



West Dean Pre-School Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Registered person	West Dean Pre-School Nursery
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

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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 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?

West Dean Pre-School Nursery opened in the current premises in 1999. The group is managed by an elected committee of parents and operates from self contained premises in the grounds of West Dean CE Primary School. Accommodation includes one large play area, toilet facilities, separate cloakroom area and an enclosed outside play area. Close links with the primary school are established and the group have use of the school playing fields, the adventure playground and the school gym.

The group serves the local and surrounding area and a maximum of 19 children may attend the setting at any one time. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday 09:05 - 13:00 during the school term and children bring a packed lunch to the setting. Additional sessions for the older children are available from 13:00 - 14:30 Mondays and Wednesdays.

There are currently 21 children aged from 2 years to 5 years on roll. Of these, 18 receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The committee employs a qualified leader to be responsible for the day to day running of the group who works full time in the setting. In addition, 3 qualified staff work directly with the children, 1 on a full time basis. The group receive support from the early years and Sure start partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children have wonderful opportunities to engage in physical activities because the organisation of the group allows them to move freely between the inside and outside learning environment. They develop very good climbing and balancing skills negotiating apparatus, such as the climbing frame and walking on stilts and display good co-ordination as they ride bicycles showing an understanding of spatial awareness. Children enjoy many opportunities to develop skills in using smaller equipment, such as bats, balls and hoops and benefit from being able to use larger and more challenging apparatus in the school adventure playground enabling them to learn to take risks. They gain a very good awareness of the importance of taking regular exercise through discussions with practitioners and activities linked to topics, for example, healthy living, which increases their understanding of how to promote a healthy lifestyle.

Children's understanding of healthy eating is promoted because they enjoy healthy options at snack times, such as a range of chopped up fruits and toast with a variety of toppings. They talk confidently about how milk helps their bodies to grow and freely help themselves to drinking water across the session recognising when they are thirsty and developing their self care skills. Children's understanding of how to look after their bodies is promoted through visits from an oral health worker, for example, who visited the group with puppets and resources to talk to children about the importance of looking after their teeth. They built on this experience by acting out the role of the dentist and the patient as the role play area was transformed into a dental surgery, enabling children to share their real and imagined experiences.

Children learn the importance of following good personal hygiene routines, for example, they independently wash their hands after they have used the toilet and before snacks and fetch tissues to wipe their noses and faces. They talk about why it is important to place their hand over their mouth when they cough recognising how

germs can spread. Children stay healthy because practitioners implement effective health and hygiene policies, for example ,when changing nappies and preparing tables for snacks using disinfectant to ensure the environment is sterile and risk of infection is minimised. Children's health is maintained because practitioners have a good knowledge of their individual health and dietary requirements and obtain relevant information about their medical history. Effective procedures are in place to deal with accidents and the administration of medication and records are accurate and well maintained ensuring all information is shared with parents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children learn how to take care of themselves and keep safe, for example, as they talk about the correct way in which to carry scissors. They tuck their chairs under the table recognising that someone may trip and fall over them and practise regular fire drills with practitioners ensuring they know the procedure should emergency evacuation be necessary. Discussions and experiences linked to topics help re-enforce children's understanding of how to keep safe as they talk about why they need to wear sun hats to protect their heads when playing outside in the sunshine. Children enjoy visits to Midhurst Fire station where they put on equipment, learn how to use the water hose and practise crossing roads safely. Their safety is ensured because practitioners are vigilant and identify and remove any potential risks to children. Daily checks are made and recorded evaluating children's safety in all areas and formal risk assessments are frequently implemented and monitored paying high attention to ensuring children are kept safe.

Children benefit from the layout of both the inside and outside learning environment enabling them to move freely and safely between the two, and access toilets independently developing their self care skills. They have wonderful opportunities to develop their independent skills as they help themselves to the full range of equipment and resources presented on open shelving units and in low level drawers and boxes. High priority is given to ensuring all equipment, furniture and resources are safe, clean and well maintained, contributing to ensuring children's safety.

