



The Warren Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY316517
Inspection date	21 March 2006
Inspector	Doreen Forsyth
Setting Address	Bishops Green Community Centre, Beech Road, Bishops Green, Newbury, Berkshire, RG20 9JG
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Registered person	The Warren Pre-school Committee
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

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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?

The Warren Pre-School opened in 1988, and moved to its present premises in 2005. The pre-school operates from the village hall at Bishops Green near Newbury in Berkshire. They have use of a large hall with adjacent children's toilets. There is an enclosed paved and grassed area for outside play.

The setting is registered to care for 26 children aged from 2 to 5 years old. Currently, there are 15 children on roll, 10 of these are in receipt of government funding for

nursery education. The setting provides for children with special needs or that speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school is open term time mornings, from 09:30 until 12:30 on Monday and Fridays and from 09:30 until 12:00 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Three full or part time staff work with the children. Of these one has relevant qualifications at level 3. The setting is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

At Warren pre-school children are protected from infection and suitably taken care of if they have an accident or become ill because staff follow suitable health and hygiene practices and guidelines. Any accidents, medications administered to children and any special dietary requirements are appropriately recorded. Children are encouraged to practise simple good hygiene practices, for example, they are always reminded to wash their hands before eating or after using the toilet.

Children have a daily snack, this is often biscuits, however, staff are introducing more varied snacks including fresh fruits and vegetables. Children learn about healthy eating and living through their topic work. The children do not have any free access to drinking water while at the setting, if they are thirsty they have to ask a member of staff for a drink. Children can use the book corner bean bags to rest on if necessary.

Children enjoy some suitable physical activity indoors; they confidently bounce on mini trampolines and use balancing resources with skill. They dance and move to music. The setting has a suitable outside play area, but this is not used much in winter months.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a new, very well maintained, light and spacious village hall. Children have easy access to child size toilets and hand washing facilities. The setting is regularly risk assessed; staff ensure the hall is locked and secure when the children are present to protect them. The attached outside play area is well fenced, safe and suitable for children's play. Children learn to keep themselves safe; staff remind children to walk indoors, and to use the play equipment properly.

Children use a good range of resources and equipment, which are safe and suitable for the purpose. The toys are stored in the hall cupboards, but staff have organised the play room and provided shelving and storage trolleys so children can easily access much of the equipment, enabling them to choose what they play with.

Children are well safeguarded because staff understand their role in child protection

and are able to put appropriate procedures in place if necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle well at the pre-school, they are happy and enjoy their play. They respond well to the adults who are interested in what the children do and say. Children enjoy each other's company and have made some firm friendships. Children take part in a range of activities planned by the staff to help promote children's play and learning.

Nursery Education.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The play leader has a good understanding of the early learning goals, she undertakes the majority of the daily planning. The play assistants' understanding is more limited. but they confidently help organise activities that promote children's progress in all of the six areas of learning. The setting uses suitable resources to help children learn; the daily sessions are appropriately planned, but sometimes children wait for the next activity for unnecessarily long periods, and then become a little restless.

The daily planning is well organised and is firmly based on the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. The needs of all children including any with special educational needs are considered when staff have their planning meetings. Staff assess and record children's progress, but the information gained from the assessments is not always used to inform the planning. When children first start out onto the stepping stones towards the early learning goals staff do not obtain information from parents about what children know and can do, so they do not have an initial base for staff to build onto, this makes it more difficult to help children to move forward in their learning. Children in the setting that have English as an additional language are helped to learn appropriately.

Children confidently contribute to discussion at group times, they are able to share their thoughts and ideas and put them into words. They play well together, share and co-operate with each other, for example, using the rocking toys or helping to tidy up. Children quickly learn the rules and routines of the setting. They have some opportunities to be independent. Children are able to select some of their own toys and activities, they visit the toilets and wash their hands independently and they help serve each other at snack times. Children learn about their local community through discussion with the adults present and in their topic work when they have visitors, such as a policeman or the local vicar into the setting. They also go for walks in the local area.

