



Oakhill Childcare

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY306656
Inspection date	02 March 2006
Inspector	Elaine Poulton
Setting Address	Oakhill County Primary School, Hawksworth, Tamworth, Staffordshire, B77 2HH
Telephone number	
E-mail	
Registered person	Pre-School Learning Alliance
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Oakhill Childcare opened in 2005 and is part of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The group is situated within the Face Centre attached to Oakhill County Primary School in Tamworth. The group serves the local and surrounding areas.

There are currently 46 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 17 nursery funded 3 and 4 year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special needs, and who speak English as an additional

language.

The group opens Monday to Friday from 09:15 until 15:15 during school term time.

The setting employs 7 staff to work directly with the children. There are 6 staff including the manager who hold appropriate early years qualifications. There is 1 other member of staff who is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Pre-school Learning Alliance and a teacher mentor from the Local Education Authority. The group fosters good links with Oakhill Primary School and Sure Start.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health and general well-being is promoted well in the group. Their individual dietary needs are met effectively as information is shared with parents. Children have a mid-morning and a mid-afternoon snack planned to offer a well-balanced selection of healthy foods. Parents provide a packed lunch for their children to eat at mid-day. Children enjoy being selected to help set the table and are learning to spread their own toast and use a knife safely. Regular drinks including milk, juice and squash are offered throughout the session. Children can access drinking water and are able to help themselves if they are thirsty. They are learning about healthy eating through planned topics and themes.

Children understand why they need to wash and dry their hands before they eat their snacks, after taking part in messy activities and after visiting the bathroom. Liquid soap and individual paper towels are provided for the children and hygiene practices are well-established. This helps to prevent any cross contamination.

Staff are effective in ensuring that children are well cared for and that their individual needs are met. There are good procedures for managing accidents and informing parents, giving prescribed medication and caring for children who may become ill whilst in the setting. This means that children are helped to maintain good health.

Children participate in a variety of physical activities and exercise. They can rest or take part in quiet activities if they wish as well as being active. They enjoy taking part in well planned movement sessions which encourages them to be active and to move in a variety of different ways. They have good opportunities to develop their physical skills and join in enthusiastically hopping like bunnies to their favourite rhymes. They enjoy climbing, throwing and running after hoops and taking fresh air outside in the adventure play area. Outdoor play is accessed regularly and children get involved in a good range of planned activities, such as digging in soil and putting out bedding plants and walking and exploring in the grounds.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The safety of the children is a high priority in this day care setting. Security is good with staff being vigilant with external exits ensuring that all visitors are greeted but do not gain access to the setting or present a risk to the children.

The pre-school room is warm and well ventilated and staff set up the area prior to children's arrival, which means they quickly choose a toy or game to play with and settle well. There is sufficient space and an adequate number of toilets and hand-wash facilities available.

Children use a wide range of safe, good quality and developmentally appropriate resources. They can access toys and games themselves, easily and safely from a wide selection available. Equipment such as tables, chairs and furniture are all at suitable child height. This means that children of all ages can use them, move around safely and sit down comfortably to play games, join in with activities or to eat their food.

The children practise emergency evacuations regularly and are beginning to understand why they need to exit the building quickly and safely when the alarm is raised. There are fire precaution signs displayed and risk assessments are in place to minimise hazards and prevent accidents to children. This means that children are kept safe in the setting.

Staff have a good understanding of child protection and reporting concerns in line with local Area Child Protection Committee guidelines. There is a clear child protection policy in place and staff are aware of the signs of abuse and the procedures to follow if they suspect a child is at risk. All staff are clear about the settings procedure should an allegation be made against them. This means that staff have a good understanding of their role and responsibility in child protection issues.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The group uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework successfully. The planning and assessment systems link together well. Young children experience a varied balance of activities that are planned for accordingly, to ensure they become competent young learners. Plans are posted on the wall by the entrance for staff and parents to follow. These plans demonstrate routines and activities that support children's all round care, learning and development.

Children settle well and are beginning to build good relationships with the staff. Most children are helped to learn right from wrong through discussions, planned activities and explanations. There are regular discussions with parents ensure that individual children's needs are met and they are helped to feel safe and secure.

Children enjoy experimenting with different textures such as, sand and paint. Small world resources, construction and board games encourage children to learn to take turns. Older children take pleasure in sitting together turning pages over carefully and

describing the exciting parts of the story book to their younger peers, often making up story-lines from the pictures. Younger children are confident to approach staff and sit on their lap to look through a book together. The children benefit from regular story-time supported through an outside agency.

Children experiment with a good variety of equipment and resources indoor and outside. They enjoy cutting and gluing paper to make a 'rainbow'. Younger children are challenged appropriately and are helped to recognise numbers, colours and shapes. When asked they happily select either a blue or green crayon to make-marks inside the lines of a star or a circle. They enter into imaginary play in the Oakhill Café, Oakhill Beauty Parlour and Oakhill Office and play along-side one another or sometimes on their own. They watch and listen to each other and as a result they are beginning to learn how to share resources and develop their language and communication skills in a small group situation.

