

Romsey Community Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	511675
Inspection date	22 November 2007
Inspector	Lisa Jane Cupples
Setting Address	The Romsey School, Greatbridge, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 8ZB
Telephone number	01794 527011
E-mail	
Registered person	Romsey Community 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?

Romsey Community Pre-school opened in 1989. The pre-school operates from the youth wing of Romsey Community School, which is located in Romsey, Hampshire. The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding areas and is a limited company run by a voluntary management committee. The pre-school uses a room in the youth wing and they have the use of a secure outdoor play area. A maximum of 26 children may attend the setting at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:30 to 12:00 during school term time only.

There are currently 26 children from two years nine months to five years on roll. Of these, 20 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of morning sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs five staff to work with the children. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of personal hygiene and are developing good self care skills through daily routines and discussions. Children are actively encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times and use disposable paper towels to help prevent the possible spread of infection. Children's good health is promoted effectively because the staff implement stringent hygiene procedures to help prevent the possible spread of infection. For example, the tables are cleaned before snack time and staff use disposable gloves when dealing with bodily fluids. Spillages are cleaned up quickly with little fuss, maintaining a clean and healthy environment for the children.

The staff have a very clear understanding of the procedures to record all accidents that occur on the premises. Parents give written consent for staff to seek emergency medical treatment and to administer medication. Although, they are not required to sign the records to acknowledge the administration of medication, to ensure they are fully informed at all times. Children will receive appropriate treatment if an accident occurs because four members of staff hold a current first aid certificate. A fully stocked first aid kit is stored in the kitchen area and the deputy supervisor checks the contents regularly to ensure it is up-to-date and well-maintained, helping to keep the children healthy.

Children benefit from a nutritious diet because the staff team have a clear understanding of healthy eating. They provide a wide range of fruit for snacks and discuss the needs of each child with the parents in detail and record the information on their registration forms. Staff find out about each child's allergies, medical, cultural needs and parental preferences through discussion, ensuring that their practice reflects the needs of the children and their families. Children are beginning to understand about healthy eating through daily discussions and talk about which food is good for them.

Children are able to free-flow in and out of the garden area during the first part of the session every day. Children ride wheeled toys with confidence and practise their hand to eye co-ordination through pouring activities with the sand. Staff organise walks to the local park for children to learn about their community and local environment. Children practise their climbing and balancing skills on the climbing frame and learn to travel over, under and through equipment as they complete obstacle courses using tunnels and other equipment. Children learn about spatial awareness as they are asked to find themselves some space before indoor physical activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a clean and well-maintained environment. Staff display the children's work brightly on the only fixed notice board they are able to use in the room. The display is changed regularly to ensure the children feel their work is valued. There is ample space for the children to move around freely from one activity to another. Staff arrive before the children and set up the room. They ensure a well-balanced range of activities are provided and children are able to choose what they would like to do during the first part of the morning, increasing their independence and decision-making skills. Children have access to an extensive range of resources and play equipment that is suitable for the age and stage of development. The

resources are well-maintained, clean and checked regularly, providing a safe play and learning environment for the children.

Children's safety is promoted because staff complete risk assessments daily. They check the premises before the children arrive and are vigilant throughout the sessions; for example, other users of the youth wing occasionally come through the pre-school room to access their offices. Staff ensure the doors are closed securely so the children can not leave the building unnoticed. Children are beginning to learn the importance of keeping themselves safe through routines; for example, children practise fire drills regularly and are able to explain what they have to do in an emergency. Children also know they must not run in the building in case they fall and hurt themselves.

All staff have an extremely clear understanding of child protection procedures and they would recognise the possible signs and symptoms of abuse. Comprehensive policies are displayed and shared with parents, ensuring they are aware of the settings responsibility for safeguarding the children who attend. Children's pre-existing injuries are recorded in detail and parents sign to acknowledge the records. The child protection policy includes procedures to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle quickly on arrival and are eager to learn; exploring the pre-school to see what activities are out for the morning. They hang up their coats, self-register and go straight to the activities, chatting animatedly with the peers and staff. Staff have a good understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and ensure all activities and experiences are differentiated effectively to meet the needs of the youngest children in the group. The curriculum planning clearly shows how the framework is incorporated into the daily sessions. Staff are skilled at supporting and assisting the children during practical activities, while allowing the children to explore and experiment with the broad range of materials and resources. This develops the children's confidence and helps them to become competent learners. Staff introduce new vocabulary and often repeat words slowly and clearly, developing their communication skills effectively.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning are good. Staff have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage. Staff observe the children's progress and keep detailed records of their achievements. The key workers collate the information gathered and identify the children's next steps. The children's individual needs are discussed at staff meetings and form the basis of the well-balanced short-term curriculum planning, ensuring the children's needs are being met. Activities are pitched at the right level for the children, ensuring they are sufficiently challenged, helping them to make good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas. Staff interact exceptionally well with the children, asking open-ended questions, encouraging the children to think about what they are trying to do.

