



Barn Close Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY295645
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Inspector Margaret Coyne

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Registered person Barn Close 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Barn Close Pre-School opened approximately 30 years ago and was re-registered in 2004 with the current owners. It operates from the two room within premises in Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.15 to 12.00 for 38 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 30 children aged from 2.6 years to under 5 years on role. Of these 11 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local catchment area. The pre-school currently supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs five staff. Three of the staff including both managers hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a qualification.

The pre-school receives support from an early years teacher and a mentor from the Early Years Development and Child care Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a range of physical activities which contribute to a healthy life style. They confidently use their physical skills to access a range of large and small equipment. Staff ensure children experience a variety of ways to move their bodies as they climb, balance, throw and kick balls and crawl through tunnels. Children's experiences are not hindered by weather conditions as staff set up large equipment indoors and take other activities outside. Children's dexterity and hand and eye coordination is developing as they manipulate beads, playdough, pencils and small world figures. They particularly enjoy moving to music and using their bodies to take part in action songs and rhymes.

Children learn the importance of personal hygiene through well organised routines. They wash their hands after using the toilet and know to wash them again after messy activities and before snacks. Younger children develop their understanding through watching the older children and through the positive role modelling of the adults. The children are protected from infection through the well managed hygiene routines which are practised by the group such as changing into indoor shoes and the standard of cleanliness of the premises and equipment. Practitioners are well informed about the children's health and adequate documentation is in place to support this. All suitable consents are in place from parents however there is no system used to record any medication given to a child. Accidents are documented to ensure a full record is kept and shared with parents. Two members of staff hold current first aid certificates which are regularly updated.

Children are able to have a snack during the morning session. They sit in small groups and it is a happy social occasion. Staff are beginning to introduce children to fruit during this time but it is limited and not available each day. Therefore children are not able to try new tastes and experiences on a regular basis. Children do have opportunity to take part in the preparation of some snacks such as sandwich making but this is incorporated into a theme and not as a regular practice. Children have the choice of a drink but are unable to develop independence skills by pouring this for themselves. The practitioners take account of parents wishes and any dietary needs of the children. Extra care is taken if any child has an allergy or dietary requirement

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is paramount to the organisation of the group. Practitioners recognise hazards and take positive steps to minimise these. The setting is well planned with lots of space for children to move freely and safely around activities. Thorough safety and security precautions are in place to promote and safeguard the children's welfare. Practitioners help children gain an awareness of keeping themselves safe in pre-school as they explain and practise simple procedures such as emergency evacuation, escorting children to the toilets and the boundaries to keep children safe such as not running inside or throwing sand and toys. Where some younger children have difficulties responding to the boundaries practitioners manage this effectively explaining to the children in a simple but positive manner aimed at their level of understanding so they can operate safely within their environment.

Children use a broad range of safe, well maintained and developmentally appropriate resources. All items are regularly checked for safety and children share in this responsibility by notifying an adult if any thing is broken. Equipment and activities are attractively presented at the children's height to encourage independent access and to help children learn to respect and look after their resources. For example the dressing up clothes are hung on a rack and children are encouraged to put clothes back so they, and others, do not trip over them. This helps children gain an awareness of safety and take some responsibility for keeping themselves safe.

Children are well protected. Practitioners are knowledgeable about child protection and all procedures are up to date. All staff are encouraged to extend and update their understanding by attending additional training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, settled and secure. They have a sense of belonging as they come into the pre-school and know the routine. They change into indoor shoes and know where to hang their coats. Children relate well to each other and socialise together seeking out friends to share activities. Most children spend their time in a purposeful manner as they move freely around the activities throughout the session. They enjoy exploring new and familiar concepts such as the home corner, dressing up and creativity table. However children have few opportunities to experience other real life situations through role play. Most children are able to concentrate and persist at self chosen activities. Practitioners are on hand to support and engage those children who's concentration is limited to help them gain control of their feelings and show an interest in an activity. For example children becoming disruptive are guided to the construction mat where they can explore building with blocks, use trains and aeroplanes and have opportunity to talk about themselves with support from an adult.

Children enjoy singing, action rhymes and using musical instruments. Children used hand held shakers while singing familiar songs and the staff member introduced them

to the concept of loud, quiet, short, slow and long sounds. This resulted in children gaining control and distinguishing sounds and practising rhythm. Children use paint, playdough, printing and sticking. However some of these activities are over directed by practitioners resulting in mass produced work and children unable to use free expression to explore their own creativity.

Children's independence is developing as they move freely around the room selecting activities and becoming increasingly more self sufficient when using the toilets, washing hands, putting on coats and dressing up clothes. However this is not extended at snack time where children are unable to pour their own drinks or given enough time to persevere when making their own sandwiches.

The Birth to Three matters framework has been introduced and is incorporated into the plans. This has a positive effect on the children as staff have gained an insight into focusing their attention when adapting activities to promote the learning for younger children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is satisfactory. Children are generally making progress due to the practitioners sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn effectively. Plans are comprehensive and show interesting activities which challenge and stimulate most children. As a result most children are motivated and make positive links in their learning. Children use their imaginations well as they take part in role play and seek friends out to join in as they play shopping and imitate adults in familiar situations in the home corner. However this is not fully extended with other real life situations. Children enjoy exploring and investigating as they take part in activities watching how things grow and change. For example, how tadpoles change into frogs. One child enjoyed dismantling a toy vacuum cleaner to see how it works. Children are confident speakers and most will listen well to others during play and at show and tell time. Children are encouraged to bring in items from home relating to the letter of the week. They enjoy stories and books and join in enthusiastically with songs and rhymes. Children retell stories about themselves as they play with the cars, trains and planes discussing holidays and trips out. However practitioners do not provide sufficient opportunity for children to gain an awareness of word recognition and early reading skills due to the lack of labels on everyday objects and the use of children's name cards.

Children are beginning to count and relate numbers of personal significance for example one child counted twenty-four beads as he manoeuvred them along a frame. When he reached number eighteen he knew this was his house number. Children are adept at counting and sorting the sort bears by colour.

Children gain some knowledge about their environment within the pre-school however this is not extended at present to their local environment with trips and outings although staff do intend to introduce this in line with topics to give children a well rounded view of the local area.

Practitioners have a sound awareness of each child's individual needs and their starting points in order to move them forward, They continually monitor children's

progress and use some of the stepping stones to record this. However these are limited and do not clearly identify children's achievements in order to plan for the next steps in their learning. The lack of evaluation of activities means practitioners are unable to recognise and record where they have been successful in promoting learning and which aspects need improvement. They do however give careful attention to children who speak English as an additional language and ensure they are able to participate in all activities. Practitioners have high expectations for all children and create a satisfactory, happy learning environment.

Overall children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have access to a meaningful range of resources and activities to promote a positive view of the wider world and increase their awareness of diversity. Children take part in a range of activities to increase their awareness and enjoyment of both familiar and unfamiliar festivals and celebrations for example Christmas, Easter and Chinese New Year. Practitioners have very positive attitudes and present themselves as sensitive role models which in turn helps children relate to others and gain a positive understanding of the needs of others. Children are learning to share and take turns and respond well to direction from adults and other children for example one child explaining that it was his turn next and then it will be your turn. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Effective systems are implemented to support children with any special needs or who speak English as an additional language.

Children have a good awareness of the boundaries within the pre-school and respond to direction from adults. They respond well to the consistent approach followed by all adults and this impacts clearly on children's security and confidence as they know what is expected of them. Children develop self-esteem as they are able to resolve differences and gain a strong understanding between right and wrong.

Parents play an active role in the pre-school and this in turn helps them support their child's care, learning and play. The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good. An extensive range of information is available to parents about the group, the activities and the curriculum. Posters are displayed and an accessible notice board provides clear information for parents to enable them to extend their child's learning at home. Children benefit from a two way sharing of information between practitioners and parents and the management is considering ways to develop this further. A comprehensive prospectus is in place which is continually updated and developed to show a recent picture of their practise and to help foster a good working relationship between home and pre-school.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children feel secure and confident within an organised environment. This enables them to interact with others and initiate and extend most of their own play and learning. The range and quality of activities for children enables them to be challenged in most areas and practitioners have a secure knowledge of the early learning goals to help children move forward. Children can move safely and freely around activities and enjoy uninhibited space to spread out and play.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The management team has a clear and positive vision for the future and have developed a dedicated staff team who present themselves as positive role models for the children to relate to. Induction training and qualifications are met and appropriate policies and procedures are implemented to keep the children healthy and safeguard their welfare. Practitioners work well together to develop planning which impacts on the children's play and learning and partnerships with parents. Most systems are in place to evaluate and assess their practice however this is limited in the evaluation of activities and children's progress. Practitioners promote an inclusive environment where each child is important and they organise time, staff, activities, resources and space to ensure all children benefit from their time spent within the group.

Overall the needs of the children attending are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

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):

- extend the opportunities for children to develop an understanding of healthy eating and to develop their independence skills at snack time.

- develop a system to record any medication given to a child.

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):

- increase opportunities for children to use their own imaginations and initiative when taking part in creative activities and with real life role play experiences
- provide more opportunities for children to develop early reading skills and word recognition with labels on everyday objects and the use of name cards
- introduce a rigorous system to evaluate activities and practice and to extend the children's assessments to show a clear picture of their progress and achievements.

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