



The Orchard

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	134995
Inspection date	27 February 2007
Inspector	Susan Victoria May
Setting Address	Thame Road, Little Milton, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX44 7PZ
Telephone number	01844 279989
E-mail	
Registered person	The Orchard
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?

The Orchard is a registered charity originally formed as a Play-school in 1987. It operates from a purpose built Log Cabin with a safe enclosed garden. Children also have supervised access to the adjoining playing fields and park. The pre-school serves the village of Little Milton and the surrounding area.

There are currently 46 children on roll; of these 26 are in receipt of nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for whom English is an additional language.

The pre-school is open five days per week during term times. Sessions are from 09.00 to 15.00 on Mondays and Fridays, from 09.00 to 12.00 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, with

an additional session for rising fives from 12.00 to 14.45 on Tuesdays, and a starter session for the youngest children from 13.15 to 14.45 on Wednesdays.

Five staff are employed to work with the children. Over half of the staff hold a recognised early year's qualification. The setting has a quality assurance certificate 'Partners in Quality' through the Oxfordshire Early Years Childcare Development Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff support children's welfare very well and follow comprehensive policies and procedures to protect children's health. Children are beginning to develop body awareness and to recognise their needs. For example, staff provide quiet activities for children after periods of exercise in the garden to allow children times of rest and chance to recharge batteries. Staff are sensitive to younger children's needs and give gentle reminders of routines to help children learn good hygiene practices. For example, washing hands before eating and after using the toilet. Child-sized toilets and sinks, and easily accessible soap and hand driers, support the children's developing independence skills. Children benefit from effective systems to record accidents and medication administered. To safeguard children two staff members have first aid training and there is a well equipped and easily accessible first aid box, this ensures children's minor injuries are dealt with effectively.

Children explore, test and develop physical control in exciting daily indoor and outdoor experiences. Staff have a good knowledge of the birth to three matters framework and incorporate this within their daily routine to enhance the experiences for children under three. This means the youngest children are confident to try out new skills, ask for help when needed and set their own limits within the safe environment. Children enjoy physical exercise, participate enthusiastically in free play, and take part confidently in organised activities such as the music and movement session. Opportunities to increase control and co-ordination are available daily through a variety of activities. For example, in the outdoor play area where children use bats and balls, bean bags and wheeled toys, negotiate a path of their choice and climb on and around equipment.

Packed lunches are provided by parents for children who stay all day. Staff store them appropriately to ensure the food remains fresh. During the session children receive a healthy snack of fruit, they choose which fruit they would like from a good selection and staff serve it to them. Children take it in turns to pour drinks for others on their table. Snack and meal times are a social occasion, enjoyed by all; this helps provide children with a sound foundation for future eating habits.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an exciting, warm, secure and safe indoor and outdoor environment, where staff continually assess and minimise potential risks to keep children safe at all times.

For example, Staff check visitor's identification and ensure they record their visit, while clear induction procedures for students and parent helpers ensure the children are only ever supervised by persons who are suitable to do so. Excellent arrival and departure procedures safeguard the children's welfare. Parents enter and leave the premises only when identified by staff who answer the door bell. Staff accurately record children's attendance times and they are aware who is able to collect the children. There is ample space indoors and outdoors for children to move and play comfortably and child-sized furniture supports them in their play. Children access and use a wonderful range of suitable and safe equipment, which is age appropriate and cannot fail to help them thrive and meet their developmental needs. For example, each child has a designated garden area outdoors and access to a range of appropriately sized gardening tools with which to dig, plant flowers and vegetables to learn about and explore the natural world. Older children confidently request and self select additional resources to extend and support their play.

Children have access to a play area and grounds outside of the pre school premises and staff are vigilant when escorting them to these areas. When leaving the premises for any reason, staff take a small first aid kit; all children's contact details and a mobile phone. For longer expeditions for example, to the Nature reserve, the adult: child ratios are increased. On the premises Fire exits are clearly marked and staff and children are aware of the emergency evacuation procedures as this is practised regularly. The smoke detectors comply with the fire officer's guidelines to ensure children's welfare is maintained and all equipment is checked regularly. Children learn to keep themselves safe and avoid accidental injury by not running inside, respecting others when waiting in a line and not entering the garden without staff.

Children are protected because staff are totally committed to safeguarding them and take measures to keep them safe at all times. Policies, literature and training support staff in understanding their role in child protection and ensure they are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the Pre School. Younger children achieve well because staff effectively use their skill and knowledge of early years guidance, such as Birth to three matters. Staff provide good quality care and education for all children to develop in most areas. All children arrive happy and eager to participate in the pre school day. Children make good progress because staff recognise the uniqueness of each child. Caring relationships increase children's sense of trust and help them develop their individuality. Children gain confidence and self-esteem as staff praise their efforts and achievements, encourage them to achieve and provide activities which are stimulating, fun and within their learning abilities. Staff sit with the children encouraging their participation. They listen to their news and respond to their signs and gestures. Staff set out the room carefully with activities and resources thoughtfully displayed to encourage the children to use. For example, children are eager to paint at the easel where brightly coloured paints attract their attention. The environment is bright and eye-catching as staff value and display the children's work and child related posters and pictures. Children are involved in a broad range of planned activities and spontaneous events, which

