

Dunster Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	143032
Inspection date	21 June 2007
Inspector	Jacqueline Allen
Setting Address	c/o Dunster First School, St. Georges Street, Dunster, Minehead, Somerset, TA24 6RX
Telephone number	01643 822233
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Registered person	Dunster 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 outstanding. 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?

Dunster Pre-School opened in 1982. It operates from a portakabin consisting of one room with adjoining toilet facilities and a fully enclosed outside play area, on the grounds of Dunster First School, Dunster, Somerset. It serves the local area.

There are currently 49 children from two to under four years on roll. This includes 42 funded children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special needs and English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.00 to 11.45 Monday to Friday and 13.00 until 15:30 Tuesdays to Thursdays.

There are six members of staff who work regularly with the children. Of these, four have level 3 training and one has a level 2 and is working towards a level 3 in early years. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is given the highest priority by the staff who promote high standards of cleanliness and hygiene. Children routinely wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. They are encouraged to access tissues as required and dispose of them hygienically. They are reminded to put their hands over their mouths when they cough to prevent the spread of germs and there is a comprehensive sick child policy to prevent the spread of infection. Staff are vigilant at wiping tables with anti-bacterial spray and notice immediately when a child pours themselves a drink and then pours some back into the jug, replacing the water immediately. Children's accidents are appropriately treated as all the staff hold valid first aid certificates, and are well recorded. Children's medical needs are well known and met and parental consent is held in the event of the staff needing to seek emergency treatment for children in their care.

Children are encouraged to eat healthily by the excellent range of healthy, nutritious foods supplied at snack time, such as carrot sticks, cheese, cherry tomatoes and breadsticks. Children are involved in growing their own foods, such as raspberries and potatoes, which increases their understanding and awareness of how foods grow and encourages ongoing discussions about healthy eating. Children pour their own drinks from the lidded jug and cups available. Their individual dietary needs are well known and understood by the conscientious staff who keep an overview list available to refer to.

Children experience physical activity at each session. They use the outdoor area as an extension of their play space where they confidently use the slide, balance on low benches and competently use a variety of wheeled resources. They visit their allotment regularly where they participate in planting, weeding and digging activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children have very good space to play both inside and outdoors, which is well organised to allow them to participate in a range of activities. Their play space is warm and welcoming with a variety of bright displays which includes children's own work. Children self select from the excellent range of low-level storage and the variety of resources laid out on tables, on the floor and outside. Children confidently use the computer and mouse, access books independently, persist at puzzles and access mark making materials independently.

Children are safe as the staff are extremely vigilant about locking the door when parents leave and record the time on the daily register. They routinely man the door at times of children's arrival and departure, hold regular fire drills and carry out thorough risk assessments. There are written procedures for outings including one for the allotment, where staff protect canes with plastic bottles to reduce the risks to children and have a list of poisonous plants. Children are collected by authorised carers and visitors are accurately recorded. Children's safety is well considered and shared with parents when they use the school's small outdoor swimming pool. Information is gained from parents on children's confidence and abilities in the water which helps to keep them safe.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff have excellent knowledge on the signs and symptoms of abuse and have clear, up-to-date information to refer to if they have concerns about a child in their care, which is in line with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children greatly benefit from the high quality support and the excellent interaction they receive from the staff. They are welcomed individually on arrival, find their name to register themselves and settle quickly to their play. Young children are comforted if they cry briefly for their carer and are sat next to staff to ensure they feel supported, safe and secure. Children's progress through the Birth to three framework is recorded, showing staff's good understanding of children's development. Close and caring relationships increase children's sense of trust and help them develop a strong sense of self. Children enjoy participating in the planned exploratory and sensory experiences. For example, they enthusiastically explore sand, water and paint and join in with familiar stories, songs and rhymes.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children persist for a long time at activities of their choosing and are learning to wait patiently for their turn, with some support from staff as appropriate. Children are forming good relationships with their peers and are confident to talk to staff and ask for help. They become engrossed in their role play, displaying good language and imagination skills as they pretend to be pirates and crocodiles. They confidently choose shapes with a purpose to create pictures, with staff extending this activity on an individual basis by asking questions, such as 'how many have you got?' and 'how many more do you need?'. Children are fascinated by the water play which has rocks, play crabs and real seaweed to explore. Children observe how the seaweed has attached itself to a rock overnight and explore the texture, popping it and using it to squirt water. Children are delighted with their findings and are encouraged to listen to a shell by the staff. They love exploring the telescope, sometimes looking in the top and then the bottom. Staff extend children by encouraging them to find specific things.

