



## Oak House Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

**Unique Reference Number** EY310513  
**Inspection date** 03 May 2006  
**Inspector** Joan, Patricia Flowers

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**Registered person** C.P.S. Preston Ltd  
**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](http://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?

Oak House Nursery is run by C.P.S. Preston Ltd. It opened in 1982 and was registered with Ofsted in 2005. The provision operates from nine rooms and associated facilities in a large annex to the school buildings with additional use of some rooms in the school. The nursery is situated near to the city centre of Preston in Lancashire. A maximum of 115 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.45 to 18.00 all year round, except for all

bank holidays and one week at Christmas. The provision additionally offers a before and after school care service and a holiday club during school closures times. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery serves children from a wide catchment area. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Funding for nursery education is received for three and four-year-olds. The setting supports children with special educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 21 childcare staff and two site support staff; of these, 8 members of staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications and 5 staff are working towards a qualification. The setting accesses support from the Local Authority teacher team.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Careful consideration is given to providing a wide range of experiences so that children enjoy fresh air and good physical exercise through planned indoor and outdoor activities. Free play with wheeled toys, hoops, balls and games involving running, hopping and twirling the hula hoops allow children the benefit of vigorous activity to promote their fitness and physical stamina. Regular opportunities for children to access healthy drinks of water, juice and milk ensure their fluid intake is maintained at a healthy level. All children have the choice to access a drink freely throughout the day according to their individual needs as they begin to recognise when they are thirsty, after exercise for example. Three and four-year-old children independently pour their drinks with increasing skill and success as they exercise free choices.

Children enjoy an excellent range of freshly prepared meals and snacks encompassing all the different food groups. They have many opportunities to develop their food preferences and are encouraged to try new foods. This balanced and nutritious diet allows children to grow and develop physically very well and gives them the energy to function healthily, therefore getting the most out of their play and learning activities. Children are encouraged enthusiastically, for example, when they eat the sandwiches made with brown bread. In this way children are learning about making healthy choices. Individual children's dietary needs are met very effectively. There is a robust system in place which is implemented by all practitioners to ensure that children are not given consumable items that are, or could, be detrimental to their well being, thereby maintaining their continued good health. Vegetarian options are always available so all needs are catered for in close consultation with parents and carers.

Children are actively learning to be healthy as they follow the practitioner's good examples during everyday routines. These are effectively implemented by staff so that children's health, nutritional and physical needs are well met. Children are fully

encouraged to be independent routinely in their personal care and are competent when washing their hands at toilet times and before eating their meals. Consequently, they come to understand about how germs are spread. Some children talked about why practitioners wore protective gloves when serving the lunch, explaining that this was 'to keep the food clean'. Children's good health is promoted to a high degree as a result. Children's well-being is further enhanced because at least half of all practitioners have up to date first aid knowledge and some also hold food hygiene certificates.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed into a bright, visually stimulating and well maintained environment in which they are safe and secure. Children's art work and photographs are displayed along with meaningful notices and sources of information for parents. They are collected by persons only known to the staff or by prior arrangement, thus safety is assured. The premises are suitable for their purpose because they are effectively organised and good use is made of space, so that children can move freely around the setting and can have a sense of belonging. Staff fully understand and implement total supervision of children, thus ensuring that safety is not compromised.

Staff are most competent in providing children with a substantial range of safe and developmentally appropriate resources, thus ensuring that children are progressing in all areas of their development. Furniture and equipment is of a high standard and facilitates ease of access for all children. This promotes their independence and choice. There are comprehensive risk assessments carried out both in full and on a daily basis so that children's safety is always assured. Excellent systems are in place to maintain the premises safely. Children partake in periodic emergency evacuation drills, thereby encouraging their understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe.

Children's safety and welfare is further safeguarded should there be any concerns of abuse as staff clearly understand their responsibilities for recording and reporting any child protection issues to the appropriate authorities. Most staff have had child protection awareness training and all are aware of the setting's child protection policy enabling children's safety and well-being under such circumstances.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children experience and benefit from an extensive range of play opportunities to promote their all round development and learning. They enjoy and achieve because practitioners provide a wide and interesting range of play and learning opportunities that suit all age ranges. Practitioners working with the two-year-olds are developing their understanding about the Birth to three matters framework. Planning linked to the different aspects of this framework contributes to effective practice so children's all

round early development is promoted in preparation for the next steps in their development and learning. The sound key working system ensures consistency in the way each child's ongoing assessment is monitored so they make progress.

There are plentiful examples of art work completed by children on display, which acknowledges and values their achievements and promotes their self esteem very well. Young children are learning to form good relationships with one another and with the adults who care for them. They learn about each other's differences and similarities and become actively involved when working in groups, such as the interactive computer white board or with a friend in a shared game with the Magne Blocks. Practitioners sensitively support children in activities, helping when required and allowing time and space for self initiated play in the Launderette role play area. This informed approach by practitioners helps children to progress, develop well and enjoy their time in the setting.

In the out of school club children are engaged in activities that interest them. They can choose to be creative with the planned craft activity of making a finger mouse puppet or to play with the construction toys, do their homework, or relax looking at books. The practitioners working in this group know the children well, hence children are relaxed and at ease in this familiar environment.

#### Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Practitioners working with older pre-school children have a secure knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. Children therefore progress in all areas of learning. The sessions are inventive and are balanced successfully between adult focussed and self initiated activities. Children are motivated to learn and willing to participate in small group sessions as well as individual tasks. Planning is strong and staff work well with the guidance to help children progress along the stepping stones towards the Early Learning goals.

