



## Chatterbox Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	205213
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 November 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Saida Cummings
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<b>Registered person</b>	Chatterbox Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Chatterbox Pre-School is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children at the pre-school and members of the local community. The group opened in 1986 and operates from the memorial hall in the village of Fernhill Heath situated between Droitwich and Worcester. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school serves the surrounding area. A maximum of 30 children may attend at any one time. Children from the age of two to four years of age attend the setting. The pre-school is open each weekday from 08:30 to 15:00 during term time.

There are currently 55 children aged from two to four years on roll. Of these, 43 children receive funding for early education. The setting offers support to children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 10 members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications and three are working towards a qualification. The pre-school receives support from the Local Authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are learning to gain control of their bodies and move confidently around the setting. They take part in planned and spontaneous indoor physical activities to help use different parts of their bodies. For example, they enjoy joining in with ring games such as 'the farmer's in his den'. Children benefit from the many opportunities for daily fresh air and exercise. They are able to develop their physical skills on a regular basis as outdoor play is timetabled into each session. They confidently use various play equipment to help them balance, climb, slide and rock. They are challenged when using the range of outdoor play equipment as there are different types which are suitable for the different age groups.

Children are beginning to develop self-care skills during daily hygiene routines including washing their hands after outdoor play, toileting and before meals. There are appropriate procedures in place for dealing with any accidents, administering medication if requested and initially gathering information from parents and carers concerning individual children's health needs. The risk of infection to children is reduced as parents and carers are made aware of the guidelines followed and children are not cared for if they have an infectious illness. Children are building up their independence through daily routines, such as putting on and taking off their own coats, hats and scarves. Younger children's routines are adhered to whenever possible. They have opportunities for resting after lunch or taking part in quieter activities.

Children are well nourished and enjoy a varied and interesting diet. They bring their own packed lunches and are provided with healthy snacks and drinks for the remainder of the day. Children enjoy well-organised snack and mealtimes where they sit in appropriate groups and use these opportunities to build on their socialising skills.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures. Some of the staff have completed appropriate child protection training and they are all aware of the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines. They are also aware of the procedures to follow should there be any concerns.

Children are cared for in a safe, secure and welcoming environment. Staff follow appropriate procedures for completing risk assessments to ensure hazards to children are minimised. Furniture and equipment are set out to enable children to move freely and safely. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area which is checked for hazards prior to each outdoor play session. Children are made aware of the emergency evacuation procedure which is regularly practised.

Children have access to safe, clean and age appropriate play equipment and resources. Staff follow appropriate procedures to ensure all equipment is regularly cleaned and checked for safety. Children are constantly supervised and taught safety as part of their everyday activities. This includes discussions concerning safety rules, such as not walking with scissors in their hands and the procedures to follow when walking across the car park to access the outdoor play area.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are developing their independence physically and emotionally. They are confident and are building up their self-esteem. Children benefit from the way the resources and equipment are organised which helps them to gain relevant experiences and to develop their independence. They are able to self-select from a wide variety of age appropriate play equipment and resources, which enables them to instigate their own play and use the toys and materials to engage in meaningful play. Children socialise well, are busy and engage in purposeful activities throughout the sessions. They are given time to concentrate and complete their chosen tasks. Young children have opportunities to socialise with older children as staff plan activities that enable all the children to be involved. Staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to specifically plan for this age group to ensure they have many opportunities to develop and build on their knowledge and skills. Planned activities are adapted accordingly depending on children's abilities and stages of development. For example, they enjoy taking part in splash painting whilst the older children are painting 'Jupiter' as part of the current 'Sky' theme.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children's personal, social and emotional development is well fostered because of staff's knowledge and understanding of how young children learn and progress. Children are able to instigate some of their own play activities and also choose from the various planned activities set up by the adults. Communication, language and literacy are well developed. Children recognise familiar words and are good in their linking sounds to letters. Staff encourage children's understanding of different letters as a letter is covered each week within the planned activities, which is also linked to various parts of each session. For example, they understand that 'j' is for 'jumping' and 'jogging' which they can do whilst outdoors. Children enjoy stories and spontaneously use the book corner to look at books which interest them. They also enjoy joining in with story time, often repeating the familiar 'punch lines' from their favourite and familiar stories. Children have opportunities for writing during specific planned activities and as part of their everyday play. Staff ensure various writing materials are made available at all times to encourage children to develop their writing skills.

