



## Occold Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	251583
<b>Inspection date</b>	22 November 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Susan Smith
<b>Setting Address</b>	Jubilee Hall, Occold, Eye, Suffolk, IP23 7PL
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<b>Registered person</b>	Occold Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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?

Occold Pre-School is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children at the pre-school. It opened in 1978 and operates from within the village hall in Occold, Suffolk. A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The group opens four days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 until 15:00, Monday to Thursday, a lunch club is available each day from 11:30 until 12:30.

There are currently 32 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 26 children receive funding for early education. Children attend from the local area.

The pre-school employs nine staff, of these seven staff including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school receives support from the local authority and the

Pre-School Learning Alliance and is currently working toward the Suffolk Quality Kitemark, quality assurance scheme.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's health is protected because staff are aware of good hygiene practices to prevent the spread of infection. For example, children stay healthy because staff always clean the tables with anti-bacteria spray prior to lunchtime. Staff support and help children to gain a secure understanding of good hygiene practices. For example, children are reminded to wash their hands before eating and after visiting the toilet and usually staff explain the reason for doing this. Consequently the risk of cross infection is minimised and children stay healthy.

Children receive appropriate care if they are ill or have an accident because staff are aware of individual children's health care needs and all the required documentation and consents are in place to support this. In addition, all staff have current first aid and food hygiene certificates to ensure they are aware of the correct procedure to follow to maintain children's health and prevent the spread of infection. A well stocked first aid kit, the contents of which are checked regularly, is easily available in an emergency.

Children benefit from a nutritious, balanced diet with the setting and parents working in close partnership to provide children with food that is healthy. Parents provide snacks from home which children can freely access during the session. Children who stay for the lunch club enjoy the social occasion as they sit together in small groups with staff to eat their packed lunch. Their individual dietary needs are met well with good recording procedures in place to ensure all staff are fully aware of children who have special dietary requirements. Children are learning about healthy eating, they are encouraged to talk about healthy foods they like to eat. They have free access to drinking water throughout the session to ensure they are not thirsty.

Children participate in a range of activities which contributes to their physical health and fitness both inside and outside. They show enjoyment when playing outside and benefit from the fresh air. Children's physical health is promoted as they confidently ride on bikes, run and play circle games such as 'The farmers in his den'. Children demonstrate increasing control while using equipment such as sticky tape, scissors, a variety of mark making tools and construction sets to help them develop their hand-eye coordination. Children are able to rest or be more active according to their needs and floor cushions are available in the book area if children wish to sit quietly.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Positive steps are taken to promote safety within the setting and to keep children safe. Staff ensure proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents because they have a sound knowledge of health and safety procedures which they consistently implement. Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised because staff are vigilant. All potential risks are identified and most are

minimised with daily risk assessments completed. However, glass in the toilet window is broken which potentially compromises children's safety. The pre-school have brought this to the attention of the village hall committee who have yet to carry out any repairs.

Children benefit from a child friendly environment where they can move around safely and appropriate safety precautions are taken. For example, fire drills are practised regularly and all emergency exits are kept clear. Entry to the pre-school is managed well by staff which ensures children cannot leave unsupervised and no unauthorised persons can gain access. The outer door is locked and parents and visitors are admitted by staff. Also, the outside gate is locked when children are playing outside so children remain safe.

There is a good range of high quality toys and equipment which are well maintained. Children are able to access these independently from tables, trays and boxes situated at their height. This enables children to make many of their own choices, increases their independence and helps them to organise their own play. Children are beginning to learn how to keep themselves safe with staff explaining some safe practices. For example, children are gently reminded to close the draws after they have used them so they do not collide with them and hurt themselves.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff have a sound knowledge of child protection procedures. They are aware of recording and reporting procedures and fully understand their responsibilities. A child protection policy is in place which all staff know how to implement if they had a concern.

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

The provision is good.

An effective key worker system is in place with staff knowing their key children and their families well. Subsequently, children's individual needs are met well and they develop confidence and self-esteem. Children feel at ease in the pre-school environment. They happily separate from their parents and carers at the beginning of the session and enthusiastically explore and investigate their environment. Younger children's progress is beginning to be monitored as observations of their play and achievements are now taken and assessment records are being developed. Younger children experience a range of activities and play opportunities which overall contributes to their development and learning. Staff have a sound knowledge of child development. They are familiar with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and generally plan and organise activities in line with the framework for younger children. However, their knowledge of the framework is insecure and this potentially limits learning for younger children.

The daily routine has a balance of adult-led and child initiated play. Children's independence is encouraged as they are able to move around freely and make independent choices in their play. They have regular opportunities to experience creative play such as paint, printing, water and sand. For example, children are absorbed in exploring the texture, shape and size of the different fruits used for printing and they enjoy mixing colours while painting at the easel. Children actively engage in using their imaginations in the home corner. For example, they delight in re-enacting familiar scenarios such as making cups of tea and going to the shops.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge of all aspects of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. They use their knowledge to provide a wide range of stimulating and exciting planned and delivered activities designed to help children make good progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Children's progress is monitored in their record of progress and is used effectively to inform planning to ensure sufficient challenges are offered to all children. However, the intended learning outcomes in the everyday curriculum activities are not always identified, to further promote children's learning. Staff provide an interesting and welcoming environment which reflects most children children's background and the wider community.

The use of time and resources are good. The sessions are balanced to enable children to experience group time, outside play and to pursue their own interests. Staff know their children well and often ask searching questions that challenge the children in order to aid their progression to the next steps in their learning. Children cooperate with the routine, for example, they freely access their snack and help to tidy up. They are beginning to learn the consequence of their actions.

Children enjoy the freedom to explore and experiment. For example, when they were playing with the train track, children were working collaboratively and negotiating with each other, discussing what they can build and how it should be done. This enables the children to use their initiative, concentrate on what they are doing and form meaningful relationships with other children. Children enjoy playing with different malleable materials. They relish playing with the play dough that they made earlier in the session and happily share it with other children at the table.

Children are involved and motivated, they are keen to offer their own ideas and respond well to challenges. For example, children enjoy diligently experimenting with the weighing scales using sand to explore weight and volume using different size containers. Some children confidently predict which container was the heaviest and which was the lightest. Children have many opportunities to sort items into different colours, shapes and to count them through resources such as the 'Compare Bears' and 'Textured Boards'.

Children sit quietly and listen intently to stories read by a member of staff. They also enjoy sharing books spontaneously with staff and relish the close interaction and attention this affords them. This helps children to appreciate books, recognise that print has meaning and seek comfort from staff when needed. All children are very confident communicators, they speak confidently and clearly with adults and each other. Children have good opportunities to develop early writing skills, for example, on the daily writing table and outside with a box of writing resources. Many children can name and write letters in their names and some can recognise their own name.

Children learn about the natural world through planned topics such as mini beasts. They enjoy using the computer and demonstrate excellent control of the mouse and use everyday technology such as mobile phones in their play.

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

The provision is good.

Children are highly valued as individuals and are able to make positive choices and decisions during their time at the setting. They are developing a positive attitude to each other and gain an understanding of the wider world through topics studied and some resources that show positive images of difference and diversity. Children participate with different planned activities which enhances their understanding of different celebrations and festivals, these include Chinese New Year, Diwali, Christmas and Easter. Children have a clear understanding of their place in the community and share information about their homes and how they live.

Children are very confident in their relationships with staff. They play happily together and with adults and are developing a strong sense of belonging. Children are encouraged to be independent in self-care, for example, when using the toilet facilities. Children cooperate together as they take turns and share popular resources such as, patiently waiting for their turn on the ride on toys and the computer.

The setting works closely with parents and other professionals to ensure children's specific needs are met. Policies are in place to care for children with additional needs and there is a nominated member of staff to seek additional support and advice from other professionals to ensure that children's needs are met.

Children behave well as they know what is expected of them. They are learning responsible behaviours and these are reinforced by the staff through gentle reminders and simple explanations which are at an appropriate level for their understanding. Children behave considerately, such as refilling the paper towel dispenser when it becomes empty. They share resources and negotiate without adult intervention. This enables them to make choices, take decisions and build harmonious partnerships. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered as they take part in the life of the setting and receiving appropriate support from staff.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff have built a good rapport with parents and exchange information on a daily basis regarding any issues that may arise, this ensures continuity of care. Parents are well informed about the Foundation Stage and their children's progress through sharing detailed records of achievement. This gives parents a good understanding of the progress made by their children and also encourages parents to extend their children's learning in a meaningful way at home. Parents are asked to complete a child profile when their children start at the pre-school to help identify their children's starting point. They receive newsletters which gives general information regarding the running of the setting.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are relaxed and happy in the setting. They are safeguarded as recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well protected and cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child development. Staff have a high regard for the well-being of all children and ensure there are robust systems in place regarding visitors. This ensures children are safe

and secure. Children are well supported and staff awareness contributes to children's good health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting. Policies and procedures are in place and work in practice to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. The staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and work well together to create a caring environment for children.

The room is organised to allow children to move freely and safely and the routine of the session helps children to settle well. Staff are mostly deployed effectively within the setting, spending the majority of their time interacting with the children to support their care, learning and play.

The leadership and management is good. The staff team work closely together to improve and enhance the setting for the children and regularly review and monitor their policies which ensures children's needs are actively promoted. Their work is well supported by the committee who are fully aware of their role and responsibilities. The staff are a strong team who complement each other's skills. Children benefit as the staff are enthusiastic and committed to promoting an inclusive environment in which every child matters. Staff are eager to attend further training to improve their understanding and practice in early years education and to enable them to help all children achieve well. Regular staff meetings take place to monitor the effectiveness of the quality of teaching this ensures children make good progress.

Overall, children's needs are met.

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

At the last inspection the setting was asked to improve the system of registration and to ensure all electrical equipment conformed to health and safety regulations. The group have implemented an effective system of registration which clearly shows who is present in the group at any one time. Parents sign their children in and out on arrival and departure and they record the actual times. In addition staff record their times of attendance on a daily basis and a visitors book is used for all other adults. The setting has developed robust systems of risk assessments which includes annual checks on all portable electric equipment by an electrician. At the last electrical check the laminating machine failed, so the group ceased using it and are in the process of replacing it with a new one to ensure children's safety. The group was also asked to ensure that documentation was collated to form an operational plan. All the necessary documentation is now contained with the operational plan. This is shared with staff and the committee to ensure consistent and cohesive practice within the setting, to ensure the welfare of all children.

The nursery inspection set key issues relating to the organisation of the curriculum planning to make it accessible to staff and parents and to use spontaneous opportunities to reinforce children's learning with regard to recognising the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active. The group now display the curriculum planning on the kitchen door so that staff and parents can access it, this allows them to work together to promote children's learning. In addition, staff use questioning skilfully during physical activity, for example, while running outside staff ask 'What is your heart doing?' this raises children's awareness of the effects exercise has on their body.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the 1 April 2004 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**

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):

- increase staff knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- ensure hazards to children on the premises are minimised with regard to the broken window in the toilets.

#### **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):

- ensure planning identifies the intended learning outcome in the everyday routine curriculum.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)