



Woodlands Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	507964
Inspection date	01 February 2007
Inspector	Marilyn Joy
Setting Address	Netley Marsh Community Hall, Woodlands Road, Netley Marsh, Southampton, Hampshire, SO40 7GL
Telephone number	023 80293558
E-mail	
Registered person	Woodlands 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Woodlands Pre-school opened in 1982. It is managed by a voluntary committee of parents and operates from the Community Hall in the village of Netley Marsh. Children attend from the surrounding area.

The pre-school is registered for a maximum of 26 children aged from two years to under five years. There are currently 53 children on roll and of these 42 children receive funding for nursery education. A small number of children attend with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Sessions are from 09:30 to 12:00 from Monday to Friday and from 12:30 to 15:00 every afternoon except Wednesday, term time only. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are eleven staff who work with the children, of which ten have early years qualifications. There are two members of staff who are furthering their qualifications. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well. They enjoy healthy and nutritious snacks of fresh fruit, bread sticks and raisins, with a choice of either milk or water. Staff have a clear understanding of children's dietary requirements and ensure all snacks and cooking activities comply with these. Children help to make fruit smoothies and apple pie. Good hygiene practices are observed by staff when preparing foods and during daily routines. Children are encouraged to develop good routines themselves, such as, washing their hands at appropriate times.

Individual health requirements are responded to because staff have a clear understanding of what is needed and, where necessary, they attend training so they are able to deal with situations that may arise. Details of medication are recorded, although written consent is not always clear. Particular care is taken to prevent the risk of cross infection. There is a clear sickness policy in place and parents are provided with regular information about childhood illnesses and exclusion times.

Activities to promote children's physical development are offered daily. A good range of small and large equipment is rotated so children are able to practise a range of movements and develop their hand-eye coordination. Children competently manoeuvre bikes around obstacles and each other, learning to control them as they stop and start at the traffic lights. They patiently wait their turn when there are not enough bikes for all. Children join in with music and movement. They giggle and laugh as they wiggle around, experimenting with a variety of movements and steps.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, safe and well-maintained environment. The hall is light and airy. Effective systems are in place for monitoring children's arrival and departure, as well as securing the premises during the session to ensure they are unable to leave unaccompanied. Children are supervised well whilst being able to access all facilities independently. Daily safety checks are conducted to ensure the premises are safe and there are no potential hazards. There is a good range of quality resources available, which are regularly checked and cleaned. They are presented at low level so children can easily reach them safely.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have a sound understanding of child protection issues and there are clear procedures in place should they have any concerns. Evacuation procedures are regularly practised so that staff know what to do and children can be evacuated quickly in the event of a fire. Formal risk assessments are conducted periodically by the committee and procedures developed according to current practices in the pre-school.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop confidence and self-esteem in the supportive environment provided by the enthusiastic staff team. They enjoy a varied curriculum that offers a range of activities which are introduced well at the beginning of each session so that children know what is available. Older children have the opportunity to attend the '4s Club' where they spend time working together in the same groups as they move around several focus activities. They learn to take turns when playing the snail game and match number cards with the correct amount of bricks. Children develop positive relationships with staff and each other, often working co-operatively and interacting together. They develop increasing independence in their personal care and when putting coats and shoes on to play outside.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Careful consideration is given to ensuring the two-year rolling programme of topics cover all aspects of learning and enable children to make sound progress towards the early learning goals. Interesting activities are offered and resources are rotated daily. Children make bread rolls, go for walks around the grounds and find out about the jobs people do. They are motivated and keen to learn. However, the layout and presentation of resources does not always provide enough challenge or encourage their creativity and imagination. Systems are in place to record and monitor children's progress, although, their next stage in their learning is not clearly identified and incorporated into the planning. Challenges are not consistently offered across all sessions, for example, including pictures on children's name cards to help recognition is dependent on the session attended rather than ability.

Many children communicate confidently with others. They concentrate and willingly contribute their ideas at circle time. They listen attentively to stories and handle books well. They begin to recognise their names and some sounds and letters. However, the book corner is not very inviting and there is little text displayed to extend their awareness of letters and writing. Children develop their pre-writing skills when using different resources and tools for mark-making. They chalk on the wall outside and choose pictures to colour. Sometimes purposeful opportunities are offered to practise emergent writing, for example, when adding their names to pictures, writing cards or in the role play area. Children enjoy conversing with staff who encourage them to talk about their experiences and join in their play.

Children develop their counting and number skills during well-planned activities at '4's Club'. Resources promoting mathematical skills are rotated daily, so that children can sort objects by size and colour, make comparisons and explore the physical concept of shape when making puzzles or constructing. Opportunities are missed during routine practical activities to solve simple problems, such as, are there enough and how many?

Children explore colour and texture when creating different colours with paint, scooping stones into containers or manipulating dough. However, children are not always able to choose resources to express themselves freely or develop their skills in imaginative play. Planned craft activities introduce cutting out, collage and making models and children develop their own storylines

well in the role play area when it is available. Children become familiar with technology as they enthusiastically cluster around the computer and, with help from staff, take turns in operating the mouse and completing the tasks.

