



St Gabriels Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109593
Inspection date	09 March 2006
Inspector	Janet Armstrong
Setting Address	Keysworth Road, Turlin Moor, Poole, Dorset, BH16 5BH
Telephone number	01202 245352
E-mail	
Registered person	St Gabriels Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

St Gabriels Preschool has been established for approximately 38 years and is managed by a voluntary committee of Parochial Church Council members. They operate from a purpose built building, situated in Turlin Moor, near to the main town of Poole. The preschool serves the local community.

The preschool provides care for 36 children between the ages of 2 and 5 years. They are open each week day during school term times. Sessions run on Monday,

Tuesday and Thursday from 09.00 to 15.15, and on Wednesday and Friday from 08.00 to 15.15. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The preschool is registered to receive the government funding for 3 and 4-year-olds. There are currently 58 children on roll, of whom 31 are funded. The setting supports children with special educational needs.

The accommodation consists of 2 main play rooms providing separate care for the under and over 3-year-olds. Toilet and kitchen facilities are available. The preschool also has access to the large church hall for physical activities. A large garden is included in the registration.

The preschool employs a qualified manager who holds NVQ III in childcare and education. She is supported by 5 members of staff, all of whom have a recognised child care qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean environment where staff monitor and maintain good hygiene standards to enable children to explore in an environment that is free from germs. Children learn about managing their own personal hygiene through access to tissues to blow their own noses and washing and drying their hands themselves. Regular daily routines mean that children recognise when they need to wash their hands. For example, after messy play and using the toilet and before snack and lunchtimes, where they have independent access to liquid soap, water and paper towels. This helps to reduce the risk of the spread of infection. Appropriate documentation is held identifying children's individual health, dietary and medical needs. However, there is no system to record discussions with parents detailing how to manage any allergies or food intolerances. This compromises children's health and well-being. All staff hold a recognised first aid certificate and clear procedures are followed when administering medication and dealing with any accidents. Staff follow positive hygiene routines to support children's health. For example, before snack and lunchtime, tables are wiped down with disinfectant spray and staff follow effective procedures when training children to use the toilet and changing nappies. This further promotes children's health and minimises their exposure to the risk of the spread of infection.

Children's introduction to a healthy lifestyle is appropriately supported. In the butterfly room, children have free access to drinking water and cups. Children learn about healthy foods through planned topics. The setting has recently joined the Healthy Eating Years project where they have introduced children to healthy snacks such as, fruit and vegetables. However, in the butterfly room, children are offered a quarter of an orange and no alternative. This does not provide children with sufficient quantities or choice and means that some children go hungry until lunchtime. In the caterpillar room, children are offered a biscuit at snack time. This does not provide children with consistent or positive messages about healthy eating. As part of the healthy eating project parents are asked to support their children's health by improving the contents

of the lunch boxes to provide children with healthy options. This has worked well, providing children with a balanced and nutritious lunch. Children's physical development is appropriately supported. They have sufficient opportunities to learn new skills through access to a range of equipment, such as climbing apparatus and ride on toys.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is promoted well. A safe environment enables them to explore freely. All the necessary precautions are in place to reduce potential hazards. For example, socket covers protect electrical points, hazardous substances are inaccessible to children and the main and middle doors are locked to restrict access to visitors and enable staff to monitor children's whereabouts. The premises is in a good state of repair and the equipment and play provision are well maintained. Formal risk assessments of the environment are completed and recorded daily. This is supported by visual daily checks of the furniture, equipment and play provision to enable children to play safely. Children are taught safe practices. For example, no running indoors or climbing on the furniture. They learn about stranger danger, how to cross the road safely and potential hazards around them when on outings. This means children are able to start taking care of their own safety. Children's safety is further promoted through some positive procedures and written policies. For example, only authorised persons agreed by parents may collect their child and smoke alarms are tested on a weekly basis. However, fire drills have not been practised since December 2005. This compromises children's safety in an emergency situation.

Staff have an appropriate awareness and understanding of child protection issues. They are aware of the procedures to follow should they have a concern about a child in their care. This helps to protect children from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settle quickly into the sessions through good reassurance and support from staff. Regular routines and free access to a wide range of play provision and resources encourages children to make independent and free choices in their play. Staff have a good knowledge of the individual needs of those children attending and offer high levels of care to promote children's welfare.

