



Victoria Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	251703
Inspection date	24 November 2006
Inspector	Glenda Kathleen Field
Setting Address	7 Winston Avenue, Oulton Broad, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR33 9PA
Telephone number	01502 515522
E-mail	
Registered person	Victoria Pre School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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?

Victoria Pre-school has been established since 1982. It has been accommodated in its present premises, on the site of Dell Primary School, in Oulton Broad near Lowestoft, since September 1994. Most of the children live close to the pre-school and will transfer to two local primary schools for their compulsory schooling.

The setting is registered to care for a maximum of 18 children at any one time. There are currently 45 children on roll, 23 of whom are in receipt of nursery education funding. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those with English as an additional language.

Sessions are held during school terms, on weekdays from 09:00 until 11:30 and 13:05 until 15:35. Victoria Pre-school is managed by an elected committee of parents and employs eight

staff, all of whom hold a relevant early years qualification, to work with the children. The setting are members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receive support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership..

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted effectively as the setting takes positive steps to promote the children's good health. For example, the setting obtains information regarding allergies and children's specific health needs prior to children commencing at the setting. All staff hold current first aid certificates and a complete first aid box is in place, enabling staff to respond to any minor accidents appropriately. The setting also obtains necessary parental written consents, such as consent for any emergency treatment or advice that may be necessary and medication administration. However, there is no written procedure for staff to follow if a child becomes ill whilst at the setting. This potentially impacts on children's good health. Children are encouraged to begin to take responsibility of meeting their own health needs by washing their hands after using the toilet, taking part in messy play activities and before eating.

Children are well nourished and have good opportunities to learn about healthy eating because the setting provides children with drinks and food that are nutritious and complies with their dietary and religious needs. For example, fresh fruit, crackers with assorted spreads and bread sticks are given for snack food along with milk or water to drink. The setting enables children to learn about healthy living through a range of activities that develop the children's understanding of what foods are good for them. However, children are not able to access fresh drinking water freely throughout within the setting during the cooler months to ensure they do not become dehydrated, although jugs of water and beakers are made available to children when using the outside area during the summer months.

Children enjoy good opportunities to experience physical activity and develop their skills because the setting plan a range of activities that enable the children to develop their confidence on a wide range of equipment that provides challenge, for example an assortment of wheeled toys, bats, balls and stilts and climbing equipment is used in the school's adventure playground. The setting has access to the primary school gym on a weekly basis and the swimming pool during the summer months.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very welcoming, safe and secure environment where all visitors are monitored upon arrival and departure. Children are kept safe by the appropriate procedures in place, such as the effective routines for their arrival and departure from the building. They have adequate space indoors and outdoors, to experience a good range of activities to promote their overall development. Children are able to move freely around the setting which supports their developing independence.

When going on outings children are kept safe as staff ensure they have completed a risk assessment of the place of interest ensuring it is appropriate and suitable for the children. Children are beginning to understand about keeping themselves and others safe when staff talk to them about walking inside the building, not to put knives in their mouths at snack time and visits from the school crossing patrol person talking about road safety. Children are also learning to keep themselves safe in an emergency by their involvement in the practising of fire drills.

Children have access to an extensive range of resources which meets their needs in all areas of their development. These are easily accessible from low-level shelving and floor based containers, this ensures children have equal access and gain independence through making appropriate choices. Child size tables and chairs are used throughout the setting.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded and promoted as most staff have completed child protection training. The setting has a child protection statement in place along with all the required documentation, which is made readily available to parents via the notice board. All staff have a clear understanding of their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary to protect children from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident, independent and developing their self-esteem. They ask questions and respond to new challenges by questioning and using their own initiative. All children have their individual needs met and are developing a good range of knowledge and skills because the setting plans and provides activities and play opportunities that enable children to achieve.

Children begin to distinguish right from wrong and form positive relationships through the staff setting consistent boundaries and supporting the children appropriately to develop these skills. Children show a good level of interest in the provided activities and respond to staff who interact well in their play. They enjoy whole group activities where they share stories and songs.

The setting uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework extremely effectively with information relating to the framework displayed. Observations are made of children and the information is transferred to their individual records.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have good knowledge of how children learn and a sound understanding of the early learning goals and the stepping stones within them. A key worker system is in place and staff know the children well. Staff are interested in what children say and do and manage children's behaviour well. They plan a range of adult-led and free play activities for children to experience. The sessions are balanced to enable children to experience group times, outside play and to pursue their own interests. Long, medium and short term plans are in place and clearly evidence the aspects of learning. Focussed activities are planned, and are evaluated to determine whether the intended learning outcome was achieved, however, they do not show any differentiation that may be required. Observations are made and transferred to children's achievement records, however, they do not identify the next steps in individual children's learning to inform planning.

Children have excellent self-help skills, they are able to manage their own needs such as putting on aprons and pouring their drinks at snack time. They are developing good relationships with adults and are keen to share their news, for example, a child told the inspector that she did not have a cat at home but did have a rabbit. Children are co-operative and well behaved with staff managing their behaviour positively. They are learning to share and take turns, for example, independently using the timer for their turn at an activity. Children are beginning to be aware of others through topics such as 'ourselves' and 'people who help us'.

