

Churchfields Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	403438
Inspection date	03 October 2007
Inspector	Susan Parker
Setting Address	Greencotes, Hertford, Hertfordshire, SG13 8AE
Telephone number	01992 509406
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Registered person	The Trustees of Churchfields Kindergarten
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?

Churchfields Kindergarten is a committee run pre-school and opened in 1979. It operates from one room within the Abel Primary School building. It is situated close to the town centre of Hertford and serves the local area.

A maximum of 20 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The kindergarten is open from 12:45 to 15:00 Monday to Thursday during the school term. Children share access to a secure enclosed play area.

There are currently 20 children aged two years, ten months to five years on roll. Of these, 13 receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting welcomes children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

Three members of staff work directly with the children. All of them have early years qualifications to NVQ Level 2 or 3.

The kindergarten are members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean and hygienic environment where they gain a positive understanding of good hygiene practices and are enthusiastic in developing independence in their personal care.

Children's physical, nutritional and health needs are met due to the effective procedures and practices followed by the staff. Children enjoy an excellent range of purposeful activities which contribute to their good health. For example there are a selection of good outdoor activities and equipment to help children to develop control of their bodies as they run, jump, ride on wheeled toys, climb and balance. When the weather is poor, children have access to a smaller range of physical activities in the classroom.

Children are confident to try out new skills and ask for help when needed, this is a result of the staff's very good understanding of each child's stage of development, thoughtful provision of resources and continual encouragement. For example, one child is able to stand and lower herself on the rope, another sits to lower herself.

Children help themselves to easily accessible drinks and enjoy an excellent range of healthy snacks, for example fresh fruits, salad vegetables, and raisins. They benefit from these well balanced, varied and healthy snacks which take account of their individual needs. Children are given choices and have the opportunity to peel their own oranges and bananas.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, well organised, child-centred provision where hazards are minimised and effective precautions are in place to protect them. Children are therefore, able to move around the play areas freely and independently. Children gain a sense of responsibility as they move around the tables and equipment inside the compact classroom without risk. They are learning about safety as they participate in road safety activities and regular fire drills.

The environment is rich and stimulating with brightly coloured posters, photographs and children's artwork displayed. Children make full use of the good range of high quality equipment which is safe, attractively displayed, well maintained and suitable for the children's use. They are able to select and access the play resources without risk as they are easily accessible and the staff are vigilant in their monitoring and supervision.

Children are very well protected by the staff team as they have a clear understanding of child protection. They have attended child protection training and give top priority to children's safety and welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children actively participate in purposeful activities and clearly enjoy the harmonious atmosphere. They are making excellent progress in their learning, self-esteem and development because practitioners have an excellent understanding of how children learn. Staff act as positive role

models, and give sensitive support to all children. They demonstrate a genuine affection for children; they respect children's feelings, value their comments and clearly enjoy their company. Staff follow a set routine which promotes children's feelings of security and stability. Children are happy, settle quickly and relate well to other children and staff. Practitioners encourage and build children's confidence and vocabulary through constant praise and recognition. Staff adapt their questioning to reflect each child's stage of development and level of understanding. This helps them meet the needs of all children. The well established and experienced staff team are suitably qualified and dedicated to the concept of providing high quality childcare and education. They follow children to the activities which engage their interest and provide excellent support to draw the learning from play. This promotes positive outcomes for children. Staff have a proficient knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework which is included in all aspects of planning and provision of learning activities. These secure systems underpin the foundations of the educational programme for younger or less able children who attend the provision.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff have an excellent understanding of the Foundation Stage and of how children learn through play. All staff are skilled enough to take the lead in planning, they purposefully draw from their prior working knowledge in addition to using regular training courses to continue to develop the group's early years curriculum. Staff meet formally as a team to share and collate ideas linked to their current topic. This forms the basis of their long term objectives. They then break their overarching theme into a weekly plan formulating a medium term overview of how they will cover their topic within the six areas of learning.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is nurtured well. Children arrive with confidence separating from their main carer with ease. They are attentive and respectful of adult and peers alike. For example, they know to be quiet and listen when someone is talking and to take turns. Children are developing their independence in dressing and toileting themselves. Their self-esteem is promoted as they proudly talk about their displayed photographs and art displays. Children build an awareness of phonetic links as they have many opportunities to recognise their names. They are encouraged to enjoy books and take books home to share each week. Children handle books well. They take time to look at the pictorial illustrations before turning the page to continue the story. Children have plentiful opportunities to mark make and are beginning to form recognisable letters as they practise writing their names on completed art work and on play shopping lists.