support their development and learning. For example, during free play they confidently use the computer, build with construction equipment, paint on the easel, and access role play resources. Planned activities such as the music session provide an opportunity for children to listen, identify individual sounds and make music together as a group.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children have opportunities to enjoy a stimulating range of activities relevant to their needs. They access a broad range of good resources, which supports their development across most areas of learning. All children are keen to learn, self-assured in their play and confident to try new experiences. Children demonstrate increasing independence in most areas; however snack time provides little opportunity for them to be actively involved. Children behave very well and accept responsibility for their actions. They have a secure awareness of right and wrong, and show a healthy respect for others and their beliefs. They listen intently to stories and recall favourites. Children treat books with respect; have good access to a range of books on a daily basis, and a library system allows them to share the books with parents. The accessibility of reference books helps children recognise them as a source of learning and communicating information. Children have opportunities to use marks relevant to their play and older children are adept at writing and recognising their own and others names. Children are beginning to attempt writing for different purposes for example, a child 'wrote' a story and took great delight in reading it back. Staff liaise closely with parents to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, to help them fully participate in the activities and make very good progress. Children use their imagination and are creative in expressing themselves, making sense of the world around them through a variety of media. They are inquisitive about their surroundings, use everyday technology confidently and wonder at changes they observe such as the growth of a flower from a tiny seed.

Children have many chances to find out about their immediate environment and the local area; however, opportunities to extend older children's knowledge and understanding of the wider world are limited. Children work well together; they share information and resources and acknowledge each others differences. Children are very confident when using numbers in their play and respond enthusiastically to challenges to extend their mathematical vocabulary and skills in planned activities and daily routines. For example, during outdoor play children threw a large dice and had to identify the number and then make the correct number of hops.

Staff have a clear understanding of children's skills, interests and needs. Planning by all staff provides a good balance of adult and child led activities to allow the children to develop at their own pace. Staff are perceptive to children's interests and extend their language and thinking skills successfully through questioning and dialogue. All staff are involved in observation, monitoring and recording of children's achievements and developing evaluation practices to help improve the quality of teaching and inform future planning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated with equal concern and feel a sense of belonging; they display positive self-esteem, and confidently express their likes and dislikes. They access small world toys and

dressing up clothes, which promotes positive images and all children are encouraged to try all activities. Children are cared for by staff who work well with parents to meet the children's individual needs and ensure they are fully included in the life of the setting. The successful inclusion procedures and staff's effective knowledge of special needs policies, ensure children with additional needs participate fully in all activities and achieve manageable targets, boosting their self worth. All staff have very good knowledge of each child's routine through discussion with parents, and adhere to this within the routine of the day.

All children are welcome and participate in the nursery because staff value and respect their differences, individuality and family context. Staff consider children's and parents contributions important. Children's behaviour is good and they demonstrate an increasing understanding of what is right and wrong. Children are beginning to understand about sharing and taking turns. Children respond positively to staff requests to tidy way; they respect the equipment, staff and each other.

Children have good opportunities to learn about themselves and each other through topic work, everyday and planned activities. They explore the local area and develop a sense of community through visitors and outings. For example, regular trips to the local nature reserve. Staff have high expectations and standards, and provide good role models for the children treating them and each other with respect and courtesy. This is reflected by the children who are kind and considerate to each other, for example, a child shares his cars when another child wants to play. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. The partnership with parents contributes significantly to children's well-being in the nursery. Staff actively seek parent's views about the children's needs and interests before and during their time at the setting. Staff ensure all parents know how their children are progressing and developing. Children benefit greatly from the involvement of their parents, thereby contributing to their good health, safety, development and learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff enhance children's care, welfare and learning opportunities through good organisation. Leadership and management are good. Children are happy, secure and enjoy their time in the setting because staff offer good care and attention to their needs. Staff ensure children are never left unsupervised with persons not vetted, that ratios are maintained throughout the sessions and the correct amount of staff on duty hold suitable qualifications. This supports children's wellbeing. Staff work well as a team and good communication and guidance allows them to provide a stimulating, well-balanced and smooth flowing programme throughout the day. The premises layout is well organised and children experience different areas to play throughout the day, including exploring the garden.

Children benefit from qualified and experienced staff who are very caring. Staff are committed to attending further childcare training and development courses, which management support. This helps them to reflect, monitor and improve the quality of the care and education they offer to all children. They evaluate planned activities to inform future planning; contributing

to the children's learning opportunities well. Staff are allocated non-contact time to complete the planning and children's records of achievements. This supports children's future learning needs well. All legally required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and wellbeing is in place and is regularly reviewed, however, the complaints procedure does not include the correct address for the regulator. The certificate of registration is displayed during operational hours. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

Care

At the last inspection the provider was asked to make arrangements for alternative premises in the event of emergency evacuation of the building and consider obtaining training in Basic Food Hygiene.

The staff regularly practice evacuation procedures with the children and have identified the safest place as being well away from the building and probable arrival of emergency vehicles in the car park. There are premises nearby that may be used in an emergency when staff consider it safe to move the children.

Staff have very clear procedures in place for storage and preparation of food, and have given consideration to Food Hygiene training, however, staff have to prioritise when deciding what training is most beneficial to the children, and consequently they have not yet completed a food hygiene course.

Nursery Education

At the last inspection, there were two key weaknesses identified. There have been significant improvements in the identified areas, benefiting the children's learning.

Children have regular opportunities to use mathematical language on a daily basis; they have opportunities to count in songs and rhymes, follow number lines and identify numbers, for example, on the calendar. This promotes their learning well.

Children have daily access through planned and everyday events to access information technology and are confident when using the computer, the calculator and handling the range of equipment in the home corner such as the keyboard and phone.

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):

- update the complaints procedure to include latest address for the regulator

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 opportunities for the older and more able children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the wider world
- consider ways to promote independence skills for older and more able children at snack times

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