Children are using language effectively to communicate, they are confident to talk to staff, who encourage them to chat about what they are doing and what will happen next, such as when mixing coloured paints. Children handle books carefully and are beginning to understand how books and words are meaningful. Children use one handed tools and equipment such as pencils, crayons, brushes, scissors and play dough cutters confidently. Some children are beginning to attempt writing for a purpose, and write recognisable letters in their names, however, resources for children to develop their early writing skills are limited.

Children are beginning to say and use number names, such as when counting the number seated at the snack tables and transferring milk cartons to trays. Most children are able to count to ten unaided and some beyond ten. There are opportunities for children to develop their understanding of simple calculating and problem solving through the daily routines such as snack time. Some children are able to recognise and name different shapes and to use mathematical language such as larger and smaller, for example, when playing with construction toys.

Children have access to a computer every session and children's understanding of information communication technology is being developed as they operate the mouse with increasing control. Children are beginning to develop a sense of time and place through the routines of the setting and when talking about how they spent their time at the weekend. There are many opportunities for children to examine objects and living things closely to encourage their investigation skills, for example, sunflowers they have grown from seed in the garden of the setting. Children show interest in the world in which they live, for example, they know their way around the setting, they create scenarios with small world equipment such as the farmyard animals, buildings and play people. Visitors to the nursery such as the police and school crossing patrol people enable children to learn about their community. Children have opportunities to gain an awareness of the cultures and beliefs through topics such as Chinese New Year and Shrove Tuesday.

Children explore colour and correctly name colours, they are beginning to experiment with mixing the colours together and talking about what's happening. Children explore different materials in the adult-led craft activities such as materials, glitter and sponge printing. They have opportunities to express their own ideas with free painting at easels, imaginative play opportunities and building with constructions sets. Children's imaginative play is fostered with role play activities such as the vet's surgery. Children enjoy singing rhymes and ring games.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children experience a meaningful range of resources that promote a positive view of the wider world and increases their awareness of diversity and understanding of others. Children learn about their local community from visitors to the setting, for example, the police and school crossing patrol persons.

Children play together harmoniously and alongside each other, amicably sharing and taking turns with all the resources. For example, three children played happily together in the role play area activity using a range of resources provided. They experience good role models in the staff who treat each other, the children and the environment with respect. Children's behaviour is very good.

The setting has good procedures in place to care for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The special needs co-ordinator for the setting shows a good understanding of her role, and works closely with the early years special needs support teacher to ensure all the documentation and knowledge required to support their care and aid their development is in place.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive full information about the nursery and the Foundation Stage in the settings prospectus. Policies and procedures of the setting are made available on the parents' notice board. Parents are informed about the group's long, medium and short term plans which are posted on the notice board of the setting. Children benefit from the close relationships built between parents and staff when they verbally exchange information at the end of the session. Parents are encouraged to meet with staff to view and contribute to their child's achievement records. Parents make comments on thank you cards such as, "thank you for making my child's experience and time at pre-school so positive and fun," "my child has blossomed since being with you," and "through consistent effort from both myself and all you wonderful ladies my child settled in really well." Staff ensure that they have all necessary information about children to enable them to provide continuity of care. Therefore, children's care is enhanced through a good working partnership.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and emotional development is fostered because they are developing and self-esteem, behave well and are developing a good understanding of right and wrong. Children relate well to each other and staff, and are developing an understanding of their community through visitors to the setting. Children are beginning to show an appreciation of other cultures and beliefs through topics and activities offered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by staff who are well qualified and have a clear understanding of the needs of children. An induction procedure is in place to ensure all staff are aware of policies and procedures and are able to implement them. The setting is well organised to provide for the needs of all children. Daily routines provide opportunities for children to develop in all

areas of learning, both inside and out. All the required policies and procedures are in place which ensure the efficient management of the provision.

The leadership and management is good.

The organisation of the setting ensures that children are cared for in an environment where there are qualified and suitable staff to meet the needs of all the children attending. Policies and procedures protect children and are effectively implemented to promote all the outcomes for children. The management and organisation of the setting is pro-active in ensuring that the practice of all staff contributes positively to children's good health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting. All children are supported appropriately to achieve their potential by staff knowing their starting points and working with parents and carers to support this progress.

Staff have clear job descriptions which are used as a basis for appraisal. Good teamwork is developed and systems in place to ensure clear communication takes place between staff. Training needs are identified and opportunities provided for staff to access relevant courses. The quality of care and education is monitored to ensure strengths and areas for improvement are identified, with all staff working together to act upon them. The future development of the setting is being addressed with the management negotiating for permission and the necessary funding to enable an extension to be built onto the primary school to accommodate the pre-school. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting agreed to increase opportunities for children to use and understand how technology works, improve opportunities for parents and carers to formally discuss their children's development and to introduce a system to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching taking place. The setting has worked well to address these identified key issues by obtaining a computer and other programmable toys which enable children to begin to understand how technology works. Parents are now offered opportunities to meet with their children's key workers to discuss their progress in the early learning goals and annual appraisals for staff take place as part of the monitoring of the quality of teaching taking place.

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

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):

- develop a procedure for contacting parents or another adult designated by the parent if a child becomes ill whilst at the setting
- ensure that children are able to access fresh drinking water throughout the session

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 resources for children to develop their early writing skills
- continue to develop the assessment and evaluation of children's progress to identify the next steps in their learning and inform planning; also ensure that focussed activities identify any differentiation required to address children's individual development.

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