

3-4-5 Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109957
Inspection date	13 June 2007
Inspector	Lorraine Wardlaw
Setting Address	24 Jacklyns Lane, Alresford, Hampshire, SO24 9JJ
Telephone number	01962 735414
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Registered person	3-4-5 Pre-School
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?

3-4-5 Pre-School first opened in the mid 1960s and has been registered since 1989. It is run by a voluntary management committee and operates from the Methodist Church Hall in Alresford. It serves the local area. There are currently 29 children from three years to under five years on roll. This includes 23 funded three and four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is able to support children who have learning difficulties or who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens for four mornings and two afternoons a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 11:45 on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings, and from 12:30 until 15:00 Monday and Wednesday afternoons.

Four staff work with the children. Two have early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the reception teacher at the local school and from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children at the pre-school enjoy a healthy lifestyle because they can freely access the outside area to gain fresh air and exercise. They use scooters and tricycles and regularly access the field to run and practise their ball skills. Children enjoy lots of music and movement activities, moving their bodies to piano music to aid their physical development. They use a good variety of tools at the play doh table and are adept at using the scissors to create their own pictures. Children enjoy healthy snacks provided by their parents because the setting gives clear guidance about promoting children's good health. The guidance also includes protecting children in the sun; children spontaneously put on their hats before playing outside. Children choose water, milk or milk shake to drink at mid morning and freely access drinking water throughout the session. Children who experience minor accidents receive sympathetic support from staff and good records are kept which the setting monitors.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a suitably safe environment where staff undertake daily checks to ensure the rooms are safe to receive them. An annual risk assessment is carried out, but fire drills are not very regularly practised and new staff are not aware of the procedure. Visitors to the setting are asked to sign in and staff have a sound procedure for the safe collection of children. There is plenty of space for children to play and learn safely and staff put up displays and posters to make it welcoming to them. Children play with a good selection of safe, age appropriate toys and resources which are checked by staff as they put them out. They love to act out crossing the road at the play zebra crossing and stopping when the lollipop child says STOP, which raises their awareness about road safety. Children are suitably protected from possible harm or abuse because most of the staff are aware of the child protection procedure. Only checked staff are able to supervise children in the toilet and the registered body are aware of their responsibilities for checking staff to ensure they are suitable to work with children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children separate from their parents and carers with confidence and enter the pre-school happily; those who are new and tearful, experience one to one sympathetic, support from staff and are soon joining in with the play. They enjoy the wealth of experiences offered to them at the pre-school and are keen to make their own choices in their play. They are able to concentrate on activities for good lengths of time, persevering until they have finished a task, such as when they make their own birthday card and envelope using pencils, paper and sellotape. They love to feel the 'goeey' gloop dripping from their fingers and enjoy many sensory activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals; this is evidenced in their records of achievement and is aided by staff offering them a practical, stimulating environment that covers all areas of learning. Staff understand how young children learn through their play and most staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. There is high emphasis on child initiated,

free play activities with minimal adult led activities currently being planned. As a consequence, staff are not able to successfully build on and plan the next steps in children's learning with the information gathered from the children's assessment records. They rely on their knowledge of children's capabilities and their own individual teaching practice during free play; the more experienced staff are able to extend children to think and to be challenged in their play but new staff are less confident, for example, in the travel agents children look at world maps and local maps of Alresford. They identify where they live and where the pre-school is located and draw a route from their house to the group. Records of children's progress are well maintained and reflect what children can do, but not all are related to the stepping stones and aspects of learning.