Children are protected and safeguarded from harm because practitioners have a very good understanding of their role with regards to protecting children in their care. They have completed relevant training and have a detailed knowledge of the procedures to follow should they have concerns. Injuries children arrive with are discussed with parents and recorded, although full names are not always noted and the entries do not ensure confidentiality is maintained. Effective systems are in place to ensure children's safety at the beginning and end of sessions, for example, the entrance is monitored and effective procedures are in place to ensure children are collected by people who are known to practitioners, which helps to ensure that children are kept safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are extremely happy and arrive confidently to the group familiar with the daily routine. They excitedly greet their peers and practitioners and separate from their parents with ease. Younger children are totally integrated into the provision and benefit enormously from the time they spend with their older peers. They develop excellent levels of independence and confidence showing a strong sense of self assurance as they choose their own resources and make their own decisions about where they play. Children have wonderful opportunities to be imaginative as they pretend to be vets in the role play area giving their cats injections and develop their early writing skills writing medication for them. Young children are skilful communicators expressing their ideas in their play and talking through what they are doing. They are encouraged to solve their own problems even at a very early age, for example, when trying to complete puzzles and develop good levels of concentration and perseverance.

Children are extremely competent learners using a wide range of tools and have exceptional opportunities to be creative as they independently access a wide range of media and materials and use a variety of textures to explore creativity. Young children benefit because practitioners have an excellent knowledge of child development and use this to adapt their teaching approach to meet their individual needs. The organisation of the day allows children to lead and direct their own learning and practitioners follow children's interests building on their individual skills and introduce new knowledge through their self chosen activities. Written observations of younger children's progress are made and used to identify next steps in their learning, and the system for this is currently being developed to link to the aspects and components within the Birth to three matters framework. Consequently, younger children are exceptionally well supported by practitioners who help them to develop at their own rate and thrive in the wonderfully stimulating and vibrant learning environment.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good individual progress in their learning because teaching is rooted in a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and practitioners have an excellent understanding of how children learn most effectively. They use an exciting and inspirational range of teaching methods to capture children's attention and follow their interests and ideas to extend children's individual learning. Children relish their time in the setting and thrive from the highly effective use of time, space and resources enabling them to wander freely between the inside and outside learning environment for the majority of the session. They develop exceptional levels of independence as they help themselves to resources and tidy away afterwards playing a very active role in their learning and showing high levels of motivation.

Children's early reading and writing skills are extremely well developed and they talk confidently about sounds and letters identifying words that start with the same sound and those that rhyme. They regularly notice letters and familiar words around the room and recognise their names making comparisons between the letters with their peers. Children practise emergent writing in a variety of situations, for example, in the vet surgery taking appointments, outside recording findings from experiments and using a range of media, such as coloured water on the paving slabs. They express

themselves extremely well using a very good range of vocabulary and think through their own ideas leading on from the effective questioning of practitioners. Children enjoy listening to one another and contributing to group discussions and listen intently to stories from the practitioner answering questions and making predictions about what might happen next.

Children show very good skills in using a range of tools, such as cutters, knives and scissors and show real fascination as they use screwdrivers to take a range of equipment apart and investigate how it works. Practitioners are highly effective in the way they are flexible around routines. For example, during a singing and music session outside one child wanders off and discovers a wiggly worm on the grass. This causes great excitement and interest among the other children and practitioners allow them to pursue their curiosity by suggesting they fetch magnifying glasses, paper and binoculars to explore the worm in further detail. Children hurry off in search of more mini beasts and use additional resources, such as measuring tapes and torches to aid their exploration. Their imagination is extremely well developed as they use coins to pay for cat food in the role-play area, act out the story of Goldilocks and initiate going on a bear hunt outside.

Children solve their own problems, for example, around size and shape when cutting pieces of tape to fix models together. They display very good designing and making skills making models from dough, solving how to fit the car track together and using recycled materials to create large models for them to play with. Children use very good mathematical language as they make comparisons between numbers, sequence the teddy bears in size order and compare the size and shapes of their sandwiches at lunchtime. Their learning is promoted across every aspect of the session because practitioners are highly effective in the way they make excellent use of planned activities, children's self chosen play, routines and incidental opportunities. They use very good questioning techniques, such as open ended questions, encouraging children to think about things, find their own solutions and try things for themselves in a safe and secure environment. Younger children are exceptionally well supported because practitioners adapt their questioning, for example when encouraging them to sequence pictures in order to re-tell a familiar story.

