



## **Blean Pre-School**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	127023
<b>Inspection date</b>	09 March 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Freeda Wildon
<b>Setting Address</b>	Blean Parish Hall, School Lane, Blean, Canterbury, Kent, CT2 9JA
<b>Telephone number</b>	07944 290301 or 07763 720052
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Blean Pre-school Committee
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 satisfactory. 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?

Blean Pre-School is a committee run pre-school that opened in 1994. It operates from the village hall in Blean, near Canterbury, Kent. The pre-school has access to two rooms, toilets, a kitchen and an outside area. The pre-school serves the local area and surrounding towns.

A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:30 to 12:00 term time only.

There are currently 31 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 23 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six members of staff, of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is 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 satisfactory.

The premises are cleaned to a satisfactory standard. Children learn about health and hygiene through the daily routine, for example, they wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. There is liquid soap and paper towels to help prevent the spread of infection. Effective procedures are in place to keep surfaces clean and hygienic. However, procedures for the disposal of nappies are not effective. A sick child policy ensures that parents understand that children who are infectious do not attend the setting. This prevents the spread of infection.

There are currently two members of staff who hold a first aid qualification, two others are waiting to update their training. There is always one first aid trained member of staff present at every session who is able to act in the best interest of the children should there be an accident. A first aid box is readily available for staff to use and staff record any accidents involving the children. There is a medication policy and prior written permission from parents for medical emergency or advice.

Children are learning about healthy eating because staff provide a variety of healthy snacks and drinks, for example, fresh and dried fruit, and vegetables. Milk and water are offered at snack times and a jug of water is always available through the session to keep children's bodies hydrated. The outdoor area is not used frequently but children receive daily opportunities to be involved in physical play. Children practise their large muscles skills by climbing and balancing on the equipment. They confidently use equipment displaying control of their bodies, for example, children enjoy walking with stilts.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children and parents are welcomed warmly by the staff who prepare the play areas before the children arrive. The toys and equipment cover all areas of learning and are clean and safe for children to play with. Toys are cleaned on a rota and sometimes children join in and parents take home equipment to clean. A designated member of staff carries out daily risk assessments to ensure that the premises are safe before the children arrive. The premises are locked during the session to prevent unwanted visitors. At arrival and departure times when the door is unlocked an alarm alerts staff when the door is in use; they react promptly to make sure children are safe. Visitors attending the setting sign in the visitors book.

Procedures for the safe arrival and collection of children are in place; this ensures that children leave with authorised adults. Fire detection and fire fighting equipment is accessible in the building and regular fire drills are carried out. Consequently, children are familiar with the

procedures to evacuate the premises in an emergency. However, the fire drills are not cross-referenced with the attendance register to ensure that all children can practise this.

Staff know what to do if they have concerns about child protection; they would raise their concerns with their line manager. However, not all of them are secure in their knowledge of the different types of abuse. In addition, the child protection policy is not in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children arrive happily and are keen to join their friends to play. Children are confident and enjoy their time at the pre-school because staff are warm and caring towards the children. The resources are selected by the staff who prepare the environment before children arrive in accordance with the plans. Although this enables children to play as soon as they arrive, this limits opportunities for children to self-select and make independence choices from the full range. Staff share children's contact books with parents which keeps them informed about the activities that cover all areas of learning. All planning is based on the Foundation Stage and the six areas of learning. Staff working with younger children have not yet accessed the training on the Birth to three matters framework or use the framework to plan for younger children. As a result, activities are not always meaningful to the younger children and they do not have free access to a role play area to help them make meaning of the world.

### **Nursery Education**

Teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and plan the activities to cover the six areas of learning. As a result, children are making satisfactory progress in their development. Staff assess children's development and record their next steps. Although they know the children well and share their next steps at the beginning of each session they do not use this to inform the planning but rely on their memory. Therefore, this does not ensure that the next steps are covered equally. Staff sometimes underestimate children's ability and undertake tasks for them that they can manage alone or with some assistance, for example, preparing their own snacks and drinks.

Children are happy and confident; when they arrive they are eager to join their friends in play. They play co-operatively with one another, share well and take turns easily. Most children independently manage the toilet but they are accompanied by a member of staff for security reasons and the layout of the premises. They behave well and show consideration for one another. They respond positively to praise and encouragement which is helping them learn what is right and wrong and staff use stories to illustrate appropriate behaviour. Children are learning to take care of their environment through the daily routine, such as tidying up.

Children have daily opportunities to recognise their names through self-registration and place names at the snack table. They have opportunities to mark make and opportunities to write, however, opportunities to write for a purpose in the role play area is limited. Children enjoy listening to stories and visit the book area which is supported by a member of staff. They sing along to stories and know the stories well; they learn how books work and are beginning to

understand that print carries meaning. For example, children pretend to read instructions for medication as they administer medication to a sick doll. Children are confident speakers in groups and with their friends.

