



Buttsbury Preschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	402207
Inspection date	13 October 2005
Inspector	Lynn Clements
Setting Address	c/o Buttsbury Infant School, Perry Street, Billericay, Essex, CM12 0NX
Telephone number	01277 631816
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Registered person	Buttsbury 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 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?

Buttsbury Pre-school opened in 1976 and operates from a single storey building within the grounds of Buttsbury Infants School, close to the centre of Billericay. The Pre-school serves the local community.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are 81 children on roll. During the inspection 22 children were present. Currently the pre-school supports a total of 61 funded children.

The setting supports a small number of children who have special needs.

The pre-school is open five days a week, during school term times. Sessions run from 09:00 until 11:30 and in the afternoons from 12:30 until 15:00.

There are 12 members of staff and 3 relief staff work with the children. Nine members of staff including the manager hold relevant early years training to National Vocational Qualification levels 2 and 3, and 4 members of staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority and the area special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children throughout the pre-school participate in a wide range of energetic activities providing excellent opportunities for them to keep healthy and active. Children develop their confidence as they extend their physical skills using both large and small equipment and apparatus with competence and control. They learn about their bodies as they discover that their skeleton holds them up and their muscles help them to move, run, jump, balance on stilts and kick footballs. Children learn about spatial awareness joining in music and movement activities becoming caterpillars in cocoons and then slowly moving and opening up to become big beautiful butterflies as they dance around the hall carefully avoiding each other. Most children are using single handed tools such as scissors with confidence while younger children are supported by caring staff who ensure further activities are planned to build on their confidence and coordination. Children are able to rest or be active according to their individual needs.

Well planned daily routines help children learn about the importance of good hygiene. They wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet to prevent germs and sore tummies. Children remain protected from infection due to the clear knowledge staff have regarding health care and childhood illnesses and the thorough cleaning routines implemented by staff on a daily basis. All health related documentation is in place and parents and carers are kept fully informed of any accidents or incidents. A high proportion of staff have attended first aid training to ensure children are cared for appropriately in the event of an accident.

Children benefit from a healthy diet. They have daily opportunities to access the snack bar, selecting fresh fruits and vegetables or spreading their own crackers. They use their senses to smell and taste different foods exploring their likes and dislikes in a supportive environment. Staff work closely with parents to ensure the healthy eating programme is an integral part of the children's everyday life at the pre-school and parents support this initiative when providing children's packed lunches. Children's specific dietary needs are met and respected. Jugs of water are available but are situated too high for children to access independently to ensure none remain thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a well maintained building situated in the grounds of the infant school. The effective organisation of the pre-school as a whole, including attention to thoughtful child accessible storage enables children to access toys and resources independently to extend their own play and learning. Children move safely and freely around the pre-school both inside and out making decisions about the games they play and the activities they join.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by adults. Consistent attention to daily risk assessments ensures that child accessible areas in the pre-school remain safe and secure for children to explore and investigate independently. Children tidy away their toys after playing to prevent tripping hazards and make room for other games and activities. They develop a good awareness about personal safety as they practise fire drills with the infant school which helps everyone concerned know what to do in the event of an emergency. There are clear systems in place to check the identification of visitors to prevent children leaving the premises with any adults that have not been checked and cleared with the parents that it is safe to do so.

All children are protected by competent vigilant staff who have a thorough knowledge and understanding with regard to child protection procedures. These procedures are implemented to protect children and promote their individual well-being. Children's safety and welfare remains paramount.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children play an active part in the pre-school. They are motivated and stimulated, moving freely around the wide range of developmentally appropriate activities, selecting resources and making choices about joining in or developing their own ideas and games. Staff have completed training on the 'Birth to three matters' framework and will begin implementing this to support their practice with children under three years. Children participate in activities both inside and outside. They use their own ideas to solve problems and extend their games adapting storage tubs to catch balls thrown through the netball hoops or when seeking out adults to help them find out what its like inside the marrow they have in their greengrocers shop. They touch and feel various vegetables and learn how to grow flowers, joining in the community flower show and winning second prize. Children paint freely and move to music becoming beautiful graceful butterflies or joining in and singing simple number rhymes such as ten green bottles.

Children and staff play enthusiastically together, taking turns and responding appropriately to each other as they choose books and engage in discussions about who has the biggest or smallest feet. They talk about children's newly arrived brothers or sisters and what it will be like when they go off to the reception class. Children are keen to communicate with each other extending their games as they construct thunderbird spaceships and begin saving and rescuing people and other

stranded vehicles. Staff ensure children have time to offer their ideas and thoughts without fear of failure. Children make good progress in all areas of learning supported by staff who have a sound understanding about how young children learn through play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make steady progress in all six areas of learning. Staff have a clear knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and plan purposeful learning opportunities for children. Key worker observations provide clear information about each individual child which is used to plan their next steps for learning. However, differentiation in planning requires development to clearly identify how activities will be adapted to meet and challenge appropriately the needs of the more able or younger less able children, ensuring all children remain motivated to learn. Individual assessment records are in place and are used to plan activities which build on what children know and can do and their achievements are linked clearly to the stepping stones. However, opportunities for parents and carers to share observations and help plan their children's next steps for learning are limited. Meaningful and varied teaching methods provide a sensitive approach to support children's differing stages of development including those with special educational needs. Overall, children make at least good progress towards the early learning goals given their capabilities and starting points.

Children seek out activities and are busy throughout the session displaying high levels of independence. They explore the wider world around them through creative practical activities, such as leaf rubbing. Older more able children take charge at this activity, competently and kindly showing younger ones how the magic happens when you place a leaf under the paper then rub over the top with a crayon and watch the leaf pattern emerge onto the paper. They talk about the colour of their leaves and notice that one leaf is red and not green. Children select their own name cards at snack time and more able children are beginning to write their own names. However, opportunities to explore linking sounds and letters through simple phonic programmes requires development to build on children's current interests and skills.

Children are active learners taking risks and trying new activities. Staff work hard as a team using descriptive praise and encouragement helping to develop children's personal independence and investigative opportunities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop positive attitudes to others and world around them. Images around the pre-school of ethnicity, gender and disability provide an environment which encourages children to discuss and explore their own ideas and views. Varied topics and opportunities to investigate festivals and examine artefacts from around the world develops children's understanding about other communities and cultures and the wider world around them.

Children respond well to the consistent and clear boundaries promoted by staff. They

take turns and share, learning to self regulate aided by sand timers, for instance, to ensure everyone has a fair turn on the computer. Children make room for each other moving up on the sofa enabling another child to share the story. Staff take a calm approach using age appropriate explanations and helping children to develop their awareness of others and how to behave together in the pre-school or when visiting the infant school to watch special assemblies. Children's behaviour throughout the pre-school is very good. Children's views are listened to and their comments taken seriously, staff treat children with respect and act as good role models. The positive environment builds children's confidence and self-esteem.

The pre-school has clear and effective strategies to support children with special educational needs. They adopt a multi agency approach to ensure that children, parents and carers are supported to make smooth transitions into the pre-school and then into the reception class.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff invite parents and children into the pre-school prior to placement helping to build constructive relationships and provide continuity of care. Relevant information is shared enabling staff to plan for children individually before they start at the pre-school. Daily discussions, appointments and open evenings provide plenty of opportunities to share ideas and address concerns. Parents are encouraged to share their skills and interests, and participate in topics or help with special events and outings. Clear open communications builds trust between parents, carers and staff and provides a secure environment enabling children to move with confidence between their home and the pre-school. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Clear policies and procedures are in place. The staff induction programme and regular appraisals ensures that children's health and welfare are safeguarded and staff are valued and supported. The manager monitors and evaluates classroom practice and uses the information well to organise and deploy staff effectively.

Documentation is organised well and easily accessible. All records are securely stored and confidentiality is maintained.

Leadership and management is good. The manager is proactive in working with staff and the management committee when organising events for parents such as open evenings and visits from the photographer. She works hard to support her staff team, building their confidence and supporting their professional development. Staff skills and interests are used well to support an interesting and interactive curriculum for children.

All staff work together to provide a positive working environment and pleasant atmosphere for children and their families.

Overall the range of children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the pre-school has developed its operational plan and re-evaluated their staff induction, child protection and risk assessment procedures to ensure children's safety and welfare remains paramount.

They have also developed their planning and assessment systems working with local qualified teachers and completing training courses which have enabled them to plan and provide a motivating and purposeful curriculum building on what children know and can do and helping them to achieve and make good progress.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report

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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):

- ensure drinking water is available to children at an appropriate level enabling them to pour their own drinks when they feel thirsty
- implement the 'Birth to three matters' framework to support children under three appropriately.

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):

- monitor existing planning systems to ensure that activities are adapted sufficiently to meet the needs of the more able and less able children ensuring all children remain motivated to learn and make good progress towards the early learning goals. Also, increase opportunities for parents and carers to share observations and be involved in the planning of their child's next steps for learning

- increase opportunities for children to explore linking sounds to letters through simple phonics.

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