



Catterick Village Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	400260
Inspection date	17 January 2007
Inspector	Pauline Pinnegar
Setting Address	The School Field, Mowbray Road, Catterick Village, North Yorkshire, DL10 7LH
Telephone number	07944 643220
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Registered person	Catterick Village Pre-School Committee
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?

Catterick Village Pre School is run by a voluntary management committee and has been registered since 1992. It is located in Catterick Village, providing care for children from the local and surrounding area. The setting operates from a portable classroom within the grounds of Michael Sydall Primary School, with access to cloakroom and toilet facilities as well as an adjoining outdoor play area. A maximum of 22 children may attend the group at any one time. The group is open from 08.45 to 11.45 from Monday to Friday during school term time only. An optional lunch club runs from 11:45 to 12:45.

There are currently 25 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 23 children receive funding for early education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

There are five members of staff working with the children. All, except one, are employed on a full-time basis. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Pre School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy plenty of robust physical exercise each day. Staff provide plenty of opportunities for physical play through well-planned indoor and outdoor activities. This helps children develop their confidence to enjoy moving with control, using their bodies in various ways, for example, as they use the climbing frame and slide. Children develop balancing skills as they make good use of the school hall facilities each week. Children move confidently and negotiate space well in the main play room, as they move in and out of the different role play areas. Outdoors, children enjoy riding bikes and scooters with great fun. Children use a range of small equipment with great skill, such as paint brushes, scissors and a range of tools in the mark making area. Children are effectively supported to develop and extend their physical skills and staff help them begin to understand how exercise is good for their bodies.

Children are protected from illness and infection as staff follow effective hygiene routines. They are reminded constantly about the importance of good hygiene practice and most are moving towards independence in attending to their personal care. For example, they discuss the importance of washing hands before they have snack, especially if they have been playing outside, and can access tissues independently to wipe their nose. However, the group does not have hot water facilities and children wash their hands using cold water and wipes. This does not fully prevent the risk of cross infection. Arrangements for first aid and administering medication fully protect children.

Wholesome snacks are provided to support children's good health. These include sliced raw carrots, chopped banana, raisins and cheese cubes. Snack time is a sociable, happy occasion where staff and children sit together. Children help themselves freely to their own labelled bottles of water at all times, with additional drinks offered to them at snack time. Children bring packed lunches if they stay for the lunch club; staff share information with parents about raising children's awareness of healthy eating and ask them to think carefully about what they provide for their child. Food from packed lunch boxes is stored appropriately. Children have also explored healthy eating topics within the group and are able to recognise that fruit and vegetables are healthy foods.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled in the group which is very bright and welcoming. The setting is suitably maintained. However, the heating system has been installed for some time, and on occasion, does not adequately maintain a comfortable temperature for both children and staff. Children's safety is given high priority. Practitioners are knowledgeable and follow the setting's comprehensive policies and procedures to protect children and promote their wellbeing.

Thorough risk assessments are carried out regularly which identify and minimise risks. Good systems are in place to monitor entry to and from the setting. This means that children are able to move around safely, freely and independently. Children learn to keep themselves safe as staff involve them in daily discussions and teach them safe practice. For example, they are aware that only three children at a time can play on the climbing frame indoors. They have lots of discussions about road safety when they go on outings. They enjoy role play games with the cars outside, using the traffic lights to think about when it is safe to cross. They know what to do when they have fire drills and enjoy a visit from local fire fighters. Staff provide a good balance between freedom and safe limits so that children are appropriately challenged.

Children have access to sufficient, safe space to allow them to enjoy a wide variety of activities. They use a wide range of safe and suitable toys and play materials. Resources are of good quality and are well-maintained. They are readily accessible for children to reach independently and the play environment is effectively organised to allow children to move around freely and safely to develop their own play ideas.

Staff give priority to protecting children and access appropriate child protection training opportunities. Children are sensitively supported to share their feelings and make their needs known. Staff's clear understanding of their responsibilities within child protection procedures, helps to ensure that children are effectively protected and their welfare safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled in the pre-school. They confidently use the whole environment and explore activities freely. The play environment is planned well to encourage children to access resources independently and plan their own play. They have free access to exploratory and creative play, such as sand, water, crafts and painting, which allows them to experiment with different media and develop their own creative ideas. Staff encourage children to count and become familiar with number concepts within their everyday routines and activities. They learn lots of counting rhymes. They sit quietly in the cosy book corner, select their favourite book and sit engrossed, reading to themselves. Children learn to share and cooperate well, involving others in their games; for example, they play cooperatively in the shop pretending to buy and sell the food. Role play is a strong feature within the group and children use their imagination very well as they dress up pretending to be fire fighters and make 'dinner' in the home corner.

Children develop very caring relationships with staff and their peers and form strong friendships within the group. Staff promote a clear emphasis on being polite and caring towards others and are very interested in what children do and say. Children are very secure in their environment and totally involved in activities. Staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework well to support two year olds within the group and planning incorporates all the components of the framework. Caring relationships foster children's self-esteem and warm interactions give them confidence to explore and enjoy learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good, so that children make good progress towards the early learning goals. They are confident to try out new experiences, supported by staff with good knowledge of the Foundation Stage of learning. Children are interested and motivated to learn. Activity planning is well structured and successfully promotes opportunities in all areas of learning. Children access outdoor play in groups at specific times each session, but staff have not yet maximised the opportunities for learning presented by the outdoor environment on a 'free flow' basis. Staff use their knowledge of children's individual interests very well to extend their learning. Children use initiative to access many resources independently, with areas well resourced to promote maximum independence and stimulus. For example, the mark making area is filled with a comprehensive range of materials and tools to support creativity. Books are used well in all learning areas, including reference books associated to focussed activities such as transport, and the book corner itself is richly resourced. Good systems have been established to monitor children's progress. Staff routinely observe children in varied ways, identifying what they know and can do, and outlining the next steps in their learning. These observations are shared by staff on an informal basis and at formal planning meetings. Staff maximise the use of these observations to differentiate activities and clearly identify the focus of teaching in activity areas. This means that all children are consistently challenged within their everyday play.