Children are developing well in their spoken language; older children are encouraged to talk through their ideas, such as when they role play with the road works and building set. They listen attentively at story time and at times are encouraged to think when experienced staff ask open ended questions. Children visit the book corner independently and look at books, often imitating the adult at story time. Children recognise specific letters of the alphabet in their names when they talk about letters and sing the alphabet song. Most children can easily recognise their name. They have good opportunities to write emergently and many children can write their own name. Children count and recognise numerals with confidence, which is facilitated by good resources. For example, a four-year-old orders picture cards of different homes with numbers on in the correct sequence, saying confidently eight comes before nine. They have fun knocking down green bottles with balls counting how many they have knocked down and how many are left. The more able child is challenged to problem solve during the 'ten fat sausages' song; the staff member asks 'we have eight now how many more do we need?'. A child confidently responds with the answer 'two'. Children have good opportunities to experiment with water and sand and observe living things. They observe closely snails found in the garden and see the changes in the tadpoles. Children use the remote control duck to move it along the floor and have opportunities to use a laptop learning about information technology. Children produce some very good drawings and have benefited from 'the green wheel project' which promotes creative development in children and develops an awareness of children's artistic potential. Children love to use their imaginations and make up their own role play games. For example, they make dens and go on journeys to places such as Australia using chairs as props.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children and their parents are welcomed warmly by staff. Children's individual needs are effectively met by the staff who know them well through written information gathered and discussions with parents. There is a flexible settling in policy for children depending on their needs. Staff have a sound knowledge of equality of opportunity and how to promote it. For example, posters depicting positive images of disability and culture are displayed. The setting has a strong relationship with its parents; they have a full parents' rota, active fundraising committee and are involved in community events such as the Duck race. Parents are very happy with the level of care provided for their children. Children show good levels of independence; they access the bathroom themselves and select their own activities during most of the session. They pour their own drinks, should they need water during the session. Children are very keen and motivated to play and learn. They build good relationships with others, including the adults. Children share resources and take turns. For example, a four-year-old says to a child 'now you do it and I will hold it' experimenting in the water tray with a shower hose and gravity. Children

are well behaved and understand the routines and codes of conduct, such as helping to tidy up when it is time to do so. Children with learning difficulties and those with English as their second language are making sound progress because staff work with parents and other professionals to meet their needs. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is being fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. There is good involvement by the parents and their extended families; they come into the group to share their knowledge and skills and are involved in the management committee. Parents receive regular newsletters about the setting and receive an attractively presented prospectus and welcome pack informing them about the curriculum and the care offered. An annual open day informs parents through good photographic evidence and hands on activities of what children learn through their play. Children's developmental progress is discussed informally with staff. Staff involve parents in linking the learning to home by giving them useful information, such as an information sheet on the importance of singing nursery rhymes with children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a well-organised, safe and secure environment where they are comfortable and at ease. There is good use of space with staff working hard each session to set the pre-school up. There are effective systems in place to check new staff, with the management committee being very aware of their responsibilities. Currently, half of the staff hold relevant child care qualifications but there is a commitment to training. Documentation is efficiently organised and compliant with regulations. Thorough policies are regularly updated and shared with parents to ensure they are fully aware of the service provided. However, the procedure for inducting new staff is not thorough enough. Children benefit from the high staff ratio and good levels of supervision. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is good. The leader is passionate about her work, and has found it a challenge employing new staff to replace those who left the stable staff team and who worked instinctively well together. All staff are involved in planning the curriculum and give their ideas at regular staff meetings. Children's progression is monitored and discussed daily before the session begins. Staff undertake annual appraisals for their personal development, but the evaluation of staff practice and of the curriculum, including activities is minimal. There is a strong commitment towards the ongoing development of the pre-school by the leader who attends cluster meetings and training regularly.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was required to respond to four recommendations. The setting now ensures that confidentiality is maintained in the accident record book and that children are kept safe when electric buggies are being operated by members of the public who access the building. A staff appraisal scheme has now been formally introduced to aid staff development. Activity cards were introduced to volunteers to give them information on the aims, outcomes, vocabulary, and questions to use when helping children at the setting. However, these were not evident during the inspection, but will be used in the future.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. 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):

- devise an induction system for staff and include information on the Foundation Stage
- ensure fire drills are carried out regularly

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 and implement regularly, adult led, focus activity plans; ensure that they cover all ability children including children with learning difficulties and English as a second language
- ensure the record keeping register and flower system of children's capabilities covers all aspects within the Foundation stage and use this information to plan the focus activities.
- monitor staff teaching practise regularly and evaluate the curriculum offered to ensure that children's learning is being successfully promoted by all staff and learning opportunities are not missed in free play

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk