



Woore Pre-School: Saplings

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	224227
Inspection date	13 November 2006
Inspector	Juliette Jennings
Setting Address	Woore County Primary School, London Road, Woore, Crewe, Cheshire, CW3 9SQ
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Registered person	Woore Playgroup
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Woore Pre-School; Saplings has been established since 1969. It is a committee-run group, operating from a room within Woore County Primary School in the village of Woore on the Shropshire/Staffordshire border.

The group serves children from the village of Woore and the surrounding rural areas. The pre-school is open Monday to Thursday 09:00 until 14:50 and Friday from 09:00 until 11:30. There is an additional facility of a breakfast club on a daily basis from 08:00 until 08:50. There are currently 23 children on roll, this includes 11 funded three and four-year-olds. They have use of a designated room within the school, in addition to a small outdoor play area, a fully enclosed larger play area with play equipment and use of the school's outdoor play area.

There are three members of staff who work with the children, two of whom hold suitable childcare qualifications. The group receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a clean and well-maintained environment where staff follow agreed procedures to ensure that children are healthy. Hygiene procedures are thorough, with staff following good practice guidelines in relation to preparation of food when they wear disposable aprons, gloves and hair coverings. This helps to limit the risk of cross-contamination. Children develop a good awareness of keeping themselves clean and healthy because they wash their hands very regularly throughout the routine, access tissues when they need them and talk about being healthy in themed activities. Documentation is available to record children's accidents and any administration of medication. However, written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment was not in place for all children.

Children develop a good understanding of healthy eating through the provision of healthy snacks and through theme work. Children help themselves to and thoroughly enjoy a wide variety of snacks, which includes banana, apple, pear, kiwi, toast and crumpets, on a daily basis at snack time. In addition, they have access to full cream milk within the routine and can independently help themselves to drinks of fresh water because staff provide a jug and cups at low-level. Children accessing the breakfast club are encouraged to make healthy choices from the range provided and enjoy bacon, eggs, beans, cereals, fruit, yoghurts and toast.

Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills through regular access to the good-sized outdoor play areas which have a wide range of equipment to support their development in this area. They use wheeled toys, throw balls, aim hoops and climb, balance and swing using the challenging climbing equipment. They develop more precise skills on a daily basis through use of resources such as construction toys, complex puzzles, availability of scissors and glue sticks in creative activities and through support in early writing skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy and benefit from a colourful, stimulating and exciting play space where children are obviously confident, happy, secure and keen to busy themselves with the wide range of resources on offer to them. They access these age-appropriate resources from mostly low-level storage and within a routine which accommodates, encourages and supports a child-initiated, free play approach to learning, with some structured activities threaded throughout.

Children's safety is supported appropriately, with procedures in place which generally work in practice to ensure the space is safe for the children to use. Two safety issues were highlighted at this inspection in relation to an electrical socket which was uncovered and some trailing curtain cords in areas used by children. These safety issues were quickly addressed by staff once highlighted. There are good systems in place for ensuring that children are safe on the

premises, for example, the secure entry system works well and staff are good at following the procedures for locking the gate as soon as children have arrived, thus ensuring children are secure. Entry to visitors during the session is effectively monitored through the school entrance.

Children's welfare is promoted because there are clear policies and procedures in place which outline what staff should do if they have a concern in relation to child protection. Training is accessed regularly so that staff know about recent legislative changes and procedures have been updated accordingly. Relevant referral documentation is readily available within the operational plan so that staff can act promptly if required.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and content in the space and are occupied with an extensive range of activities, which are planned by staff who are aware of their individual needs, likes and dislikes. Younger children enjoy age-appropriate activities alongside the older children and they are busy with favourite activities that include role play, construction play, drawing and exploratory play. They enjoy positive relationships with staff and other children, developing their independence and confidence well within this relaxed and friendly environment. They have good support and enthusiastic encouragement from staff, who actively engage in their play and obviously enjoy their time with the children. Staff are currently implementing the 'Birth to three matters' framework in order to assess the progress of children aged under three years of age.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good

Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. They are excited and motivated to learn, interested in what is happening around them, intrigued to discover and investigate and are confident to ask questions. Children relish their time in the setting and have a positive attitude to learning. They are happy, settled and purposefully engaged throughout the session. Consistent support and meaningful praise encourages children to become increasingly independent, to learn what they can do and know when to ask for help.

Children are busy and occupied with the good range of activities that are on offer to them. They enter the group confidently and talk about their likes and dislikes, choosing to play with favourite resources and independently accessing these. They are developing sound relationships with others whilst enjoying imaginary role play. They know how to share and take turns, for example, the lotto game is enjoyed by a number of children, and they show independence in daily routines. Three and four-year-olds use language when they talk about their experiences, chat in role play, respond to their names at register time or select the correct name card for the choice available. They are interested in stories and listen well, guessing at what might be next in the story. Children attempt writing and can overwrite familiar words. Children understand and use numbers well. They count how many fingers are being held up or links in a chain. Calculation is encouraged through activities such as working out how many puzzle pieces will

be needed to form a circle. Children develop an understanding of shape, space and measure through building complex models with bricks and linking magnets together.

Children explore the spectacles that have been laid out on a table, using a good range of different shapes and sizes with various strengths of lens. They choose different sizes and put them in the different cases. They enjoy trying them on and looking at each other with them, linking their role play to the home corner too. Their creativity is supported appropriately and they explore a variety of materials, for example, crinkling the tissue paper and touching and feeling the leaves they are using for printing. They relish imaginary play, for example, when they develop a role play using the home corner resources, the telephones and café resources and engage in this play for an extended period of time. However, there are limited opportunities for children to respond and communicate their ideas creatively and consequently there is limited evidence of children's own work displayed within the environment. Children's physical development is good and the setting continue to consider the indoor/outdoor learning provision.

Children are supported well in their play by enthusiastic and experienced staff who engage appropriately with them, are good role models and encourage them to develop their play opportunities to help them make good progress towards the early learning goals. They have a good knowledge of how children learn best and use the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage to support a free play environment, ensuring that children have good opportunities in all areas of development.

The planning and assessment system works efficiently and allows children's progress to be tracked through the stepping stones, showing a clear progression towards the early learning goals. Staff are aware of where the children are within their individual stages of development and know what to do to help them make progress, for example, noting that scissors skills could be improved and feeding this into future planning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are content, confident and happy in the setting. Behaviour is good, with staff using positive techniques well to support and encourage good behaviour or deal with unwanted behaviour, though the latter was infrequent at the time of the inspection. Children are able to negotiate and solve problems with adult support, for example, trying to fit the popoids together to make a robot. They can take turns and share with the role play resources during their play or engage in a lotto game.

Theme work, activities and a good range of resources ensure that children are beginning to develop a sound understanding of diversity. Children are confident in choosing from the wide range of learning opportunities provided by staff and are confident to access resources for themselves from the low-level storage available. Self-esteem is developed through encouragement and positive responses from adults to their efforts and achievements. There are appropriate procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents of three and four-year-olds know about their child's progress because open days are arranged so that they can discuss this with their child's key worker. In addition, child profiles are readily available which highlight development and an open door policy is in place so that parents can discuss any issues with staff. There is no formal system in place to encourage parents to share what they know about their children, so children's abilities on entry to the setting are not recorded to inform a starting point for future development. However, a relaxed and helpful ethos ensures that all parents are able to discuss issues informally. Daily verbal feedback and availability of written plans helps to ensure that parents know about what their children have been doing whilst attending. Good information is available in relation to the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and the 'Birth to three matters' framework. In addition, documentation is in place which allows consistent care for children, in line with parents' wishes.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management is good. The good support from all involved in the setting ensures a positive environment for the children who attend. Staff and committee are committed to ensuring that the children enjoy an interesting, stimulating and child-orientated environment in which they can make good progress at their own pace. They are clear about what needs to be done next for the individual children and also for the setting as a whole, in order to improve the education provision. For example, there is a focus on improving the access to the outdoor space to create an indoor/outdoor learning space for children.

Staff work well together as a team and have a good understanding of how children learn and develop. Children benefit from a staff group who are continually looking to improve their knowledge and understanding of childcare issues and who provide a valuable, supportive space for children to learn through play. In addition, documentation is in good order and stored in line with requirements, ensuring that information to care for children consistently is readily available.

A variety of fundraising activities encourage involvement from parents and the local community, helping to ensure that the group remains an integral part of the community, giving children security and confidence to develop within an environment which is familiar to them. The recent move to the school premises has helped to reinforce the strong links with the school and gives children good opportunity to make a seamless transition into school. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous education inspection the setting were asked to provide opportunities for children to initiate their own learning and extend the availability of resources. This has been much improved as the setting now have a designated room where resources and equipment are readily available and the routine allows children to self-select and initiate their play. In addition, the setting was asked to provide more opportunities for use of information technology and for staff to consider the learning potential in everyday activities. This is supported through provision of programmable toys and information technology which children freely access. Routine activities

are used to promote children's learning, for example, counting out the drinks cartons at snack time. Finally, the setting was asked to develop opportunities for parents to share what they know about their children. This has been improved to some extent by way of open days, an open door policy and keyworker meetings.

The issues raised at the previous care inspection were in relation to accessibility and correctness of documentation, which is now in good order and readily available. In addition, availability of resources was questioned and this has now been much improved by way of effective low-level storage. Finally, there were some safety issues which were addressed promptly to ensure children's safety.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. 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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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):

- make sure written parental consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is in place for all children
- formalise the procedures for obtaining information from parents on the child's entry into the setting so that they can share what they know about their children.

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):

- improve the opportunities for children to respond and communicate their ideas creatively, with evidence of children's own work clearly displayed within the environment. In addition, continue to develop the use of the outdoor environment to support and extend children's learning.

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