Children confidently use the computer and other technology and make good use of the sand timer to help develop their concept of time as they wait for their turn. Planned activities and experiences help children to further develop their understanding of time and the place in which they live, for example, linked to topics around seasons, growth, animals and their families. Children notice how the cushion becomes hot outside from the sun and talk about the plants and vegetables they have grown in the garden recognising the changes that have taken place. They use measuring tapes and record their findings as they measure their plants against themselves and decide to measure other objects such as tables, showing a very good concept of number. Children talk about the changes that take place as they mix different coloured paints and add colouring to water predicting what will happen. They have independent access to explore a wide range of media and materials, including dough, sand, water and paint and select objects and textures to explore with paint, such as marbles, leaves and bubbles. Children enjoy using their senses to explore the wonderful array of resources and equipment and enjoy exploring sound

and rhythm using a range of instruments.

Assessment of children's ongoing progress is rigorous and their individual achievements are extremely well recorded, although the system to identify and record children's starting points is not fully developed. Practitioners use their knowledge of individual children and information gained from continual assessment to identify next steps in their learning and plan focused activities and experiences around these. Teaching is inspiring and challenging for all children and effective support is provided to the younger and less able children, for example, as practitioners sit with them during large and small group times. All children are thoroughly engrossed in their learning and become independent and autonomous learners able to achieve their individual potential during their time in the group.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop a real sense of belonging to the setting. For example, they take on roles to help practitioners, such as helping to prepare and serve snacks, place their personal belongings in individually named drawers and on coat pegs and help pack away resources when they have finished playing with them. Their behaviour is very good and children play exceptionally well together recognising the need to share and take turns and co-operate with their peers. They are extremely confident and show high levels of self esteem responding well to the continual praise from practitioners. Unwanted behaviour is effectively managed and children are helped to think about why some behaviour is unacceptable and the affect it has on others. Parents are informed about incidents of behaviour and practitioners work with them to ensure a consistent approach, although no record of this is made.

Children learn about themselves and value one another recognising the differences and similarities between themselves and others. For example, this is promoted through discussions and stories with practitioners, use of resources reflecting a diversity of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability and activities and experiences linked to special events and topics. Children learn about festivals, such as Diwali as they make monkey masks, decorated hands and a welcome sign from sand. They use their masks to act out the story of Diwali in the school gym and dress up in sari's and read stories about other countries. They gain a very good understanding of their local environment and community as well as the wider world. Practitioners plan an exciting programme of activities, which includes opportunities for children to visit places in the local environment, such as the farm, West dean Gardens and Midhurst fire station. They enjoy visits from the local librarian and policeman and recall how they participated in a sponsored bicycle ride helping to raise money for their group. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

All children are highly valued in the setting and effective systems are in place to support those with special needs and those with English as an additional language. Practitioners liaise extremely closely with parents and other professionals to ensure children are fully included in all aspects of the group and their individual needs met.

All children develop excellent relationships with practitioners and their peers, which is greatly enhanced by the successful implementation of a very effective key worker system. They benefit enormously from extremely strong relationships between practitioners and their parents securing the links between home and the setting. Effective and flexible induction and settling in procedures, including the option of home visits, enables parents to share information about their child and feel at ease, in the group. Parents are extremely well informed about the group in a number of ways, for example regular newsletters, information displayed on the notice board, prospectus and welcome pack and daily informal discussion with practitioners. They are encouraged to play an active role in the group, such as being on the committee, helping out in sessions and participating in fund raising events and are invited to share their skills and expertise with the children.

