines or labels in the setting.

Children are developing a good understanding of numbers through both practical and adult led activities. They can recognise and name basic shapes. They also sequence events and use appropriate vocabulary to describe the start the middle and the end. Not all children's mathematical learning is extended through use of discussion during every day routines.

Children explore and investigate different materials, using all their senses. They look closely at objects and are interested to find out about how things work, such as binoculars and torches. They are learning to use the computer and practise mouse control skills. Children walk in the grounds and can identify and talk about features in the natural world around them.

Children enjoy active play and willingly take part in music and movement sessions. They enjoy waking up their muscles by throwing and chasing after balls, pedalling wheeled toy, balancing on stilts, crawling and crouching down. They are able to move safely in different ways around equipment and furniture inside the setting and outdoors. Not all children are helped to recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active through planned discussions.

They explore and use different textures, such as wood and bark and express their thoughts and ideas through a widening range of materials. They are beginning to use small and large pieces of equipment, such as combs, curlers, calculators, and scissors, with increasing dexterity and control.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Information about children's individual care needs is shared between staff and parents and this means children are supported effectively in the setting. Staff have a good understanding of equal opportunities and use this to introduce activities to interest children in different cultures and beliefs.

Staff have good systems in place to support children with special needs effectively. They work closely with parents and other professionals such as a pre-school teacher to ensure that children are included in the life of the group and can access all activities in all areas of the provision.

Children are praised and rewarded consistently when they are behaving well and this in turn promotes and reinforces good behaviour. Younger children are helped to learn right from wrong. They are learning how to share resources in a small group situation

and are building good relationships with staff and peers. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered in the setting.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff are continually developing systems to ensure that parents are kept fully informed about their child's achievement and progress towards the early learning goals so that they are actively involved in their child's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting employs experienced, qualified and vetted staff to ensure that children are cared for and are well protected. Staffing ratios are maintained at all times resulting in children's care, learning and play being well supported. There is a consistent staff team which helps children to settle in well, develop good relationships and enjoy their play and learning. Space is well utilized and staff continue to explore ways to organise and group older and younger children to benefit their individual learning needs. Children benefit from the 'peel-off' focus group activities and enjoy the interaction with others and the adult attention this provides.

Policies and procedures which support good practice are in place and staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities to care for children and to ensure that children's good health, safety, enjoyment and ability to make a positive contribution is promoted well.

Children behave well as staff reward their good behaviour and achievements with praise and encouragement. Activity plans and assessments are notably successful in promoting children's learning. Staff are well deployed and indoor space and equipment is well organised. The outdoor play area is used to its full potential as there are activities planned to help older children explore their local community and natural outdoor environment. Resources are well maintained, safe and accessible and some are labelled which helps younger children identify them.

Leadership and management is good. The manager is experienced, has a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and offers direction to staff to ensure a consistent approach to children's learning. Individual staff supervision and evaluation systems are in place to support staff and identify further training to ensure children continue to make good progress across the Foundation Stage. The manager is good at identifying strengths and weaknesses in the setting.

The provision meets the needs of the range of the 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.

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):

- continue to explore ways to group older and younger children to benefit individual learning needs

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):

- exploit opportunities to extend and reinforce children's learning, for example through discussions during daily routines and activities, such as snack time, and through use of resources, such as number displays and letter lines in the setting.

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