Funded Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Most staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage, stepping stones and early learning goals. Staff ensure that resources are accessible to all children and activities are stimulating and purposeful. Most staff are knowledgeable about how children develop and support children's learning well. Some staff are further developing their skills and understanding of the stepping stones, through taking up appropriate early years training. Most staff are clear about offering appropriate challenges to extend and reinforce children's learning. They support children's good behaviour well and they consistently praise and reward children for their achievements but not all children are helped to learn what is right and wrong. There is a well organised system for assessing children's progress based on observations of what children can do. Staff use this information to plan what children need to do next in their learning.

Children separate from their main carer and settle well. They are beginning to learn each others names and search out particular friends to play with who have similar interests. Children manage small tasks well and help during the session by giving out green plates, blue cups and cutlery at snack time. Their independence is growing as they are encouraged to spread their own toast, put on their own coats on and help them selves to water. Most children behave well because they are interested and involved in a range of purposeful activities. Not all children are helped to learn what is right and wrong during some routines.

Children enjoy singing their favourite song and rhymes. They respond well to stories and enjoy exploring real and imagined experiences, through role play and a good range of well presented resources. They are beginning to use different mediums to practise mark making. They can recognise their name on their registration card. Some children are practising writing letters of their name and can form recognisable letters.

Children are developing a good understanding of numbers through both practical and adult led activities. They can recognise and name basic shapes, such as square, circle and triangle. Children's mathematical learning is growing through use of rhymes, discussion and during every day routines. Some children recognise

numerals to 10. They are supported to count how many are left when one is taken away. Number lines and posters that show different shapes are not always used to extend or reinforce children's learning.

Children explore and investigate different materials, using all their senses. They look closely at objects and are interested to find out about how things fit together, such as construction blocks. Children explore keyboards, mobile phones and battery operated programmable resources. They are beginning to recognise weather conditions and days of the week. Children are active outdoors and explore their immediate surroundings. Not all children benefit through planned activities that help them explore the local community to identify different features in the natural environment.

Children enjoy active play and willingly take part in music and movement sessions. They enjoy waking up their muscles by throwing and chasing after large hoops, pedalling wheeled toys, balancing on stilts and climbing over and crawling through obstacles. They are able to move safely in different ways around equipment and furniture inside the setting and outdoors. Not all children benefit from discussions to help them recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active.

They explore and use different textures, such as warm water, play dough, wet and dry sand and begin to express their thoughts and ideas through a widening range of materials. They are beginning to use their imagination well and enjoy role play. Children use a range of small resources such as scissors and large pieces of play equipment, such as the outdoor 'caterpillar' and 'train' with increasing dexterity and control.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Information about children's individual care needs is shared between staff and parents and this means children are supported effectively in the setting. Staff have a clear understanding of equal opportunities and use this to introduce activities to interest children in different cultures and beliefs.

Staff have appropriate systems in place to support children with special needs effectively. They work closely with parents and other professionals such as a pre-school teacher mentor. This means that all children are included in the life of the group and can access all activities in all areas of the provision. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered in the setting.

Children are praised and rewarded consistently when they are behaving well and this in turn promotes and reinforces good behaviour. Younger children are learning how to share resources in a small group situation and are building good relationships with staff and peers.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Staff are continually updating and developing systems to ensure that parents are kept fully informed about their child's achievement and progress towards the early learning goals and stepping stones so that they are well informed and actively involved in their child's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting employs experienced, qualified and vetted staff to ensure that children are cared for and are well protected. Staffing ratios are maintained at all times resulting in children's care, learning and play being well supported. There is a consistent staff team which helps children to settle in well, develop relationships and enjoy their play and learning. This means that children benefit from the interaction with others and the adult support in the setting.

Resources and equipments is well maintained, safe and accessible and some toy-boxes are labelled which helps children identify the contents. Space is satisfactorily utilized but children are not always grouped appropriately to ensure their individual learning needs are met.

A good range of policies and procedures are in place that support good practice and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities. This means that the care offered to children ensures that their good health, safety, enjoyment and ability to make a positive contribution is promoted well in the setting.

Most children behave well as staff reward their good behaviour and achievements with praise and encouragement. Activity plans and assessment systems are successful in promoting children's learning. Staff are well deployed and indoor space and equipment is well organised. The outside play areas are used well and activities are planned to help children explore the natural outdoor environment.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The management team are experienced and supportive. The manager has a suitable knowledge of the Foundation Stage and offers direction to staff to ensure a consistent approach to children's learning. Individual staff appraisal and evaluation systems are satisfactory and support staff to identify further training needs to help children make progress along the stepping stones. The group benefits from ongoing advice, support and training from the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

The provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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):

- explore ways to organise and group children more effectively to benefit their individual learning needs.

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):

- help children to understand what is right and wrong and support them in appropriate decision making
- exploit opportunities to extend and reinforce children's knowledge and understand of the world around them
- improve staffs knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones to promote appropriate challenges to support and extend children's individual learning across the stepping stones.

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