



Grovelands Park Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	133725
Inspection date	30 November 2006
Inspector	Rosemary Davies
Setting Address	School Lane, Grove, Wantage, Oxfordshire, OX12 7LB
Telephone number	07971 925414
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Registered person	Grovelands Park 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?

Grovelands Park Pre-School registered in 1990. It is managed by a voluntary committee. It operates from two rooms, in its own portacabin, in the grounds of Millbrook Primary School, in the village of Grove, on the outskirts of Wantage, Oxfordshire. There is an enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school serves the local areas of Grove, Wantage and surrounding villages.

The pre-school opens for five week days during school terms. Sessions run from 09:00 to 11:30 and from 13.00 to 15.30 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursday afternoons. There are currently 50 children from two to four years on roll. Of these, nine receive funding for nursery education. The setting supports children who speak English as an additional language. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school employs five staff on a part time basis, of whom three have appropriate early years qualifications. Regular support is received from the Local Authority and the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children in this pre-school enjoy particularly good opportunities to have plenty of fresh air and physical exercise. They develop their co-ordination skills well. They learn to climb and balance through using suitably challenging apparatus. Children exercise during inclement weather as there is plenty of space indoors for activities, such as parachute play. They develop their awareness of space well.

Children learn about healthy lifestyles under the guidance of staff. Even the youngest know they wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating their snack. They make their own choices from the healthy items on offer, such as fresh fruit and vegetable sticks. They eat sweet biscuits occasionally but not to excess. They cannot decide for themselves when to take their snack and some may be hungry earlier. Staff liaise closely with parents to discover individual children's particular dietary needs. Children drink according to their needs and help themselves to extra water from the 'Drinking Station'.

Staff follow stipulated procedures well to maintain children's good health and prevent the spread of cross infection. They clean work surfaces thoroughly, clean the refrigerator weekly and store food appropriately. They dispose of nappies hygienically. Parents are made aware of when their children cannot attend the pre-school, owing to infectious illnesses.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children use well organised and child-centred playrooms. These offer a multitude of colourful, relevant and recent displays of children's work, so providing a welcoming atmosphere. The available indoor space is used fully; children use safe, well maintained resources and toys. Children make good use of the outdoor area for a wide range of outdoor learning as well as physical play.

Children play in safety for the most part. Staff identify and minimise the majority of potential hazards to children's safety, well. Children cannot access the kitchen, for example, and visitors do not enter the playrooms unchallenged. Very occasionally, however, procedures are not followed and children are put at risk, such as when using a new slide on a hard surface. Suitable fire prevention precautions are in place and an emergency evacuation procedure is practised regularly. Staff provide parents and carers with clear guidance on what is appropriate jewellery when children undertake physical activities.

Staff understand their responsibilities for safeguarding children's welfare. All undertake regular training in both child protection and first aid, so keeping their understanding and skills up to date.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the playrooms confidently. They enjoy their play-based, practical activities with even the youngest concentrating well. Children understand the pre-school's routines and readily gather for whole-group activities. These tend to interrupt children's play too often, however, so play is not sustained for long periods. Children make their own decisions about what they will play with and when they will go outside, so promoting their independence as learners.

Children learn through using all their senses. Staff make good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to offer suitable, stimulating activities. Children benefit from the favourable adult to child ratio. They often have one to one conversations with staff, freely discussing their activities or talking about their home lives. This helps all children develop both their speaking and listening skills, including those learning English as an additional language. Warm relationships with staff are evident. Children get along well together, with staff actively helping them to share and take turns. Children's all round development is promoted well.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals for this stage of their education. This is because staff have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage and plan a suitable programme of experiences for the funded children. Children benefit from particularly good experiences to promote their personal, social and emotional development, together with their mathematical, physical and creative development.

Children's learning is based around well-chosen topics that interest them, such as 'Nursery Rhymes' and 'Christmas'. They learn from a variety of starting points and can therefore make connections across their learning. Activities about Christmas, for example, include making crackers, creating paintings of Christmas trees and visiting 'Santa's Grotto' for pretend play. Children respond well, thoroughly enjoying all these practical experiences. They begin to love books, listening entranced to dramatically read stories. They develop their hand and finger dexterity well. They start to mark-make but are not encouraged to use their emerging skills sufficiently in the daily routines. Children enjoy walks around the school playing field, finding out about the world around them.

