

Triangle Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	146445
Inspection date	12 November 2007
Inspector	Susan Parker
Setting Address	Peartree Pavilion, The Ridings, STEVENAGE, Hertfordshire, SG2 9UA
Telephone number	01438 353443
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Registered person	Elaine Barton and Nicola Wotherspoon
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?

Triangle Pre-school is sited in Peartree Park pavilion, Stevenage, Herts. The group are registered to care for a maximum of 26 children aged two to five years at any one time. There are currently 41 children on roll who attend various sessions. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday from 09.15 to 14:15 during the school term. One main room is used with a large store room, a kitchen, toilets and an office. The pavilion is in a public park with no separate outside play area. A small area is barriered for outside play and all staff supervise the children. The group have planning permission to provide an outside play area in the future.

Triangle pre-school actively supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as well as children for whom English is an additional language.

The pre-school is part of the Stevenage Pathfinder project as a pilot scheme to open longer hours to help parents return to work.

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 developing their independence in their own individual personal care. All members of staff hold a first aid certificate which ensures that children's health is a priority.

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 physical activities and equipment to help children to develop control of their bodies as they run, jump, ride on wheeled toys, climb and balance. This is effectively provided despite the group not currently having an enclosed outdoor play area. The group are planning to provide an enclosed outside play area which will promote children's physical activities.

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.

Children benefit from well balanced, varied and healthy snacks which take account of their individual needs. These include fresh fruit, and yoghurts.

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 gain a sense of responsibility as they move around the tables and equipment inside the playroom without risk. They are learning about safety as they participate in regular fire drills.

The environment is warm and welcoming with 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 good.

Children actively participate in purposeful activities and clearly enjoy the pre-school. They are making good progress in their learning, self-esteem and development because practitioners have a good 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; 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. Children's confidence and vocabulary is well promoted through constant praise and recognition. Staff expertly adapt their questioning to reflect each child's stage of development and level of understanding. This helps them meet the needs of all children. Staff have a proficient knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework as well as the Foundation Stage which is included in all aspects of the planning and provision of learning activities. These secure systems underpin the foundations of the educational programme.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and of how children learn through play. Staff meet formally as a team to share and collate ideas linked to their planning of activities and to provide challenges for the children.

Children arrive at the pre-school with confidence separating from their main carer with ease. They are attentive and respectful of adult and peers alike. 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. They have a good understanding of behaviour boundaries and are reminded of these each day during the welcome whole group time. Children are encouraged to enjoy books and take books home to share each day. They handle books well; take time to look at the pictorial illustrations before turning the page to continue the story. Children have opportunities to mark make during play activities and some are beginning to form recognisable letters. However, children have very few words or labels around the room with which they can familiarise themselves.

Children are developing a growing awareness of number. Good use of visual aids maintains the children's interest. For example finger puppets act out number rhymes so the children can see the subtracting amount clearly.

Children have regular access to technological equipment. They have fun with mobile telephones and show a good understanding of how things work. They are naturally developing an awareness of the wider world as they celebrate multi-cultural events throughout the year, and have links with their friends and their families who also attend this pre-school.

Children are developing their agility and competence in their physical skills. They have access to a range of physical 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 dancing to music.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs and backgrounds are clearly understood and respected by all 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 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 pre-school. Parents are given free access to records of their child's achievements and progress through individual assessment folders, 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, and positive working relationships with outside agencies 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, they have plans to enhance children's learning and development by providing a safe enclosed outside play area in the future. Staff have a good working knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage, 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 leaders have 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 group agreed to amend their policies and procedures to include a statement on bullying and a policy for a lost child when playing outside. Staff have effectively revamped their policies and procedures to encompass these and other areas to ensure that safety and well-being of children at all times.

The group also agreed to provide free movement between activities and to extend their provision of a broad range of activities. Staff have adapted their planning and provision of activities to ensure that all children have access to a broad range of learning and play activities as well as freedom of movement within the main room. Planning permission has been given to extend the play area to include an enclosed

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 provide a good range of physical activities, both inside and outside

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):

- provide further reference materials to enable children to recognise familiar words in every day activities

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