Children attending under the age of 3 years are cared for in the caterpillar room. They have high levels of confidence and self-esteem and are fiercely independent, where they insist on attempting to take care of their own needs. For example, a 2-year-old who is learning to use the toilet insists on setting up the booster step and seat on his own and undressing himself. He likes to have the door closed for privacy. Others attempt to blow their own nose, wash their hands unaided and make their own decisions with regards to their play. The children are supported well in their

activities and respond positively to adult stimulation. They are occupied and engaged in a range of free choice and adult-led activities. Staff constantly talk to the children throughout the session promoting the children's language development well. Children are chatty and talkative and ask lots of questions about what is going on and why. They show a natural curiosity and their learning is challenged and supported well. For example, their number and colour recognition is tested during play and they explore the effects of adding water to dry sand. Staff have attended the Birth to three matters training and use the framework well to guide planning and provide children with a range of interesting activities to promote and develop the children's progress. Children's progress is well documented and shared with parents. Children are confident learners and secure in their environment.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children's learning is adequately supported by staff who have an appropriate knowledge of the early learning goals and steps within. Staff work well together as a team and make positive contributions to the plans, sharing their ideas for activities. Short-term planning is divided into two sections. The first identifies a good range of free choice and planned activities in line with the topic to cover the six areas of learning on a weekly basis. These then link to a separate sheet that identifies a range of steps through the early learning goals. However, the same steps are identified throughout the year with little or no change. This does not sufficiently show that children will be provided with suitable challenges to enable them to progress through the different steps within the six areas of learning. Thorough written assessment records are in place to monitor and support children's progress. These show children's development through the six areas of learning, especially in their mark making skills. However, they do not sufficiently evidence whether children are making progress in all aspects and steps within the early learning goals. Staff extend children's learning well in large group activities and in some one-to-one situations. For example, children learn new skills in music and movement and receive good instruction and support when using the computer. However, children do not always receive sufficient challenges or support in some of their free choice activities. Staff interact naturally with the children and are positive role models. They have a cheerful approach and respond in a positive manner to the children's requirements.

Children's confidence is developing as they leave their carer and settle into activities and routines, some with support and reassurance from staff when required. Trusting and positive relationships have been formed with staff, whom they rely on to resolve problems and share their ideas with. Positive relationships are developing with each other. Children are generally well-behaved. They show care and concern for others in the setting and are learning what is right from wrong and why. Children's personal independence is developing. They move around the play room and make free choices in their play. They use toilet facilities independently and unsupervised and pour their own drinks at snack time.

Children are beginning to rely on their language to communicate and share their thoughts and ideas with others. They listen and contribute towards conversations with the children and adults around them. Children are learning to enjoy books. Under staff supervision in organised small group activities, they learn the structure of

books and how to use them correctly. However, they do not independently access books or choose to use the book corner during the session. Children have access to mark making materials, and enjoy colouring and drawing. They are developing good pencil control and are appropriately introduced to forming recognisable letters to start writing their own names.

Children have good counting skills and learn to count up to 10 and beyond to identify how many children are present. However, these skills are not built on to provide them with sufficient challenges on a regular basis to enable them to solve simple number problems. Children are introduced to shape and space through a range of adult-led and self-initiated activities. For example, they can correctly identify a number of shapes and use a variety of different vessels to play with water, sand and pasta. However, limited involvement from staff means that children's learning is not always sufficiently challenged through the activities provided.

Children use their senses to explore water, sand, play dough and pasta. Using a range of tools and equipment they pour, mould and experiment. However, children do not show a natural curiosity or ask questions about how things work or why. Children have free access to a range of construction resources to design and build. However, limited involvement from staff means that children's learning is not always sufficiently challenged. Children use modern day technology well on a regular basis. They show developing mouse control as they complete simple tasks under good adult supervision on the computer. Children learn about the natural environment in which they live through a range of planned activities, such as planting, growing cress, harvest time and a visit from the owl sanctuary. Children have a good introduction to a wide range of festivals and celebrations that include Holi the festival of colours, St Patricks and St Davids Day, mothers and fathers day, Raksha Bandttn, Diwali and Children's Day.

Children move with increasing control and co-ordination in their environment, avoiding furniture and others at play. Their spatial awareness is developing through well-led large group activities. For example, through musical chairs, dancing and action games such as head, shoulders, knees and toes, children complete tasks and follow simple instructions. They learn new skills to challenge and support their development. Children have access to a range of equipment through planned activities on a weekly basis to develop their large motor skills. They learn to peddle, climb, balance and kick, throw and catch. Children use one-handed tools with increasing control. Their hand-eye co-ordination and fine motor skills are developing through regular access to pens and play dough materials and tools, where they mould, shape, roll and cut.