Knowledge and understanding of the world is good. Children have regular opportunities to investigate, explore and use their senses. For example they race their cars down some small ramps which are covered in different textures to see which one goes the fastest, which one goes the slowest and which one goes the furthest. Children have opportunities to use information and communication technology as part of their everyday play. They confidently use appropriate equipment such as play telephones, programmable toys and play tills. Children use construction equipment to build models and use their imagination. Some of this is spontaneous and children

work either alone or in small groups and they are able to make links to other areas of their learning. For example, they spontaneously build rockets using the stickle bricks which links in with the current theme of 'Sky'. They are able to explain the different parts of their rockets, such as "this is the fire at the bottom which helps the rocket to take off", and "my rocket has four wings which helps it to stay in the sky". Children's mathematical development is good. They have opportunities to use mathematics during planned activities and as part of their everyday routines, such as during mealtimes. An example of this is when they compare the sizes of their apples during lunch. Children are also developing their understanding of counting and using mathematics through fun activities. For example, they all join in with the music and rhyme sessions when they are encouraged to count the number of 'ducks' left on the finger puppet during 'five little ducks went swimming one day'.

Children's physical development is well fostered. They handle small equipment, such as scissors, glue sticks and paint brushes with confidence. Some children show preference of which hand to use and are supported by appropriate equipment, such as left-handed scissors. They have opportunities to develop their hand-eye co-ordination during planned and spontaneous activities, such as cutting and sticking, crayoning, manipulating play dough and building construction equipment. Creative development for children is good. Children are able to create their own paintings and drawings as they have many opportunities to freely draw and paint during each session. They are able to take part in art and craft activities and take pride in their creations which are colourfully displayed throughout the setting. They also take opportunities to explore natural materials during outdoor play sessions, such as exploring with the fallen leaves where they enjoy running through them, kicking them and picking them up and letting them go in the wind. Children enthusiastically join in with various musical sessions, enjoying singing, dancing and using the musical instruments.

Overall children make good progress in all areas of learning. They are curious and inquisitive and staff encourage them to think for themselves and to develop their skills. Children's behaviour is managed very well as staff hold appropriate discussions to encourage them to play safely, think about their actions and to be kind to one another. As a result, children are generally well behaved which enables them to progress as there is a positive learning environment. Adults consistently and positively interact with the children to encourage their interest, involvement and learning. Staff plan interesting activities which are also adapted as required to take children's spontaneous play into consideration. As a result, children are motivated and have the freedom to initiate their own learning. All children are eager to learn, self-assured in their play and confident to try new experiences. There are systems in place for observing, monitoring and recording children's achievements. Staff set monthly targets for each child to progress or to challenge them in specific skills. However, although staff are aware of children's individual development and progress there is no formal organisation to the planning of activities to link these observations and targets to the activities. Children's assessments are not always used to adapt the planning and do not clearly identify what is required to help children move on to the next stage in their learning and experiences.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are encouraged to be involved and staff ensure all children are included. There is an effective equal opportunities policy in place which is implemented by all staff. They are aware to immediately address any discriminatory behaviour or remarks. There are excellent procedures in place for caring for any children with disabilities and/ or learning difficulties. Staff show a good awareness of how to ensure children's individual specific needs are met. There is an excellent system for working with parents, carers and outside agencies which ensures any children with disabilities and/ or learning difficulties are able to progress at their own pace and reach their full potential. There is also an effective procedure for working with any children who speak English as an additional language. Any children with a specific need are included in the life of the nursery as any specific activities are incorporated into the daily sessions and routines. Individual educational plans with achievable targets are devised for each child with a specific need. These are implemented by all staff and regularly reviewed to ensure children are able to progress at their own pace.

Children know each other well and form harmonious relationships. They hold meaningful discussions in small groups and include each other in spontaneous play. Children have access to a good range of resources to promote their awareness of diversity and take part in several planned activities to help them understand their own and other cultures beliefs, such as celebrating Christmas, Eid and Diwali. Children know what is expected of them and are well behaved. They are able to follow adults' instruction and hold discussions concerning safety rules and behaviour. They work and play well together, taking turns and sharing, for instance they take turns to use the toy cars during outdoor play sessions. Staff are good role models for the children and encourage them to be polite and to say 'please' and 'thank you'. Any behavioural issues are dealt with appropriately and sensitively. Staff praise and encourage children's positive behaviour and ensure there is a consistent approach. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers of funded children is outstanding. Staff establish an excellent relationship with parents and carers which contributes significantly to children's well-being in the nursery. They are aware of the importance of involving parents and carers in the life of the nursery and their children's development. Staff initially seek information from parents and carers concerning their children's starting points and their stages of development. Parents and carers are provided with good quality information about the setting which includes information about nursery education and how children work through the 'Foundation Stage' curriculum. They are kept well informed of what their children do and their achievements through daily discussions and use of daily diaries which detail any domestic routines and the activities the children have enjoyed taking part in. Children benefit from this good communication system as parents and carers are encouraged to be involved in their children's progress and development by extending some of the activities into the home.

