



Wise Owls Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY333354
Inspection date	29 September 2006
Inspector	Gillian Cubitt
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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?

Wise Owls Nursery registered in 2001 and relocated to Warlingham Football and Rugby Club in 2006. The nursery operates term time only between 09:15 and 15:00 on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, and between 09:15 and 13:00 on Wednesday and Friday. It serves the children from the local community. Children have the use of a large hall, with toilets accessed from a lobby off the entrance hall. The group also have use of kitchen facilities. Children may use the surrounding fields where the building is situated and staff ensure that there is a secure area for regular outdoor play.

There are currently 19 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 10 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs five staff all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a clean environment where they learn to follow sound hygiene practices. With close adult support, they are encouraged to take responsibility for washing their hands, using antibacterial soap and water, before snacks and after touching mini-beasts and snails. This helps children to develop an understanding of personal hygiene.

Children explore resources and develop physical confidence using a suitable range of organised activities. These include vigorous physical exercise during their daily periods of playing in the fresh air. They learn about how to take care of their bodies by putting on their hats and coats in cold weather and their sun hats when it is hot. Children's independence and awareness of the needs of their bodies is also heightened as they become accustomed to going to the snack bar when they are hungry or thirsty. They help themselves to water throughout the day and access this freely, especially when playing outside and participating in active physical play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to a large, welcoming modern hall with windows from the ceiling to the floor on two sides which allow daylight to brighten all the areas. Although not purpose built, staff endeavour to make the environment friendly by decorating the window areas with attractive flower stickers and examples of children's work. Activities are spread around the hall, giving children plenty of space to move around freely to access their toys and activities.

Children are safe because staff's security systems are a particular strength. Front doors are very secure and all visitors are thoroughly checked before entry. Before children play outside, staff complete a risk assessment, erect boundary fences and sweep all areas of possible debris. Children are then able to safely enjoy vigorous exercise using a variety of equipment to challenge their physical skills.

Children become accustomed to procedures in the event of a fire because the staff hold their own fire drills each half term. These are, however, not co-ordinated with other users present in the building. As a result, children are not familiar with the procedure to evacuate the whole building.

Staff know their roles and responsibility in regard to child protection. The designated member of staff is secure in her knowledge and ensures all staff follow the correct procedures to promote children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, settled and confident learners who willingly participate in all activities offered to them. Staff constantly interact with children with genuine interest and enthusiasm which develops children's feeling of trust and belonging. There is a varied range of toys and resources to support the children's learning and development and some of these are accessible. All children take part in both structured and free play activities. Staff use play plans and endeavour to adapt tasks to meet each child's level of understanding, although the methods used are not appropriate for children under three years. This is because the planning framework in place is only suited for children over the age of three. For example, children under the age of three years are asked to match items from home with of the letter of the week before they fully comprehend that words have meaning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making progress in their learning as staff have an understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum; they provide children with a variety of activities to support their learning. Staff prepare planning and have a broad weekly activity plan of key activities which are based on set themes. Staff know children's starting points from the information parents provide and they make on-going assessments of the children's progress which is recorded in each child's record book. These assessments however, do not take account of children's differing abilities and offer opportunities to extend the learning of more able children. For example, written observations record that children know their primary colours when information gained from parents clearly show they are further advanced than this in their colour recognition. Consequently, staff do not always obtain meaningful information to enable them to support children's progress effectively.

Children's social skills are well promoted. They relate well to staff and each other. In the role play area, children work together 'making pizza' and all children co-operate when tidying up toys. Children particularly enjoy the 'take the treasure' game where they learn to take turns as well as to move quietly on tip toe whilst another child closes their eyes.

Children enjoy books and sit in comfort on cushions, looking at and discussing pictures. Staff make stories meaningful because they skilfully relate these to children's own personal experiences which reinforces children's understanding. Children are able to recognise their own names easily as they see these printed in colourful, attractive labels that are on their personal boxes, home pockets and snack bar areas. Children have opportunities to write using a variety of tools and crayons that are attractively displayed on tables, but opportunities for children to write with meaning, such as writing menus and taking orders in the role play café, are not available which limits the challenge for more able children.

Children have a basic understanding of addition, pattern making and shape recognition, although there is not sufficient opportunities for them to practice their skills in meaningful ways. For example, they complete work sheets which increase an awareness of counting and what numbers look like, but these are not always accompanied with practical games and exercises to support the learning for less able children.

Children are learning about their world. They benefit because staff are skilled at weaving themes into many activities. For example, when children read the story of the Hungry Caterpillar, staff prepare a large poster of the life cycle of the caterpillar. They extend this into creativity by encouraging children to make caterpillar models. Children talk about other mini-beasts and enjoy watching snails and beetles move through compost and view them in the magnification box. Children have some opportunities to use interactive toys and, occasionally, a computer.

Children express their creativity whilst painting at the easel. They enjoy music sessions where, as a group, they sing favourite songs and tap out rhythms. Children enjoy making models using different media, however, these activities are mainly adult led and, as a result, children's ideas and creativity are not fully explored. In addition, opportunities for children to indulge fully in the role play areas are limited due to a lack of resources, such as dressing up clothes.

Children look forward to their outside play periods. They eagerly put on their rubber boots as they see opportunities to have fun jumping in and out of puddles. Their large motor and co-ordination skills are helped by the use of a wide selection of mobile equipment such as small cars, bikes and a large tractor.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel valued and respected because staff take time to listen and constantly interact with them. Staff act as good role models which encourages children to behave well and be kind and caring towards each other. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They participate in the celebration of a variety of cultural and religious festivals to increase their understanding of the world around them, although staff do not make full use of the resources at their disposal. There is a good working relationship between staff and parents which promotes children's wellbeing and care. Staff work well with parents and other external agencies to identify any special educational needs, so that children can be cared for according to their specific individual need. Children learn about others who have disabilities by looking at books and staff reading stories.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of early education is satisfactory. Parents receive some information about the Curriculum for the Foundation Stage through discussion with staff and weekly newsletters. Parents complete questionnaires which gives staff information of what children can do when they start and, through continuous assessment and written reports, parents receive feedback on their children's progress and how they can help their children's education whilst at home.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from staff who are caring and committed to ensuring children are happy and settled at the nursery. There is a strong and dedicated team who provide children with complete consistency in their care. This is achieved because all staff work well together and provide friendly, welcoming support for new staff. All staff are positively encouraged to attend a variety

of training courses to increase their knowledge of childcare and education, although courses to develop their skills of planning for the under threes, have not yet been completed.

Most of the required documentation to promote children's safety and well-being is in place and these are generally accurately maintained. All policies and procedures reflect the aims and objectives of the nursery.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff have sufficient knowledge and understanding of Foundation Stage. The two managers and staff work together as a team to prepare planning and they follow brief daily plans to ensure that all the learning goals are covered. This method, however, is new to staff and they have not fully developed the daily plan to identify how activities can be used to move children forward in their learning. Staff all meet each half term to discuss plans and future development. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints 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.

Since registration 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.

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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):

- co-ordinate current fire drills with the procedures of other users present in the building, to ensure there is no confusion for children in the event of a fire
- improve outcomes for children under three by adopting an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters framework'

- provide children with more access to resources that promote cultural diversity

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):

- provide more meaningful opportunities for children to mark make for a purpose and to work with numbers
- further develop the use of assessment and planning systems to ensure more able children are effectively challenged in all areas of learning
- increase children's opportunities to freely explore and express themselves through creative media and imaginative play

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