Partnerships with parents of children receiving nursery education are good. They are well informed about the curriculum and are helped to understand how their child learns through play in many different ways. Written information is presented in the prospectus and photographs presented in a series of scrapbooks helps parents to see the links between children's play and the stepping stones. Parents receive detailed information about topics and activities on a regular basis and this includes details of why children are doing these activities and what they will learn from them. They are kept updated on children's progress towards the early learning goals through informal communication as well as planned meetings each term with their child's key worker. Children's individual achievements are discussed, although the system for involving parents in contributing to this is not fully developed. Practitioners discuss and agree children's next steps in their individual learning and parents are encouraged to actively support and extend this at home, for example, by following suggestions of activities and borrowing books from the setting to share with their child. Children's progress is enhanced because parents are invited to play a full and active role in their learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit because the group is extremely well organised and the management structure is highly effective in ensuring roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. Management and practitioners share the same vision for the group and ensure the whole team works towards achieving this. Children benefit enormously because practitioners work exceptionally well as a team and highly effective ongoing communication, both formally and informally, between the committee and practitioners ensures operational issues are addressed and successful outcomes for children promoted.

Children's care and learning is enhanced because all practitioners are qualified and secure in their knowledge of child development enabling them to provide a rich and stimulating environment in which children begin their early learning. Effective systems are in place to recruit, appoint and induct new staff ensuring children are safe and protected, although systems to ensure their ongoing suitability have not yet been developed. Practitioners have a secure knowledge and understanding of the policies

and procedures within the setting and ensure these are implemented effectively across the provision. Most documentation is well maintained and this is reviewed and updated on a regular basis, ensuring children's safety and well-being is promoted. As a result, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management are good and all practitioners have a clear knowledge and understanding of how to promote children's learning. Highly effective systems are in place to plan and evaluate the educational programme, how this is delivered, to monitor the curriculum and assess the impact on children's individual progress. A strong emphasis is placed on identifying training needs and teaching is consistently monitored informally by the group leader through daily practice and through the implementation of formal appraisal meetings. The leader plays an extremely strong role in influencing practice on a daily basis and has a very clear knowledge of both the strengths within the group but also the areas for development. Management place high importance on ensuring all practitioners are fully supported and give priority to establishing and maintaining a successful parent partnership enhancing the opportunities available for children. Children thrive during their time in the setting and have wonderful opportunities to achieve their individual potential because all practitioners are extremely committed and dedicated to their roles and have an excellent understanding of how children learn.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the group were asked to ensure that good hygiene practices are in place for snack time and to improve the organisation of daily routines giving staff more opportunity to be involved with children to meet their needs effectively. A whole change in leadership has taken place since the last inspection and much improvement has been made to the setting. Children now wash their hands using soap as part of the daily routine before snack and lunch time and recognise the importance of this. The whole structure of the sessions since the last inspection has been evaluated and improved. All practitioners are very much involved in working directly with the children. The implementation of a successful key worker system helps to ensure children are effectively supported and their individual needs are fully met.

At the last education inspection the group were asked to improve staff's knowledge and awareness of how to provide more challenges for older and more able children and give opportunities for increasing children's independence. Practitioners now working with children in receipt of nursery education funding have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and continue to develop their understanding of the stepping stones. They use excellent teaching and questioning techniques to adapt their approach ensuring all children receive sufficient challenge. A pilot scheme is currently operating two sessions a week where the older children stay for an additional hour and a half at the end of the normal session. This increases opportunities for them to receive sufficient challenges in a smaller group.

They were also asked to increase the variety of resources and equipment and staff involvement in activities. The organisation of space and accessibility of resources have been evaluated and are now used very effectively to promote children's

learning. Staff are clear about their roles in activities and make excellent use of all aspects of the session to promote children's development.

Finally, the group were asked to use children's records of progress to influence future planning, involving parents in compiling children's level of progress and to include expectations of what children will learn from planned activities. The system for planning and assessment has been developed to ensure children's assessments records are used to guide practitioner's planning. Clear learning intentions are identified for focused activities and this information is discussed and shared effectively with parents. Parents are now involved in identifying and reviewing children's individual targets set each term ensuring they make good individual progress and receive sufficient challenges.

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

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):

- further develop the procedures for the recruitment, vetting and induction of staff to ensure their ongoing suitability
- keep a written record relating to incidents of behaviour and improve the recording of pre-existing injuries

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):

- continue to develop the system for making an initial assessment of children's starting points and include opportunities for parents to contribute to this sharing what they know about their child

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