



Woolstone Pre-school Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	141892
Inspection date	24 January 2007
Inspector	Maxine Coulson
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Registered person	Woolstone 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?

Woolstone Pre-School Playgroup has been open under its present registration since 1997. The group operates from a community building in Woolstone, a well-established residential area close to Milton Keynes. A maximum of 20 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 09.30 to 12.00 and on Tuesday and Thursday from 09.30 to 13.15.

There are currently 36 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 22 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and surrounding area. The group presently supports children who have English as an additional language.

The group employs six members of staff all of whom have early years qualifications, with the manager and deputy both commencing Level 4 training.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health and physical wellbeing are of high importance in the group. They use a clean and hygienic environment because staff follow the committee's policies and procedures carefully. They make clear to parents when children cannot attend the group, owing to illness, so helping prevent the spread of cross infection. Children learn good personal hygiene routines and understand that they must wash their hands after using the toilet or before eating their snack. They begin to recognise their care needs, such as whether or not coats are required for playing outside.

Children are beginning to develop their personal independence well, for example, by trying to put on their coats. They enjoy a healthy snack daily, choosing for themselves what fruit they want. Parents receive useful information about healthy eating, which promotes a consistent approach for the children's diet. However, children's lunches are not always stored appropriately.

Children take regular daily exercise both indoors and outside. They learn about sense of space and body control as they run around enthusiastically, twisting and turning, during an inside game of actions as if they are on a boat. For example, staff call out instructions, run to port side, run to starboard, climb the rigging. Children learn how their bodies change after exercise by feeling how quickly their hearts beat and note how it slows down when they are resting.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a welcoming, child-friendly environment, which staff work hard to create and maintain. The spacious hall is set up, ready for the children's arrival, allowing them to choose from a wide range of high quality equipment and interesting activities. Staff provide activities that promote all areas of children's development. Staff know the children well to ensure where older children need more challenging toys and activities, that they are well catered for. They make full use of the hall maximising the children's available playing space.

Children stay safe because staff are vigilant both on and off the premises and follow procedures carefully. They ensure children's safety at the beginning and end of sessions by watching entrances and exits effectively. Children are safeguarded within the group as all visitors sign on and off the premises. Staff accompany younger children to the toilet where necessary. Staff understand their responsibilities for safeguarding children's welfare and sufficient staff undertake first aid training so that children may be looked after appropriately in an emergency situation.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the playgroup eagerly, keen to see what is on offer for the session. All children in the group are offered the same activities, which children access at their own level of

development. They choose what they wish to do and quickly become engrossed in their play. Even the very youngest children concentrate well for considerable periods because they so enjoy what they are offered. They make their own decisions about when they want to join in or pick their own activity to participate in. In this way, children learn to operate independently within the playroom, which boosts their self-confidence.

Staff support children's self-initiated learning well, constantly talking with them and helping when needed. The staff are beginning to plan suitable activities for children under the age of three, however, their knowledge and understanding of the Birth to three matters framework is basic. Many experiences link closely with an overall theme, such as painting orange rectangles that are the colour and the shape of the week. The excellent relationships between staff and children encourage children to accept support and seek it if needed, including a comforting cuddle.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals of the Foundation Stage. This is because staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and are aware of the aims of activities and what children are expected to learn from them. Children thoroughly enjoy a broad and balanced programme of experiences which are well matched to their stages of development. This results from staff observing children frequently, assessing what they know and can do and using this knowledge to plan for their future learning.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is developing well. Staff spend considerable time building children's confidence and their understanding of how to operate independently within the group. As a result, children are well on the road to becoming independent learners. They understand how sessions run, hanging their coats up on entry and searching for their names to self-register, for example.

Children develop their conversation skills extremely well. They enjoy frequent conversations with staff on a one to one basis as well as chatting to each other in a group as they play. They discuss their activities, their home lives and talk about ages. For example, a group of children discuss as they are all three, whose birthday is first. They listen and learn through songs and stories which they join in with enthusiasm and pleasure. Children begin to develop a love of books looking at them for themselves or with their friends. They are developing their pencil control and use of small equipment such as scissors, supported well by staff who are close at hand. However, the lack of labelling means children are not learning to recognise the words of familiar and everyday objects.

Staff integrate mathematics well across all areas of learning. Children develop their understanding of number in purposeful, practical ways, such as counting bricks during play or counting during story time. Adult-led activities, specifically to promote mathematics are well thought out. Children's creativity is fostered well. They explore a wide range of media and materials freely through painting, gluing, collage and play dough, for example. They enjoy good role play experiences linked to the current topics, for example, using their imaginations well as they book appointments at the vet's, using the telephone and computer.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children, including those with English as an additional language receive a very warm welcome in this playgroup. Staff work hard to ensure that all can join in equally. All children receive high levels of individual attention and staff get to know them very well. For example, children's name cards are colour coded so all staff can check if they have any allergies or preferences such as a vegetarian diet.

Children's confidence and self-esteem rises as they quickly learn what is expected of them within the group. All staff praise children consistently; children respond well, eagerly helping to put resources away in the proper places. Children behave very well as a result of clear expectations and because they so enjoy their play. They learn about the diversity of the world around them, responding to a range of special celebrations and festivals. They use resources that help them learn about family life different from their own. They begin to learn about their feelings, for example, how it feels when someone is kind to you. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Throughout their children's time in the group, parents receive an excellent range of information about what is offered to the children and of their progress. There is an informative welcome pamphlet, parents' notice board, monthly newsletters and regular open days where parents are kept fully up to date of the children's individual progress. Parents serve on the committee, as well as helping out with chores such as making play dough or doing the washing for the group.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The chairperson and committee provide substantial support to the running of the group. They understand their responsibilities for appointing staff that are cleared to work with children. They oversee the implementation of a full range of policies, including all those required in law and which underpin the smooth running of the group. The chairperson and supervisor understand their respective roles. They work together closely to run the playgroup effectively, sharing a vision for its future development.

The leadership and management of nursery education are good. The supervisor provides clear leadership to the staff for which she is a very good role model. The staff work together extremely well providing a happy, contented and safe environment in which the children thrive and flourish. The manager evaluates and monitors the care and education by regular committee meetings, use of observations and plans, regular reviewing of policies, effective communication between staff and parents and identifying steps of achievement however large or small.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the group were asked to consider the following;

Develop and implement an action plan detailing how at least half of all childcare staff will receive training specifically for caring for children under the age of two years.

Ensure that all records policies and procedures are accurate and sufficiently detailed.

The group now have robust recruitment procedures for appointing new staff, so that they conform to the pre-school's policy.

They have updated the uncollected child policy, so that it reflects the pre-school's practice, and the fire drill record, so that it includes the time taken and any difficulties experienced.

They have updated the complaints policy, so that it names Ofsted as the regulator, and includes Ofsted's address and telephone number.

They have policies relating to child protection, so that they reflect best practice, and the record of incidents, so that they are signed by parents.

This ensures the continuing care, welfare and development of all children.

They yet to fully develop staff's training specifically to children under the age of three years but have plans in place to do so.

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.

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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):

- ensure all food and drinks are stored appropriately

- develop training of all staff on the Birth to three matters framework to ensure there are appropriate activities for younger children now attending the group

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 labelling throughout the room to help children recognise words of familiar everyday objects.

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