An awareness of the world around them is introduced through a good range of topics and activities. Children find out about the natural environment when thinking about the seasons, growing and animal life cycles. They make feeders for wild birds, pretend homes for hibernating hedgehogs and fruit pies in the autumn. They observe how things change when melting ice cubes and cooking. A variety of festivals and celebrations are included throughout the pre-school year, for example, Divali, Easter and bonfire night. Children learn through practical activities that interest them. They explore their local environment and look at different homes. When playing with the pirate ship staff encourage them to create their own treasure map, talking about the features they might like to include. Parents are invited to share their skills and when learning about the jobs people do several parents talked about their job with the children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Many children demonstrate a strong sense of belonging in the confident way in which they arrive at the pre-school. Effective settling-in routines help them to feel secure. Information is gathered about their particular needs prior to starting, they can attend for pre-visits and parents can stay with children for the introduction of the session. Parents are introduced to their child's keyworker so they can build positive relationships and confidence in sharing information. Good arrangements are in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A dedicated member of staff liaises closely with parents and other professionals to provide appropriate support for individual children. Essential information is shared with other staff to ensure children receive consistent and appropriate support to enable them to make progress.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They receive clear guidance from staff to help them understand what is expected of them and consequently they behave well. They are encouraged to be kind to each other, share and play co-operatively, for example, when waiting their turn on the bikes or the computer. Positive behaviour management strategies are consistently applied. Strategies for managing challenging behaviour are developed in liaison with parents, although, incidents are not always clearly recorded or signed by them.

Partnership with parents is good. They are provided with a comprehensive range of information about the pre-school, its policies and procedures. Regular newsletters and the notice board keep them up-to-date with current issues, topics and weekly planning. Additional information is provided for parents of children attending '4's club'. An induction session introduces them to some of the activities children will be involved in, the planned learning intentions and some of the expectations prior to going to school, for example, being able to put their coats and shoes on independently. Parents' requests for more information so they can support learning at home are responded to by including details in the newsletter. Parents value being able to approach staff at any time to discuss their child's progress. Photographs and examples of children's work are included in their progress records which are available for parents to view at any time. Parents are consulted about any proposed changes to the pre-school and their feedback actively sought.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The pre-school is organised well and benefits from the consistent and settled leadership and management team who work effectively together to promote positive outcomes for children. Health, safety and wellbeing are given a high priority. Measures are being developed to ensure a smooth transition and consistent management when the committee changes. Policies and procedures are regularly updated and underpin daily practice. Most documentation relating to children's care is maintained to a high standard, although, some records are not clear. Robust recruitment and employment procedures are carried out to ensure staff are suitably experienced and qualified. Annual appraisals, as well as ongoing training, supports their continued professional development.

Leadership and management is satisfactory in respect of nursery education. There is a clear commitment towards developing the provision through ongoing training and liaison with local schools and support networks. Some aspects of the provision are evaluated and developed, such as, focus activities and record keeping. However, the presentation and availability of resources does not always offer appropriate challenges or capitalise on children's enthusiasm for learning. Children benefit from the dedication and involvement of staff in activities and high staff ratio that is maintained. The pre-school meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Care inspection the pre-school was asked to update some records and provide a range of activities which help children learn about the cultural background and festivals of others. Most of the documentation has been updated as recommended and contributes towards ensuring children's safety. Records are kept of staff references and suitability checks and registers are maintained accurately. Incidents are recorded and discussed with parents, although, incident records are not usually signed. Parental consent to take photographs has been added to most registration forms. A variety of festivals and celebrations are also included within the planned curriculum. Children share their own family traditions and learn about festivals celebrated by others, such as, Christmas and Chinese New Year.

At the last inspection of Nursery Education the pre-school was asked to review the systems for planning and recording children's progress so their next steps for development are identified. The system for planning has been developed and staff receive weekly information about the activities offered so they are aware of the strand of learning to be focussed on. Useful prompt cards have been developed as a reminder for staff about the language and learning they can promote with the children, although, they are not always used. Clear systems are in place for tracking children's progress towards the early learning goals, although, opportunities are missed to record written observations of children's achievements and to incorporate their next steps for learning into the planning.

The pre-school was also asked to provide more opportunities for children to use number and simple calculation in daily routines and to see and use writing in their daily activities. Children are generally extended well at '4's club' and during some activities at other sessions, however,

opportunities are missed to consistently provide appropriate challenges for children across all sessions.

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):

- update documentation to ensure medication, incidents and parental consent for photographs are clearly recorded.

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):

- review the planning and provision of activities to ensure a consistent approach across all sessions so that children are appropriately challenged and encourage their creativity and imagination
- continue to review the system for monitoring children's progress and identifying their next steps for learning so they can be incorporated into the planning
- make more use of practical activities and routines to encourage problem solving and purposeful writing.

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