Children enjoy an extensive range of learning opportunities during free-play and are fully occupied and engaged as they explore their surroundings and become involved in purposeful activities. Following snack time the routine changes from free-play into whole group activities and set key worker time. Staff sit with the children and engage them in meaningful conversation; however the scope of their learning is restricted during the last part of the session.

Children understand the rules of the group and show good levels of independence as they self-select resources during the sessions. Children co-operate well together as they negotiate roles in their marching band and are beginning to compromise, taking turns so all the children can have a turn with the drum. Children are starting to take responsibility for their own environment as they help to tidy away the resources before snack. They work well together, carrying resource boxes to the side of the room in pairs. Children have opportunities to practise their emergent writing skills for a variety of purposes. They attempt to write their names on their own work and write prescriptions for the patients in the home corner hospital. They use blackboards and chalks inside and in the garden area and have access to writing materials during free-play. Children have access to a well-stocked book corner during every session and learn to handle the books correctly. Staff read stories to the children at the end of the session, although some children find it difficult to listen well during large group activities.

Children count confidently and recognise numerals during free-play and practical activities. They are beginning to add and subtract using groups of objects and staff support the children effectively during problem-solving activities, building their confidence and self-esteem. Children use a range of materials to build and construct, learning about different techniques to join materials and build towers. For example, the children make the tower wider at the bottom so that it will stand up. Children concentrate well with the Lego and use their imaginations, for example, children explain they are building a racing car pit, so the cars can race on the track. Children are developing a good sense of time and are able to explain what will happen next during the session. They talk about past and future events, recalling holidays or family outings and use a pictorial time line during the sessions.

Children have ample opportunities to express themselves freely during art and craft activities. They are given time to explore and experiment with the materials, creating their own ideas. Children use their imaginations well during role-play as they pretend to be doctors and nurses in the home corner hospital. Children gently wrap the dolls in blankets and enjoy dressing-up, using stethoscopes and thermometers as they treat their patients. They also use miniature world resources effectively, telling stories about the characters they are using, talking about the pirates who sail in the big ship. Children use an extensive range of media during their time at the group and often talk about the different textures of the play dough and describing the shapes and models they are making. Children use a wide range of musical instruments and are able to name them. They collect the instruments from the table during free-play and create their own marching band, singing as dancing as they move around the room, having great fun while they are learning about the different sounds the instruments make.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Staff have a very clear understanding of equal opportunities and implement the settings policies and procedures well. All children have equal access to the resources and activities provided and staff often remind the children if activities are going to be packed away, giving them further opportunities to complete tasks. Staff take the time to get to know the children and their families well, enabling them to talk to the children about siblings and other family members, helping them to settle in and feel valued as part of the group. Children are beginning to show consideration for others as they help and assist one another, for example, when the children are dressing-up. Children learn about other cultures and beliefs through topics and practical activities; for example, children learn about Hanukkah, Diwali, Chinese New Year and other festivals through food tasting, art and craft activities and listening to music from around the world. Children have

access to an extensive range of multi-cultural resources, helping them to develop an understanding of the world around them.

The special needs co-ordinator in the setting has completed training and has an exceptionally clear understanding of her role. She liaises closely with parents and other agencies to support the children who attend. Specific strategies are implemented to help the children settle and reach their full potential in the group. Children behave well because staff implement the clear rules and boundaries effectively. They take the time to give clear explanations to the children, helping them to develop an understanding of right and wrong. Staff praise the children and recognise their efforts, rewarding the positive behaviour, for example, staff thank the children for helping to tidy up before snack time and notice when they help their peers. Staff use behaviour management strategies to reflect the age and understanding of the children; for example, staff use distraction techniques for the youngest children and discussion and reasoning with the older children, ensuring they can all see they are being treated fairly.