There are good links between home and the setting to extend and involve parents and carers in their children's learning and experiences. These include parents and carers helping children to develop some of their learning through everyday routines. For example, to develop their children's writing skills they are encouraged to use different activities to extend their hand-eye

co-ordination, such as picking up items using tweezers, weaving and chopping. They are also encouraged to help their children to become independent by encouraging them to carry out small tasks for themselves, for instance putting on and taking off their own coats and visiting the toilet independently. Parents and carers are also invited to take part in practical activities during parents' and carers' evenings. Staff encourage them to try out the different activities and explain the learning outcome for each activity to make them aware of how their children learn and progress through play. For example, they explain how threading, matching and sorting help children to understand the concept of mathematics. As a result, parents and carers gain first-hand experiences of what it is like for their child at the setting.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a well-organised environment and the premises are bright and welcoming. Their work is colourfully displayed throughout the setting. The premises are organised to ensure children are cared for in child-friendly surroundings where they are able to choose activities they wish to take part in and make free choices throughout each session. The high level of adult to child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play. The management and staff work together to ensure the organisation and procedures are regularly reviewed with improvements made as required. The service is regularly reviewed as parents' and carers' views and suggestions are taken on board and whenever possible changes are made to accommodate any requests. There are good systems in place for keeping most of the required records. However, the system for recording any incidents needs developing to ensure children's well-being is not compromised.

Appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures are in place which ensure children are well protected and cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child development. Staff are committed to improving their knowledge and understanding and enjoy attending various training events. Children benefit from staff's development as any new procedures or good practice are implemented into the care provided. Parents and carers are supplied with good quality information about the organisation of the setting and how the children are cared for. They are kept fully informed of the setting's events through regular newsletters and notices.

Leadership and management for nursery education are good. The provider has clear aims for the setting and is committed to evolving and developing the provision. The effectiveness of activity planning for children is good. The written plans cover the main craft activity and link into the other free play activities made available during each session. As a result, children are able to freely choose activities and to be challenged through activities linked to learning outcomes. The provider and staff are committed to providing a high standard of care and education for the children.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the provider agreed to improve the organisation of children's arrivals and departures over the lunch time period; to ensure that attendance records are clearly

recorded; to ensure the emergency evacuation procedures are regularly practised; and to develop some of the required documentation.

The organisation of children's arrivals and departures during the lunch time period has improved. This ensures the maximum number of registered children is never exceeded. The setting has identified this time of the day as the highest risk period and have put strategies in place to ensure all children are safe and secure. The registration system has been developed to ensure all children are accounted for at all times. Separate registers are taken during the morning, lunch time period and the afternoon so that records are maintained of all children attending at any particular time of the day. This system now clearly shows that the required adult to child ratio is met at all times.

Children are now made fully aware of the emergency evacuation procedure which is regularly practised. There is now a system in place to ensure parents' and carers' signatures are always obtained for the medication and accident records. The child protection policy has been developed to include procedures to follow should an allegation be made against a staff member or volunteer. All staff, parents and carers are made aware of this policy.

As a result, these improvements contribute towards keeping children safe at all times. Consequently, children's safety and well-being is not compromised.

#### Nursery Education:

At the last nursery education inspection there were two key issues agreed; to develop staff awareness of how to extend children's learning so that children are able to fully participate in the wide range of activities; and to link children's assessments with the planning to help them further progress across the six areas of learning.

Staff's awareness has been developed through appropriate training. They are now very aware of how to extend children's learning by encouraging them to think for themselves, try out new experiences and are able to extend planned and spontaneous activities to challenge them. As a result, children are generally extended and challenged which enables them to fully participate in the wide range of activities and opportunities available.

Staff plan interesting activities which they adapt to meet individual needs and interests. Activities are adapted as required and to take children's spontaneous play into consideration. As a result, children are motivated and make many good links in their learning. The planning of activities covers all six areas of learning. There are systems in place for observing, monitoring and recording children's achievements. Staff set monthly targets for each child to progress or to challenge children in specific skills. However, although staff are aware of children's individual development and progress there is no formal organisation to the planning of activities to link these observations and targets to the activities. A further recommendation agreed with the provider.

#### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since 01 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 and carers, 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):

- develop the system for recording all incidents to include obtaining parents' and carers' signatures.

#### **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 the planning of activities further to ensure a system is in place to enable all individual children to progress and be sufficiently challenged.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)