Children enjoy a good range of adult-initiated and structured creative activities linked to themes and topics. For example, clay and junk modelling, baking, collage and different painting and printing techniques. However, they are unable to independently access resources to initiate their own art and design and express themselves. Children enjoying music and singing familiar rhymes and songs, acting out the actions and dancing, moving their bodies to the sounds and rhythms. Children have access to large role play areas to act out the familiar and imagine situations.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met well through the appropriate documentation in place and ongoing discussions with parents. Staff know the children well through strong communication with parents. They support the children's needs well to help promote children's self-esteem. Children have a good introduction to the local community. They visit the local shop to purchase items for snack time and take a bus to the library. They receive regular visitors, such as the fire department, dental nurse, reception class teacher and a member of the neighbourhood, who all share their roles within the community with the children. This provides children with a sense of belonging and develops positive community spirit. Children have a good introduction to the wider world in which they live. Regular use and access to a range of play provision and themed topics introduces them to positive images of diversity and a wide range of varied festivals celebrated around the world. Children with special educational needs are supported very well. The pre-school co-ordinator works closely with parents and other professionals to positively support and promote the children's development.

Through consistent boundaries and positive support from staff, children learn right from wrong, what is expected of them and why. They are encouraged to share, take turns and consider the feelings of those around them. Staff are positive role models and reinforce good behaviour through praise and use of sticker charts. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents receive useful written information about the setting and the early learning goals. This enables them to make informed choices about the care and education of their children. All parents of 3-year-old children receive a copy of the setting's Ofsted inspection report. Copies are also kept in the foyer providing all parents with free access to their own copy. There are effective systems in place for sharing children's progress with parents. Termly meetings ensures they are kept up-to-date with their children's development. Children's records of assessment are shared with parents, who are encouraged to share what they know and play a part in their children's learning. Informal daily discussions with parents ensures they are kept well-informed. This promotes children's continuity of care. A complaints procedure is in place, in line with the new regulations. Although, the written procedure has yet to be updated to reflect this.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care needs are met well in two of the separate play rooms. Staff work very well together as a team. They regularly work in both rooms, with children under three years in the caterpillar room and children over three in the butterfly room. This positively promotes teamwork, where staff share tasks and responsibilities and also enables them to meet the individual care needs of all children attending. A warm and welcoming environment is provided. Separate areas for different play opportunities within both play rooms provide children with access to a range of activities. There are

clear procedures in place for the recruitment and vetting of new staff to determine their suitability and keep children safe from harm. Clear written policies, procedures and documentation in place enables staff to work consistently as a team to positively support children's well-being. Although, not all procedures are effective in promoting children's healthy eating and some aspects of their safety. Staff are supported well through regular meetings and yearly appraisals. There are high levels of qualified staff who undertake regular training opportunities to update their skills and child-care knowledge. Staff are cheerful, approachable and welcoming. Strong management systems contribute towards the staff's positive attitude. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is satisfactory.

Staff receive high levels of support and encouragement from management. They are involved in the processes for identifying the strengths of the quality of care provided and are encouraged to share ideas for improvement. Whilst planned activities as well as the weekly plans are evaluated regularly, these are not effective. Nor are systems to enable management to sufficiently monitor the impact of the nursery education they are providing.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to develop opportunities to encourage children's independence skills, their awareness of healthy eating and review large group activities to ensure the needs of all children are met and to ensure the complaints policy includes all relevant contacts for concerns. They also agreed to develop short term plans to ensure the learning programme across all six areas of the curriculum is balanced and to develop the monitoring and evaluation of the nursery education programme. Overall, these have been addressed well. Snack time has been restructured to enable children to sit where they like, make choices about their snack and pour their own drinks. This has promoted their independence well. Children learn about healthy eating through planned projects and healthier options at snack time. The setting has worked closely with parents to encourage them to improve the contents of children's lunch boxes to provide healthy options. Children's learning in large group activities is supported well. They are challenged and stimulated through structured activities, such as dancing and games. The complaints policy includes details of Ofsted, to enable parents to make direct contact should they wish. Short-term plans have been developed and show a good balance of activities covering the six areas of learning. However, they do not sufficiently show whether children are introduced to a balanced curriculum. Each planned activity and the weekly plans are evaluated by staff. However, they do not effectively identify the strengths and weaknesses of the activities and plans provided. This means staff and management are unable to monitor the impact of the nursery education provided.

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.

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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 children are provided with sufficient choices and quantities of nutritious foods at snack time
- ensure fire drills are practised on a regular basis to promote children's safety

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 planning to ensure it identifies the range of steps within the early learning goals to promote children's learning
- provide children with opportunities to solve simple number problems and initiate their own art and design to express themselves
- encourage children's independent use of books and the role play area

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