Children are developing a growing awareness of number. Older and more able children can calculate in practical situations, such as when completing a simple abacus, they can discover that three red rings and two yellow rings make five rings altogether.

Children develop a sense of time and place as they become aware of the days and the seasons. They are aware that October is an autumnal month as they take nature walks to look at the trees and shrubs, fungi and conkers. Children have regular access to a computer and other technological equipment, such as programmable Bee Bots. They develop an awareness of the wider world as they celebrate cultural events throughout the year, and have links with the people in the local community.

Children are agile and competent in their physical skills. They have access to an excellent range of outdoor equipment which promotes muscle growth, control and strength. They have daily

access to a range of tools, such as various sized pens and pencils to draw, scissors to cut and shape, paint brushes and glue spreaders. They also have access to different types of construction sets. Children have exciting imaginations. They enjoy making individual creations using an excellent selection of media and materials. Children regularly role play, using an excellent selection of dressing up. Children can feed their imaginations and become whoever they want to be. They eagerly participate in singing action songs and interpreting the music or prose with their bodies. For example, being falling leaves blowing in the wind.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs and characters are clearly understood and respected by the adults in the provision. All children are welcomed and included in the setting because the staff value and respect their individuality. Their behaviour is very good. They are aware of what is expected of them, are calm, share, take turns and enjoy each other's company. The staff use effective skills to encourage and help them to develop their relationships with one another, and to maintain behaviour boundaries. Children are very receptive to the praise and encouragement that is freely given.

Children learn to value differences through sensitive discussions, stories, activities and the use of developmentally appropriate resources. Children develop warm relationships with each other and the staff team, they help and support each other, and are aware of and sensitive to the individual abilities of the other children.

The partnership with parents and carers for nursery education is good. Parent's views about their child's needs are actively sought before the child commences at the setting and throughout their time there. Parents have access to the policies and procedures which underpin the running of this enthusiastic kindergarten. Parents are well informed of their child's achievements and progress through individual folders of children's artwork, photographs and verbal daily feedback on the children and what they have been doing. This ensures that children's care, well-being and development is greatly enhanced.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

An enthusiastic committed and dedicated staff team, sound and detailed documentation, supportive committee and positive working relationships with the school ensure that children benefit and enjoy their time at this provision. Staff are exceptionally skilled and competent in their childcare practice. They demonstrate a real affinity with children. They use their wealth of experience and their ongoing childcare training to provide a wide range of practical and stimulating learning opportunities. The staff are receptive to improvement. For example, a couple of items of documentation mentioned were remedied quickly. They have plans to enhance children's learning and understanding by providing a growing area for vegetables. Staff have a good working knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and are effectively correlating the two early years programmes together. This promotes a unified curriculum for all children.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The leader has clear views and ideas for expansion and improvement to the experiences provided for the children. Staff

are highly competent. They are able to draw incidental learning from the daily routine naturally. This supports the balance and coverage across all aspects of the curriculum.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the provider agreed to make sure that children have regular access to drinking water. Staff have a partially full jug of water, and beakers, on a low table. This enables the children to independently access drinking water themselves.

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):

- continue to plan and put into practice the development of the outside play area to provide further valuable learning experiences for the children.

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):

- evolve the use of indoor and outdoor play areas, to continue extending the flexibility of the activities provided and enhance the current high levels of care and education for children.

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