Most children count to five and beyond and recognise numbers during activities. Counting is regular throughout the session and simple calculation is introduced to children through activities and rhymes, such as 'ten fat sausages'. There is a number chart displayed in the hall. However, staff did not refer to this. Shape, space and measure is explored through the daily routine, for example, emptying and refilling during sand and water play. The computer is popular amongst the children; they enjoy playing with their friends and laugh out loud. They are exuberant in their achievements. Children understand about the change in routine because staff have introduced music to warn children of the changes. A sand timer promotes children's sense of time and manages turn taking. Although staff take photographs to celebrate children's achievements and share these with parents in contact books, opportunities for children to revisit their activities are limited because of restrictions within the setting. Children learn about living things because they grow seeds and monitor the growing progress of tadpoles.

Singing is a regular feature through the session and children sing as they play. Children are learning to use their imagination and are able to be creative, for example, through role play. However, this area is not always attractively presented. Children explore different materials, such as sand, paint, glue and glitter. Staff choose creative materials for the children because of storage restrictions. Consequently, they do not freely express their imagination in areas of creative development. Children create their own opportunities to explore and use their own imagination; they explore a hole in the floor board and pretended to feed the mouse. Children use a range of tools and materials well that enable them to develop their small muscle skills through daily activities, such as spreaders, scissors, sponge and paintbrushes.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children arrive happily and settle well. They are developing relationships with staff through the key worker system. Staff constantly praise and encourage the children. As a result, they are well behaved and confident. The gathering of information from parents about children's likes and dislikes and a settling in programme help children settle and cope with separation from their parents. In addition, young children bring a special toy to help them settle. Children learn about the wider world through resources and celebrating festivals, such as Chinese New Year and Divali. Children learn about the local community from visitors to the pre-school and occasional visits to the village.

There are two members of staff who share the role of special needs coordinator who are familiar with the code of practice and able to support key workers to provide care and education to children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents are greeted warmly and are happy with the care provided for their children. Parents are given general feedback at the end of the session about their morning at the setting. Parents receive contact books and regular newsletters about children's activities and about the setting.

There is a complaints procedure for parents but it does not reflect the regulation and the committee and staff are not aware of the changes. This is a breach of regulation. The partnerships with parents and carers for funded children is satisfactory. Parents receive information about the Foundation Stage when they join the pre-school. Although parents are informed about forthcoming activities in the newsletters they are not well informed about the daily activities relating to the areas of learning. Parents have access to their children's development records every half term but they do not have free and easy access to the records as they are not readily available at the setting. As a result, parents do not fully contribute to their children's learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

More than half of the staff hold a suitable qualification which means that children are cared for by knowledgeable practitioners who understand the needs of young children. Children settle well in the pre-school. With the exception of the complaints procedure, the documentation for the safe and effective management of the setting and the welfare and care of the children is maintained and stored securely. Evidence was seen that all staff have completed Criminal Records Bureau checks to establish their suitability. Several of the staff have been at the pre-school for many years but the recruiting procedures are not fully effective. As a result, personal references are not completed. The pre-school display their registration document resulting in parents knowing the conditions of their registration. The daily routine is organised to ensure all children have the opportunity to be active, to relax and be sociable at snack times. However, the environment is not organised so that children have full and free access to the resources. Children have key workers, which enables parents to have a constant person as a point of contact to discuss their children's progress.

The leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. The committee has handed the responsibility of the management of the education programme to the pre-school's manager who supports the staff. There are systems in place to identify the strengths of the setting as a whole but there is no rigorous formal system for the education programme. Therefore, staff have not yet identified all strengths and weaknesses. Staff continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. This includes developing new systems for assessing what children know and can do. This system is not yet fully developed and includes children's interests but does not inform the planning. 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 in April 2004 the inspector made one recommendation. At the last education inspection in February 2004 the inspector made two recommendations.

The care recommendation was to ensure that all adults, children and visitors are recorded with times of arrival and departures. This is a sessional group and children and adults are marked off in the attendance register. All visitors are recorded in the visitors book, resulting in satisfactory outcomes for children.

The recommendations for the education were to improve the programme for physical development; to continue to develop planning to include a broad range of practical activities covering the six areas of learning and make effective use of the assessments based on what the children already know and what they need to learn next. The planning includes all areas of learning and physical play is included daily. Staff assess children's development, record what they know and identify their next steps but they do not use this information and children's interest to formally inform the planning. However, they know the children well and, as a result, outcomes for children are satisfactory.

### **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.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

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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):

- increase staff knowledge and understanding of child protection and ensure that the policy is in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures
- plan activities for young children in line with the Birth to three matters framework to include a wider range of developmentally appropriate activities for younger children
- ensure that the complaints policy reflects current regulation
- ensure that recruiting procedures are rigorous and robust and policies and procedure are up to date and in line with current guidance

#### **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):

- consider ways in which children can independently self-select toys and resources. (also applies to care)

- continue to develop partnership with parents by providing information frequently about the nursery education activities and ensure that they have free access and opportunities to contribute to their child's development records
- continue to develop the use of observations to inform the planning so that it is based on children's interest, what they can do and what they need to learn next
- consider ways in which children have the opportunities to revisit their activities. (also applies to care)

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