Mathematics is integrated well across the daily routines. Staff pick up on spontaneous opportunities to encourage children to solve problems, such as trying to work out why marbles are not moving in the marble run. Staff frequently question children and this encourages children to copy and question for themselves. Children of all ages play alongside each other amicably. Some older ones begin to play together with good support from staff, such as when making floor puzzles.

Staff observe children regularly and use their assessments of children's abilities to provide suitable challenges and plan for their future learning. In this way, learning is progressive, stemming from what children already know and can do.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are valued as individuals in this pre-school. Staff know them well and make sure their particular needs are met, so helping children feel settled and secure in the playrooms. Those learning English as an additional language, benefit from much individual help and from pictorial prompts around the playrooms. These help them operate independently, so that they know where to hang their coats and where to sit at snack time. Staff have consistent expectations for children's behaviour. They celebrate children's achievements, which boosts children's self-esteem. Children understand what is expected of them. All this, together with the interesting activities, contributes to children behaving very well. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. It supports children's care and education well. Parents of funded children receive a good range of information about what the pre-school offers but are not fully encouraged to extend their children's learning at home. They receive regular and accurate information about their children's progress in the Foundation Stage.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The pre-school has experienced many changes shortly before this inspection. The new committee and Registered Person, understand and execute their responsibilities for keeping the regulator, Ofsted, informed of these. They realise too, their duties to appoint staff who are cleared to work with children and to oversee the implementation of the National Standards and the pre-school's policies.

All legally required documentation is in place. However, some policies have not been reviewed within the last year and a few require minor changes to bring them into line with the October 2005 legislation. These policies, and the accompanying procedures, support the safe and efficient running of the pre-school, helping to maintain children's safety and good health when followed closely. The pre-school uses the Self Evaluation Form to help assess the provision but does not yet use an accreditation scheme to further identify its strengths and weaknesses. Nevertheless, the committee and staff are committed to improving the care and education offered to the children. Staff undertake regular training. The pre-school meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of nursery education are good. The senior management team work together well to oversee a suitable programme for the Foundation Stage. There is a clear vision for the future of the pre-school, with plans for developing the outdoor area, in particular. The staff seek and act on, advice from outside professionals. Children benefit from being on the school site and using the school playing field, although possible links with the adjacent

school nursery are not fully exploited. Staff are deployed well with both indoor playrooms and the outdoor area being covered effectively. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities. They work well together as a team to provide a suitable learning environment for the funded children.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection of day care, the group was required to address nine issues. These related to: ensuring staff are cleared to work with children and are suitably trained in child protection; introducing a suitable staff induction programme; ensuring that all required policies and paperwork are in place and regularly reviewed; developing an Operational Plan, which includes effective risk assessment and ensure that the designated special educational needs co-ordinator attends suitable training.

The pre-school has addressed these issues effectively, although a rolling programme of review for policies has not been implemented and minor alterations are required to some policies. As a result of the significant improvements made, children are better safeguarded and potential hazards to their safety identified, when staff follow procedures. Therefore, the care of the children has improved.

Following the last inspection of nursery education, the group was required to address four Key Issues. These related to improving the programme for communication, language and literacy, that for mathematics and to ensure evaluation methods are used effectively.

As a result of the changes implemented, children now enjoy listening to stories and begin to recognise some printed words, such as their own names. They make good progress in their basic understanding of mathematics. Staff now plan for children's learning effectively and challenge them appropriately so that children progress well towards reaching the early learning goals.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the 1 April 2004 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):

- ensure procedures are always followed in order to maintain children's safety
- implement a rolling programme of policy review and consider joining an accreditation scheme
- reconsider the sessional timetable, with a view to providing longer periods of uninterrupted play and further promoting children's independence (also applies to nursery education).

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):

- make improvements as indicated in the care section above.

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