Children love to explore sand and express themselves well in their art. For example, children create their own pictures using paint, glue, pipe cleaners and coloured sand. Some children relish the experience of painting their hands, rubbing them together to mix colours. Children use chalks, pencils and crayons to mark make and are sometimes encouraged to write their name on their work. They look at books independently and recognise their names. Children competently use computer programmes and display good mouse skills, showing that they can name and match numbers. They enjoy participating in songs, rhymes and action rhymes, including counting songs. They have fantastic opportunities to explore the natural world. They go on bug hunts, grow things from seed and harvest their crops which they have tended in their allotment.

Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and plan effectively to cover all six areas of learning. They constantly use open ended questions to encourage children to think and extend their language and deploy themselves confidently to support children at all times. They make good use of space, time and resources to provide an exciting range of activities for children. They have strong links with the school reception teacher and act on her advice to further children's learning. Children's assessments clearly show their progress through the stepping stones in all areas of learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs are well known and met by the caring, attentive staff who talk confidently about children's interests, likes, dislikes and personalities. Children learn about diversity through the good range of resources which reflect positive images, such as dolls, musical instruments, puzzles, books and dressing-up clothes. Children's awareness is also increased through planned activities, such as Chinese New Year and Diwali. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Staff hold information on file to ensure they are prepared to support children with English as an additional language and for those dealing with bereavement, divorce or separation. Although there are currently no children attending with any additional needs, staff have good previous experience in this area. They access information from parents and other professionals to increase their knowledge and liaise with them routinely to ensure children's needs are met.

Children play harmoniously together and are forming good relationships with their peers. Children are well supported by the observant staff who encourage children to take turns and share fairly. Children are very familiar with daily routines. For example, they wash their hands when asked and then line up in twos before being prompted by staff, when they are going to visit the school. Children are kind to each other and routinely get a tissue for children who are upset when their carer leaves. Children receive ongoing praise and encouragement from staff who are all good role models and who routinely encourage good manners. They consistently and calmly manage children's behaviour and record and share behaviour incidents with parents. They hold a vast amount of information on file to refer to on managing a range of behaviour issues, which helps to keep them informed.

Children benefit from a very good partnership with parents. Staff photographs and names are displayed on the notice board and all wear named aprons for easy identification. Staff routinely update parents on their children's care, making effective links by using a key worker system. Parental consents are in place as required.

The partnership with parents and carers for nursery education is good. Parents are happy with how staff communicate with them and the progress their children are making. Parents' evenings are held twice a year, when parents meet with their children's key workers and discuss their progress. Although staff identify particular areas to be developed with parents this is not always recorded as a means of encouraging the next steps in children's progress. Good information is given to parents on the Foundation Stage, through regular newsletters and through the staff displaying the current planning on the notice board.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care. Children greatly benefit from the staff's wealth of knowledge and expertise in all areas. They have an excellent understanding of the National Standards and have robust systems in place for the recruitment, induction and continuing appraisal of staff. Staff files have evidence of their suitability and ongoing training which shows their commitment to improving the care they provide for children.

Children, staff and visitors are accurately recorded on a daily basis. Staff deploy themselves effectively at all times and work very well together as a team to ensure children's needs are met. The operational plan is well organised and regularly updated as a working document. All

documentation is well organised to ensure records are confidential. The group is aware of their responsibilities of when to notify Ofsted and do this routinely.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. Staff hold weekly meetings and have good links with the reception teacher and school. They listen to advice and regularly make changes to improve the nursery education. They plan on a monthly basis with clear aims and objectives set.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection one recommendation was raised relating to National Standard 2 - Organisation. This has been met. The operational plan is now well organised and used as a working document to support children's care.

At the last nursery education inspection two key issues were raised relating to developing the opportunities to encourage children's independence at snack time and their imagination in art and design and to develop children's assessments to show how children are progressing towards the early learning goals through the stepping stones. Children's assessments are much improved and clearly show their progress. Lots of opportunities are available for children to express their imagination in art and design and snack time is now varied to provide some independence at this time.

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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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):

- continue to regularly review children's assessment records to identify and plan for the next steps in their learning

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