Children enjoy listening to stories; they sit well and concentrate appropriately. They learn to link sounds to letters using the letter of the week. Children rapidly learn to recognise their own names, some can confidently write their names and other words and letters. Children learn to count in the daily routines, for example, they can count how many children are present at registration time and are skilfully using numbers to begin to add and subtract.

Children learn about shape and size, in the story of the 'Very Hungry Caterpillar' they talked about a tiny egg and a very big cocoon.

Children do not have many good opportunities for exploration and investigation, for finding out why things happen and how things work or to learn about the natural world, although they could see a caterpillar in a jar. The pre-school has a computer which the children enjoy using; however, this requires adult support as the computer trolley is too high for the children to easily reach, so they cannot use the computer independently. Children begin to learn about different cultures and diversity, they celebrate festivals, such as Christmas, Diwali, Easter, and Chinese New Year, during the inspection the children were busy making Mother's Day cards.

Children enjoy exploring different media for painting and drawing, such as free painting at the easels or using crayons and chalks. They do not have many opportunities to use other malleable materials, such as sand, water, play dough or clay. Children develop their imagination through role and small world play. They enjoy dancing and moving to music. Children have sufficient opportunities to practise their large muscle movements and some opportunities for using fine muscle control, such as playing with 'tap a shape' or threading; but they do not use many tools, such as scissors on a regular basis, which the majority of children have not yet mastered.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered well. Children are encouraged to behave appropriately, staff value children's good behaviour and reward the children with stickers and praise; they admire the children's work and acknowledge their achievements. A Special Needs Co-ordinator is in place who monitors and evaluates the progress of any children with special needs. Staff know the children and their families well and endeavour to meet their individual needs. Children use some good resources to reflect different cultures and backgrounds including resources that portray positive images of disability, but the range of books available to children that promote equal opportunities is quite limited.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents have good opportunities to be actively involved in the life of the pre-school and in their children's learning, this contributes to children's sense of well-being and to their development. Parents take turns on the daily rota and serve on the pre-school management committee. They receive regular newsletters which include ideas of activities that parents can do at home with their children, such as find items linked to the letter of the week. The setting gives parents information leaflets which include information about the early learning goals and what their children will learn about. Parents are informed about the assessment records kept on the children and can have regular meetings with their children's key workers to see and discuss the records and their children's progress. However, parents do not have an initial meeting with the key worker, to inform the pre-school what they know about their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. All staff and the committee that have contact with the children are suitably vetted. The play leader is experienced and well qualified; the other staff, although experienced and have attended some training, do not have relevant qualifications. Most staff have current first aid training. The majority of the required documentation, procedures and records that help promote children's health, safety and enjoyment are in place, but the times of staff and children's attendance is not recorded, and parent's written permission for staff to obtain emergency medical assistance is not in place. The setting provides a good adult:child ratio which helps to ensure children's care, learning and play are positively supported.

The leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. There is a voluntary committee which supports the pre-school staff and helps manage the organisation of the pre-school. The chairperson is often in the setting when she is able to monitor the provision offered. Staff are encouraged to train, but there are no systems in place, apart from informal discussion, to monitor and support staff development, to monitor and evaluate the education provision and the parents satisfaction or to identify any strengths and weaknesses in the provision. The pre-school leader is dedicated to the setting and works towards continuous improvement with support from the staff.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. 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

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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):

- provide children with access to drinking water during the pre-school session
- implement the training action plan as soon as possible
- improve documentation by including the times of children's and staff's attendance into the daily records of attendance and obtaining parent's written permission for staff to seek emergency medical assistance if necessary.

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):

- use the information gained from the assessments and records that are kept on children to inform the daily planning so that children are helped to move on in their learning
- explore ways of obtaining information about the children's learning as they set out onto the stepping stones towards the early learning goals so that individual planning can build on what children already know.
- provide children with more opportunities to use a range of malleable materials and tools, especially scissors, to help children to develop their small muscle control.

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