Children thoroughly enjoy coming to the pre school. They play cooperatively and use initiative as they make choices. They concentrate well and persevere to complete activities. They are very confident communicators and happily share their own ideas and experiences. They learn to listen attentively and contribute enthusiastically at group times. All children recognise and practise writing their name and enjoy linking sounds and letters. They have many opportunities to practise writing for real purposes. Children count and use numbers in everyday activities. Children are very secure in their knowledge of how many children are allowed in each area. They talk about shape, colour and size spontaneously as they sort, match and make patterns and staff encourage use of comparative language in their construction play.

Children become very interested in the world around them, as they explore both the indoor and outdoor environment with magnifying glasses. They enjoy exploring the environment going on 'bug hunts' and nature walks. They care for the pet goldfish and remember to feed them each day. They explore full, empty, heavy and light as they pour water and sieve sand. They have free opportunity for spontaneous expression of their own creativity, for example, as they use their imagination in role play, both indoors and out. Children are gaining a growing awareness of a sense of place. They enjoy regular visits to the school to the 'secret garden' which promotes a happy transition into school. Children enjoy a wide repertoire of songs and action rhymes. They sing loudly and clearly with great enthusiasm, joining in the actions of 'the wheels on the bus' and 'in a cottage in a wood'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have very warm and trusting relationships with staff. Carefully planned transitions between pre school and primary school help children move happily to the next stage. Children are highly valued and respected as individuals; staff evidently know them very well and plan

suitable activities for them in line with their own developmental needs. Staff link very closely with parents to find out what is important to their child; they ensure they have a clear awareness of individual needs. This contributes to children feeling very secure and content in the pre-school. Children have access to a broad range of resources, play opportunities and activities, which reflect diversity and acknowledge cultural differences. Planning has included opportunities for children to explore activities, such as the Chinese Moon Festival and harvest from around the world, including countries such as Brazil, Australia and South Africa. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities receive high levels of support and are well included. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure that they are all working consistently with each other. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children play harmoniously together and make close friendships with each other. They are aware of their own needs and often show consideration for the needs of others as they take turns, share toys and develop shared play ideas. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and they manage behaviour in a way that is appropriate to each child's age and stage of development. They make sure that children are not bored or frustrated, but are busy and contented. Staff provide good role models for children by being calm and polite. Praise is given freely to children, ensuring that they develop confidence and self-esteem and understand what they have done well. Music and sand timers are used very effectively to promote good behaviour, for example, highlighting tidy-up time. Children respond with enthusiasm for requests for help from staff at tidy-up time.

The group establishes a good partnership with parents and carers. Parents receive an informative prospectus which explains pre-school practices well; they are encouraged to make suggestions and share any concerns. They are confident in approaching staff and regularly update and share information about their child. Parents enjoy relaxed and comfortable relationships, promoting children's sense of security. A regular newsletter keeps parents informed about the groups issues. Activity planning is displayed clearly for their information.

Partnership with parents and carers in relation to the educational curriculum is good. Parents receive good quality information about the Foundation Stage curriculum, they are well informed about and are actively involved in pre school themes by contributing items and extending children's learning at home. They receive written termly reports and an opportunity to hear about children's progress at open days.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff demonstrate a commitment to continual development with most staff holding a relevant qualification and all staff being appropriately experienced. Recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well protected and cared for by safe and suitable adults. Staff have a high regard for the well-being of all children. The pre-school environment is well organised to ensure children's welfare. Staff are deployed effectively to respond to children's varying needs and interests. Daily routines are clearly planned and flexibly implemented.

The leadership and management of the pre-school in regard to the provision of funded nursery education is good. Staff work very well together as a cohesive team; they review and evaluate

their own practice effectively. The manager consistently provides opportunities within the planning process and daily routines to extend staff understanding of the early learning goals. Appraisal is used effectively to identify development needs and children's experiences are enhanced by staff's access to appropriate training opportunities. Clear systems are in place to monitor staff practice, which help to ensure that children make good progress towards the early learning goals. A broad and balanced curriculum is planned for the children which effectively supports their learning and development.

Comprehensive policies and procedures are effectively implemented so that children's welfare is safeguarded. Required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and wellbeing is in place and is regularly reviewed. Robust procedures are in place to ensure staff are suitable to work with children and well defined induction procedures ensure staff fully understand their role and responsibilities. Parents' wishes regarding their child's care clearly influence day to day practice and clear written agreements are recorded.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to: seek advice regarding accreditation of prior learning so that manager and deputy may update their qualifications and appoint a registered person and notify Ofsted of the details; ensure that the complaints policy for parents includes Ofsted contact details.

The manager of the group is suitably qualified and experienced. The current deputy although only appointed on a temporary basis until the post is filled, is also suitably qualified and experienced in childcare. The newly appointed registered person for the group has completed the full vetting procedure and Ofsted has been kept fully informed with regard to her full details and have completed all suitability checks satisfactorily. The complaints procedure now contains Ofsted's full contact details. This has contributed overall to the effective organisation within the group and promotes children's welfare overall.

In relation for the programme for nursery education, the provider was asked to plan opportunities for children to learn about and solve mathematical problems. Planning for children's mathematical development now covers all aspects of the curriculum.

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

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):

- improve the facilities for children's handwashing
- monitor the rooms to ensure they are maintained at an adequate temperature.

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 opportunities for children to freely access the outdoor play area.

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