



Whitchurch Under 5`s Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	107106
Inspection date	27 April 2006
Inspector	Timothy Butcher
Setting Address	The Bungalow, 1 School Close, Whitchurch, Bristol, BS14 0DU
Telephone number	01275 547453
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Registered person	Whitchurch Under 5's Pre-School
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 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?

Whitchurch Under Fives Playgroup is a committee run pre-school group that operates from a converted bungalow adjacent to Wansdyke Primary School in Whitchurch, Bristol. There are five rooms which are used for different activities and enclosed garden areas for outdoor play. The group serves the local residential area.

There are currently 38 children on the roll, which includes 37 funded three and four-year-old children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group opens five

days a week during term time only. Sessions are from 08.30 to 11.30 and 12.45 to 16.30 with some children attending for the full day.

Two full time and four part time members of staff work with the children. All have early years qualifications. The setting supports children with special needs. The group have a link with Wansdyke Primary School.

Parents serve on the committee and are offered a parental rota to help in the group. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is actively promoted. An adequate procedure is followed, should a child have an accident and require first aid. Children are sensitively supported and given a sticker to reward their bravery. This also serves as an additional reminder to staff to pass on information to parents and gain written acknowledgement, when a child is collected. All staff have had appropriate first aid training but this has not been updated and only one member of staff holds a current certificate. Initial information gathering processes effectively identify children's individual medical needs however, the process does not always ensure that all staff are made fully aware of medical conditions. This has the potential to undermine the health care of children.

Children benefit from a healthy diet. All children have a sound understanding about healthy eating as they are provided with clear explanations about the need to eat healthily and are strongly encouraged to recognise 'good food' and 'bad food'. Staff provide regular opportunities for discussion and use well thought out resources and visual aids that effectively stimulate children's interest and extend their understanding. Children have real examples of fresh vegetables to identify at circle time. Nutritious and well balanced snacks of vegetables and fruit are provided by the setting and children freely talk about the healthy options that they have brought in their packed lunches.

Children are well protected from the spread of infection as they follow well-established hygiene procedures. They wash their hands spontaneously after messy play activities such as painting and sand play. Children develop their self-care skills as staff are well organised to provide appropriate support to children using the toilet area when needed.

Children enjoy a satisfactory range of physical activities that contribute to their good health and help them develop control and coordination of their bodies. Regular opportunities are provided for children to play outside on an all-weather surface, either under cover or in the open air. They clearly enjoy the experiences, for example, as they move freely backwards and forwards and safely negotiate obstacles and each other when using sit-on and peddle equipment. Children frequently have fun practising coordination when singing songs, moving to music and

clapping in time. Children show excitement as they learn to crawl, jump and climb in the ball park room. Access to this area and to the role-play room is limited by considerations for children's safety and is reliant on sufficient staff deployment. The planning for children's physical development provides sufficient opportunities for children to be active. It does not take into account what skills children have learned. As a result older and more able children are not always provided with suitable challenge.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a safe environment in which to play. Children benefit from the thoughtful use of space throughout the pre-school. Rooms are very appropriately laid out for their purpose. Toy trays in the choosing table allow children to exercise choice and have easy access to resources. The under- cover outside area provides children with additional opportunities to take their learning outside and for physical activities, when the weather is inclement. There is a sufficient range of safe furniture, equipment and age appropriate resources to meet the needs of children. Staff create some of their own resources, for example, the laminated cards used at circle time and use these effectively to support children's learning.

Children's safety is adequately promoted. The majority of control measures have been put in place to reduce risks to children. Recent changes to the system for the assessment of risk have been made but not fully completed. Daily visual checks are carried out by staff, however, the process for recording these is not consistently used. Children's safety is therefore potentially undermined. The premises are secure and the entrance monitored. Children begin to learn about their own personal safety, for example, they are prompted by staff to walk and not run when inside.

The committee and all staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities to protect children and local procedures would be followed. The child protection policy lacks detail in one respect. Staff have a secure knowledge of the signs and symptoms of potential abuse.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children of all ages are enthusiastic participants in a suitably wide variety of stimulating experiences. Flexible introductory sessions allow children new to the pre-school to become accustomed to the setting. Younger children settle well as staff support them with sensitive interactions. Children grow in confidence and are happy at the pre-school. They relate well to staff and to each other. They are sufficiently self-assured to play independently and in groups.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a clear understanding

of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how children learn and progress. They effectively use their skills to successfully support children's progress. Staff have high expectations of children and interact well with them. Children benefit from the clear and careful explanations of activities. Staff ask suitable questions to extend children's language and children are prompted to count in very many situations, throughout their day. Questions to develop children's problem solving skills are less in evidence. Long term planning covers each of the areas of learning, to ensure that children have access to the whole of the curriculum. However, some imbalances between areas of learning exist. More-able children are not always challenged to develop their thoughts or skills further. The use of assessment information, that identifies what individual children can do, does not sufficiently influence the short term planning of activities. As a result activities are not always planned to focus on an individual child's next stage of learning.

Children develop good communication skills as they have many opportunities to practise language during their play. Most children confidently answer questions at registration and circle times. Less confident children are skilfully encouraged by staff to contribute. Children enjoy the whole group experience and concentrate well, as they listen and respond. Different aspects of learning are brought together very well with opportunities for children to count, name, practise letter sounds and draw letter shapes in the air. As a result children are motivated and have their interest maintained and learn to express themselves.