Children benefit greatly from the open and clear lines of communication between the staff team and their parents. Information is free-flowing and enables staff to support all the children fully, from the time they start at the setting until they are ready for school. Parents receive informative newsletters every half term, which cover the activities and experiences that will be provided for the children. Good use is made of the notice board to help keep parents informed about the setting at all times. They are also able to talk to the staff whenever they want, building trusting relationships. Parents are able to stay throughout the sessions to help their children settle or as part of the parents' rota, helping them to understand how the group operates on a daily basis.

Partnership with parents of children who receive funding for early education is good. Parents receive detailed information about the pre-school and their aims and objectives. Clear information about the Foundation Stage and the six areas of learning are included, helping the parents to understand how the children learn. There is also a display chart in the setting showing the stepping stones and the weekly curriculum planning is displayed for parents' information. Parents are able to talk to the key workers at any time and have access to their children's records of achievement and they are able to make written contributions about their children's learning at home. They are actively encouraged to share what they know about their children, building extremely strong relationships, benefiting the whole family.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's safety is promoted because the committee has robust recruitment and vetting procedures in place. However, there are currently no systems in place to check the ongoing suitability of people working with the children. New staff complete an in depth induction programme, ensuring they are fully aware of their responsibilities and the pre-school policies and procedures. All staff continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of early years by attending courses and workshops whenever possible. All records, policies and procedures, which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, and to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained to a good standard. The committee and the supervisor have a clear understanding of the regulations, which provides a secure environment for the children, their families and the staff team.

Staff deployment is effective throughout the session and ratios are maintained at all times, ensuring children are fully supervised and supported. Most of the session runs smoothly and

children benefit from the extensive learning opportunities provided. Staff are exceptionally well organised and this enables them to provide an extensive range of stimulating and challenging activities during free-play. Children are fully occupied and completely engaged during their time in the group. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The daily attendance registers are clear and detailed; children's full names and times of arrival and departure are recorded. Staff are included on the register and all visitors are required to sign in and out, helping to safeguard the children.

The leadership and management of the setting are good. The pre-school is managed by a voluntary committee who employ a fully qualified and experienced supervisor to oversee the day to day running of the group. Clear roles and responsibilities are defined, ensuring the sessions and the delivery of the nursery education programme are effective. Staff work together closely to review, monitor and evaluate the planned curriculum ensuring children receive a well-balanced programme. Activities are revisited if necessary to ensure the learning intentions of the activities have been met and are also repeated for specific children if staff feel additional support is required to help children progress. The entire staff team work effectively together and are committed to continually improving the quality of care and education for all children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to ensure procedures to deal with allegations against a member of staff were included in the child protection policy and to record the times of arrival and departure for all children, staff and visitors. The child protection policy has been reviewed and now includes comprehensive procedures to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff, safeguarding the children. The daily attendance register records the children's times of arrival and departure if they arrive late or leave the setting early. Staff attendance is also recorded in the register. All visitors are required to sign in and out of the setting ensuring a complete record of everyone coming into contact with the children is maintained at all times.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting was asked to improve the programme for communication, language and literacy by increasing opportunities for children to explain their thinking, to rhyme, to link sounds to letters and to be interested and challenged at story time. To further develop the system for staff observation to evaluate practice linked to children's learning and monitor the curriculum to ensure all aspects within each area of learning are covered. They were also asked to manage time more effectively after free play to ensure learning is maximised and plan focused key worker activities which challenge children across all areas of learning. Children have ample opportunities to link letters and sounds, express their ideas freely and sing rhyming songs. Staff read stories to the children, although some children do not listen well. Staff keep detailed records of the children's progress and use the information to plan a well-balanced curriculum that reflects the children's individual needs and their next steps. Staff are still trying different routines to maximise the children's learning opportunities throughout the sessions.

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.

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 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 parents sign to acknowledge the administration of medication
- develop procedures to monitor the ongoing suitability of people working with 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):

- further develop the children's listening skills during large group activities, in particular during story time towards the end of the session
- review the organisation of the routines to ensure children's learning is maximised throughout the session.

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