Social skills are developing well and children demonstrate kindness and good manners, such as politeness when sharing books and making choices in the library. They are forming secure relationships with adults and their peers and are confident when speaking in group situations as they eagerly offer answers to questions about the story 'Smiley Shark' and predict possible outcomes in the story. Older children also enjoy the written word in books and become fully engaged in reading and enjoying books on their own, sometimes 'reading' to their chosen teddy as she points to the pictures. Children are encouraged to access resources for making marks for a purpose, such as when filling in the launderette order form in the role play area. There are many examples of letters and words used as labels and for reading within the environment which children use in their everyday play situations. Most children recognise their name when they self register as they arrive. Children are learning to count confidently to 10 and beyond. They use their fingers when counting during the number rhymes and count out the coloured beads as they sort them on the table into like groups. This promotes children's interest in number and develops their understanding of the importance of calculation in everyday situations, such as when giving out the plates and cups at snack time. Children see many examples of words, letters, numerals and shapes within their environment, with many displayed at child

height so they can see them easily and use them in play situations.

Children make sense of the world around them in imaginative and creative play and learn extensively about celebrations and customs. They use authentic cookery items such as a chapatti maker in the home corner and are introduced to other customs and beliefs through a planned early years programme called Here I Am. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is enhanced through topics, such as People Who Help Us, as they consider what it would like to be when they are grown up. Children share their own family beliefs with their group and many resources provide lots of meaningful opportunities for children to explore these issues through make believe play as they dress up and act out different situations. Children benefit also from learning about their own locality by visiting the shop and they see their art work displayed in a nearby supermarket. They explore and learn about the life cycle of a frog as they see this demonstrated in real life from frog spawn to the emerging frog. Children are interested to observe this change process and use a magnifying glass with interest. Children grow sunflower seeds in pots and measure their growths as they water and care for the plants. The environment is rich in opportunity for children to develop their interest in the wider world as well as the immediate community.

Children are developing good skills in making three dimensional models from re-cycled materials and also when they use construction toys. They are enthusiastic in joining in songs and know most of the words. They are learning about their bodies through regular music and movement sessions, some of which include ballet. They can successfully negotiate space, avoid obstacles and follow pathways well within the setting and can confidently use outdoor play resources with high levels of skill. However, opportunities for more able children to climb and develop their gross motor skills are not challenging enough. They are learning to use small equipment and tools, such as scissors, paint brushes, rollers and musical instruments, as they become competent in finer muscle movements and can skilfully control the jug of water as they pour themselves a drink.

Practitioners make links between the observations and assessments they carry out so they can plan for extending children's various abilities as they move along the stepping stones. For example, learning outcomes are identified and recorded when they are met and not met. In this way children's individual learning needs are met very well. All children experience warm and caring relationships with their key worker and each other. This supports their play, learning and enjoyment of the setting very well and ensures that their individual needs are met as a result.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's confidence and self-esteem is promoted effectively by practitioners as they help each child to feel good about themselves so they can contribute positively in the setting's community. Excellent attention is given to providing an inclusive environment where children feel valued and individual needs are well met in partnership with parents. Children learn about each other's differences and

similarities though being encouraged to share their own experiences and family beliefs with their peers. Excellent opportunities are provided for children to explore through play when they can use the authentic Chapatti making machine in the home corner and as they look at books about different religions.

Their decision making is actively encouraged as they make choices in their play and are encouraged to contribute at group times. Children show good care and concern for others. They understand what friendship means and how they can support each other as practitioners guide their interactions. Children are very well behaved and are polite, willing to wait their turn in a game or help a friend if struggling to put on their coat. Practitioners are good role models. They regularly praise children so children develop a strong sense of belief in themselves, becoming confident in the process. Each week a topic from an Early Years Religious Education Programme is covered with the three and four-year-olds. Children are able to empathise with one another, for example when a child is not feeling well or when they listen to music. In these ways children are developing their understanding about themselves. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Children settle well into the provision as practitioners obtain detailed information from parents about children's likes and dislikes and any special requirements. They take time to discuss all aspects of nursery life with carers from the outset, enabling good partnerships to be forged. However, not all enrolment forms currently held contain the required permission for seeking any necessary emergency treatment or advice. This compromises the care provided for those children affected. Key workers communicate with parents daily, both verbally and through specific records like the medication and accident record. Children's activities and learning experiences are shared with parents very well. Practitioners meet with parents informally and also at set times during the year to ensure that each child's individual needs are met effectively.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Practitioners work especially well together as a team; they organise the environment effectively. They plan a variety of activities for both indoors and outside, which children find fun and exciting. Children are therefore eager to attend and settle well into their play. Staff ensure that children are supervised effectively at all times providing them with opportunities to explore the various areas of play in whatever environment they happen to be in. The staff team are aware of their roles and responsibilities, thereby contributing to the smooth running of the setting. They work hard at getting to know all the children and their individual needs.

Documentation is organised well but because some enrolment forms pre-date the registration of the nursery in October 2005 not all permissions are obtained for some children. The operational plan and policy documents are detailed and available to parents on request, and are partly covered within the parent brochure. However, parents of children attending the out of school club are not given the same information as the nursery.

Regular staff meetings are held to build a motivated staff team, this has a positive effect on the quality of care provided for the children. A training needs analysis identifies with staff at their yearly appraisal, areas for development and steps to be taken to arrange appropriate training, either in- house or through the Local Authority. Children benefit greatly from staff who are motivated to extend their professional development in these ways.

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

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There are no complaints to report since registration in October 2005.

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):

- devise and maintain a complaints record that can be shared with parents on request
- ensure that all required information appertaining to the setting is made available in the out of school club and review enrolment forms so that all required permissions are in place for every child.

### **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):

- increase play opportunities so that more able children can be extended and challenged in their physical development.

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: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)