Children make sound progress in mathematics. They successfully learn to count in a wide range of situations, including adult led activities, free play opportunities and through routine. They are particularly proud to be chosen as the 'special helper' where they take numbered carpet squares out of the room, while other children sing. They count the number of rings of a bell, practise number recognition in choosing the corresponding mat to bring back and place the appropriate carpet square in a one-to-six sequence when they return. Children smoothly leave the room in groups according to the number selected, in preparation for snack-time. Children count fingers, plates and other children spontaneously. They enjoy opportunities to explore shape, compare size and number, for example, using compare bears.

Children are developing their literacy skills. They learn to recognise their own written name and discuss letter sounds in different contexts throughout their day. For example, they identify the letter of the week from books whilst waiting for each other at snack time. They enjoy stories at circle time and independently access and share books in role-play situations, as well as, in adult led activities. Children begin to use the computer to key their names and to draw. Staff support them sensitively to grow in confidence as they use this new skill. Children enjoy being creative in the role play room, for example, they dress up as doctors and use their imaginations and some props to recreate situations that are familiar to them. Painting activities are made interesting with such things as apples, oranges and bananas, cut up to print shapes. Children explore paint, its texture and colour with brushes and hands. There are many examples of the interesting pictures and cut and stick models that children have made throughout the building. Craft activities are well organised with different activities split between the covered outside area and the messy room. Sometimes children have a limited time to explore materials as freely as they would choose. Children learn to cut with scissors and to manipulate such things as play clay. They

develop hand and eye control and use small muscles with increasing skill.

Children have some opportunities to learn about the world around them and to explore through some planned, usually adult-led activities, such as the construction of three dimensional towers, using Lego. They grow sunflowers from seed and measure and compare growth. Children's exposure to activities that fire their curiosity and cause them to investigate are not so much in evidence and are not so meaningfully integrated into the routine of the pre-school as they are for other areas of the curriculum.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have an adequate range of activities and resources that promote a positive view of the wider world and help develop their awareness of diversity. All children have equal access to all toys and activities. The choices they make are respected. Staff know children well and build warm and mutually respectful relationships. Children learn to share, take turns and help each other, for example, with turning off taps when hand washing. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children with learning difficulties or disabilities have their needs satisfactorily met. Children with individual education plans are well supported as staff work very constructively to carry through specific plans. They work closely with carers and other professionals involved in order to support children's progress. A weakness in the process for sharing information about children's individual needs exists. Not all staff are made aware of particular conditions or additional needs. As a result the progress that children make is not enhanced by a whole setting approach and there is a potential for the quality of care to be undermined.

There is a good partnership with parents. Staff build good relationships with parents and carers and know families well. Parents and carers are kept well informed about their child's day. Clear information about the setting, its policies and procedures are provided for parents. A prospectus gives solid information about the Foundation Stage curriculum. Parents receive regular achievement reports about the progress of their child although this is not wholly divided into the early learning goals and does not record children's progress through the stepping stones. Information about forthcoming topics and themes is made readily available so that parents and carers are able to support children's learning within the pre-school. Parents report very positively on the approachability of the staff and the good care provided to children. Parents who provide help through the rota system have good opportunities to see their child's progress at first hand.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

All staff are suitably vetted. They are experienced in child care and all hold child care

qualifications. All regulatory documentation is in place. Although many of the policies and procedures are in the process of being up-dated, staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Individual child's records are held for each child. Children benefit from the well organised environment where time, space and resources are used effectively to support the satisfactory progress that children make. Children are well cared for and appear settled and content.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery is satisfactory. The skilled staff team are appropriately supported by a management committee with clear roles and responsibilities. The progress of the group is monitored by the committee via termly reports from the manager. All staff have opportunities to contribute to the development of the group such as at the regular team meetings and through the group appraisal process. Monitoring procedures are adequate but not effective enough in evaluating the Foundation Stage curriculum so that sufficient balance is given to all areas of learning.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection it was agreed that improvements to storage would be made to assist children's access to toys and materials. It was further agreed that improvements to planning would be made, including that for large group activity.

At the last education inspection it was agreed that the planning of creative development involving imaginative play would be given due attention. It was also agreed that the use of children's records and the monitoring and evaluation of activities would be strengthened so that they would better inform the planning for children's future learning.

Since the last inspection the group have made some progress as creative development is better planned and opportunities for children's imaginative play have been extended and are adequate. The amount of time made available to children to use the role-play room has been extended although there is not free access for children. Similar role-play resources are put out in the main playroom or in the outside classroom at other times. Children engage in role-play but do not have a wide variety of meaningful opportunities in which to become engrossed.

Planning for large group activities has satisfactorily improved with regular opportunities for children to take part in large group activities such as story-time and outside physical play. Better storage, for example, the use of choosing tables and some improvements to the layout of activity areas, have contributed to children having greater access to play materials. They are now able to exercise greater choice.

Since the last inspection some changes to the systems of monitoring and evaluation have been implemented. Monitoring procedures are adequate but some imbalances across the foundation stage curriculum remain.

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 the 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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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 that procedures that identify children's specific health or additional needs are consistently shared with all staff so that the needs of children are fully met
- review the policy on child protection to include a procedure should an allegation be made against a member of staff
- ensure that a member of staff with a valid first aid certificate is present at all times

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):

- develop the use of observation and assessment to more effectively influence planning so that plans clearly identify the next stage in children's learning
- develop further the systems for monitoring and evaluating the foundation stage curriculum so that sufficient balance is given to all areas of learning

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website:

