



Windmill Hill City Farm Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Crèche

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?

Windmill Hill City Farm Children and Family Centre opened in 2004. The previous provision, a pre-school, was established for 26 years. It operates from a purpose built nursery and a playroom which is used for the crèche. The centre is based on a community farm and serves local families.

The nursery opens five days a week for 50 weeks in the year. A variety of sessions are available between 08.00 and 18.00. The crèche operates between 09.30 and 11.30, and 12.30 and 14.30 on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, term time only.

A maximum of 50 children may attend the nursery at any one time and a total of 24 children may attend the crèche at any one time. There are currently 68 children from one year to under eight years on roll for the crèche and 98 children from under one to five years on roll for the

nursery. Of these, 44 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting currently supports children with special needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 26 staff; of whom six work in the crèche; of these 17 work part-time and nine work full time. There are 19 members of staff who hold appropriate early years qualifications; seven members of staff are currently working towards a recognised qualification. An administrative assistant and mid-day assistant do not work directly with the children. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is effectively promoted. Established good hygiene routines and clear expectations of staff increase children's awareness of the importance of maintaining good health. Children from a young age follow independence routines and develop an awareness of their own self care. Children spontaneously use the toilet and wash their hands after using this area, before and after snacks and meals and after messy play. Children benefit because staff follow effective procedures and practices that protect them from the spread of illness and risk of infection. For example, children are excluded when unwell, bedding is changed frequently, children use individual paper towels or hand towels according to age, shoes are not worn in the baby room, staff follow thorough nappy changing procedures and undertake regular cleaning routines. Most staff hold a valid first aid certificate and provide appropriate care if a child has an accident. Procedures for the recording of accidents and management of medication are appropriate and consistently followed throughout all aspects of the setting.

All children enjoy a varied range of physical activities on a daily basis that contribute to their good health and help them develop control and co-ordination of their bodies. Babies and young children's emerging mobility is supported appropriately by staff through the provision of activity mats, safe space to crawl, attractive objects placed out of reach, use of large soft play shapes and low level surfaces on which to pull themselves up and coast-a-long. Mobile children enjoy the freedom of space, moving safely around obstacles and each other in the three designated rear outside play areas. Children aged two years and above enjoy running on the sports pitch, balancing bean bags on their heads, kicking and throwing a variety of footballs and small balls and attempting to roll hula hoops. Children develop balancing skills when walking along low level beams and when attempting to control scooters on a gentle slope. A parachute, tunnel, low level climbing frame and equipment to create obstacle courses such as the Asco system; promotes children's skills to crawl under, through and over objects. Children of all ages enjoy daily opportunities to move to music and develop co-ordination skills when singing action songs such as 'Wind the bobbin up'. Resources such as, the 'Sticky Kids' and 'Tumble Tots' tapes provide opportunities for development and co-ordination of movements in a fun way when children are unable to play outside. Older children are starting to take note of bodily changes putting on coats when playing outside and identifying when they need to rest. Pre-school children enjoy regular opportunities for physical play throughout the day. However these are not yet planned on a regular basis to ensure sufficient emphasis is given to ensure older and

more able children are sufficiently challenged. All children enjoy plenty of opportunities for fresh air.

Children benefit from a healthy diet. Balanced and nutritious snacks of fruit and a regularly rotated menu offering a variety of locally sourced, organic, freshly prepared meals, promotes children's understanding of a healthy diet. Activities introducing the need for five portions of fruit or vegetable each day promote children's awareness further. Children's dietary needs and parental preferences are discussed, clearly displayed for staff to view and taken account of fully. Older children easily access drinking water throughout the day placed on low level surfaces. Babies and younger children are regularly offered drinks by staff. All children rest according to their needs; younger children benefit from routines consistent with their experiences at home, for instance sleeping routines.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Thorough daily monitoring of hazards in all areas used by children, regular checks of smoke detectors and fire safety equipment in conjunction with regularly reviewed written risk assessments effectively promotes children's safety. Security precautions in place when entering the premises, such as, the entry surveillance system, clear vision of the entrance from the main office, use of visitors book and procedures for the collection of children further safeguards children's welfare. Regular visual checks ensure young children, toddlers and babies sleep safely; babies and toddlers sleep within view of staff in a partitioned area in their designated room. Ratios of adults to children meet minimum standards. Children develop an understanding of their own personal safety through guidance given by staff. For example, they keep their own space safe when helping to tidy up and identify when toys are a hazard, practise fire drills and are guided to sit safely in chairs. Older children know how to use scissors safely and develop an awareness of 'stranger, danger' through stories such as Rama and Sita read at the time of Diwali. Children play happily with a varied range of safe, good quality toys and equipment that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.

Staff protect children from harm. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the issues related to child protection and are clear as to their responsibilities and reporting procedures within the setting. Parents are appropriately informed of these responsibilities through a written policy that is displayed in the entrance hall.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff's flexible and sensitive approach effectively helps children separate from their parents and settle into the setting. Children develop relaxed, positive relationships with staff, consequently this increases their sense of well-being. Babies' early communication skills are encouraged and well-supported by staff who eagerly respond to them. Staff make good eye contact and readily respond to their babbling sounds and smiles. Young children are held close, enjoy lots of cuddles and snuggle in when feeding from a bottle or looking at picture books. Staff support children well to try new experiences. Babies and children under three years enjoy

a varied range of experiences that stimulate their sense of touch, sight and sound. Staff know the children well and have a sound understanding of child development. They understand the importance of offering a variety of interesting activities that stimulate children's senses. For example, babies and toddlers enjoy daily textural play using either gloop, custard, baked beans or mashed potato. Children watch with fascination as they spread their fingers moving the gloop in the container and start to take notice of the feel on their hands when dry. They explore a range of textures and shapes such as rice crispies, shredded paper, fabric, pasta and cardboard tubes in the 'browser' box. For instance, they climb in and out of the box when filled with pasta shapes and tubes, sit inside the box, swish the contents with their feet and pour pasta down the tubes.

Children aged two to three years are intrigued by a large container of jelly, they use scoops and cups to pour it into bowls and hand whisks to create patterns; more confident children start to explore it with their hands. Staff offer children a variety of words to express how jelly feels to their touch. Staff offer activities that help children make connections, for example, children are helped to develop an awareness of their own feelings through the use of facial pictures and expressions and are introduced to change when watching ice holding small animal figures melt. Children take part in regular cookery activities, such as making jam tarts and biscuits. Staff working with children under three years are starting to make observations of what children know and do. However, these observations are not yet assessed and evaluated to inform the planning of activities that promote the next steps in children's development.

Children attending the crèche enjoy a range of planned activities based on a weekly theme. For example, they paint their own bus cut and glue pictures to the windows and sing songs such as the 'Wheels on the bus'. Children enjoy playing with construction such as Duplo and re-create their own experiences in the imaginative area using a play cooker and play babies and buggies.

All children throughout the setting enjoy walks around the farm and observe the growth of the animals throughout the year.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make sound progress towards the early learning goals. Well-qualified staff members are clear as to the learning intention of activities and have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. However, inexperienced staff and staff unfamiliar with working with this age group have a limited knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and are unclear as to the purpose of activities and therefore do not always sufficiently support children in their learning. Well-qualified staff ask clear open-ended questions such as 'what', 'how' and 'why' that help children develop their own thoughts and ideas. Regular observations of what children know and do are recorded and linked to the six areas of learning in children's individual achievement records; these however, are not evaluated against the stepping stones. Planning of activities is based on a broad understanding of the group and not on individual assessments of each child; consequently planning does not yet fully reflect the next steps to promote children's learning. Evaluations of planned activities focused on the outcome of what children have learnt are few.

Children have a positive attitude to learning and are intrigued by new experiences. Children are encouraged by more able staff to share their ideas and develop their own thoughts. For example, activities based around the theme of St. David's Day provide opportunities for children to talk about planting seeds, caring for plants and what you need to do to achieve this. Children explore interesting resources, they use their sense of touch to guess what is contained in a large bag and are introduced to unfamiliar words such as 'compost'. They listen intently to stories linked to the theme of growth, follow suggested physical actions such as digging and anticipate what happens next. Some children are able to recall the story and are starting to link sounds and letters. Problem solving is promoted through children's own experiences of planting. Children suggest what each stage entails and what they need to achieve this. Some children gasp in awe as the covers are removed from a tray of items including spades and plant pots and giggle with delight when they identify objects they do not need such as a baby cradle and a stethoscope. Children take turns when looking at packets of seeds and are eager to plant them outside.

Children spontaneously look at books and handle them correctly. They understand that print has meaning, identify familiar letters in their own names and use this developing skill in their imaginative play whilst following a story line and reading to baby dolls and their friends. Children spontaneously attempt mark making using crayons and pencils and are starting to use this in a meaningful way. For example, writing birthday invitations to friends and shopping lists in the home corner.

Children are beginning to develop mathematical skills. Everyday routines promote children's understanding of number. Most children correctly count from one to nine at snack time and spontaneously use number when referring to themselves. Children are encouraged to identify how many milk cartons are needed and whether they have enough on each table. Children use positional language when playing with small world figures in the dolls house, such as, up, down, inside and outside. Children are developing an understanding of pattern and sequence for example, when manoeuvring a computer mouse to complete a puzzle of the Welsh flag and when creating their own pictures using paints and fresh leeks. Children correctly identify cut out shapes of a circle, triangle and square and use them to create pictures of space rockets.

Children re-create and express their own ideas and experiences through role play and using a variety of resources such as fabric fur, netting, wood, buttons, sequins, tissue, play doh and wool. They create their own rangoli patterns using coloured rice and work together to create large 3D objects such as a painted post box and the 'Three Little Pigs' homes, from the natural materials straw, sticks and bricks. Children spontaneously mix paint and create new colours, however some staff do not use open-ended questioning to extend the activity to broaden the learning experience. Children construct their own 3D models using magnetic blocks and Lego.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Displays of children's own work, named coat pegs and opportunities to show items brought from home assist in developing children's sense of belonging and value. All children are welcomed individually and warmly by staff. Comforters from home such as favourite soft toys and dummies re-assure children and promote their sense of security; especially when sleeping. Children take

pride in their achievements proudly showing a member of staff their picture and the visiting inspector their creation in play doh. Staff have a strong commitment to the inclusion of all children within their setting. They work closely and effectively with parents and a wide range of professionals to clearly identify the individual needs of children and ensure appropriate steps are taken to support children and their families. Appropriate systems provide a suitable framework to identify achievable targets for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Staff work closely with children and parents for whom English is not their first language. A varied range of resources distributed throughout the setting reflect positive images and helps promote a positive attitude towards difference. The setting is an integral part of the local community. Children gain an understanding of this through visits to local shops, involvement with local pensioner groups, regular walks around the farm and the involvement of their parents. Activities linked to celebrations throughout the year and that reflect the ethnicity of the children attending such as 'Bastille Day' promote children's awareness of diversity and the wider world.

Children benefit from the excellent relationships between parents and staff. Parents are extremely supportive of the staff and appreciative of the care given to their children. Parents are well-informed of their child's daily experiences and care through daily discussions with staff and a 'home book' for children under two years. Introductory leaflets, a clearly displayed folder of policies and procedures, regular newsletters, open days, notices about events and issues such as behaviour management provides parents with clear information. Staff's frequent use of praise and encouragement throughout the setting effectively promotes children's sense of well-being and promotes their self-esteem. Staff effectively support children to share, take turns and play co-operatively together through the setting of consistent boundaries and use of age appropriate strategies. For example, staff encourage pre-school children to use a timer to promote sharing, whilst two year olds start to use a 'thinking tent' to give themselves space away from others to reflect on their actions. Peer massage and soothing music effectively helps create a calming atmosphere. The staff's calm and consistent approach provides clear role models for children and leaves them in no doubt about what is expected of them. Children's behaviour is good. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Discussion when children join the pre-school room and some posters of explanation provide parents with sufficient initial information about the Foundation Stage curriculum. Attractive displays provide parents with clear written information about how activities are linked to the monthly theme and they have a satisfactory understanding of how these promote the six areas of learning. Staff and parents have friendly relationships and much feedback is given informally at collection time. A parents' meeting prior to children starting school provides specific feedback on their own child's achievements. Children benefit from their parents' involvement in activities such as the provision of resources for monthly themes. Opportunities for parents to be actively involved with their own child's on-going learning are few.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are supported by appropriately qualified staff. Systems in place for the recruitment, checking, induction and on-going support of staff ensures they are suitable to work with

children. Staff's understanding and knowledge of policies and procedures is reflected in practice and therefore, contributes to children's well-being. Staff develop their knowledge, skills and practice through regular training opportunities. Staff create a welcoming and inviting environment for all children. The lay out of individual rooms gives children space to participate in a varied range of self-selected and adult-led activities. Children from a young age easily access resources from well-organised, labelled storage containers and low level shelving, drawers and surfaces. Child-sized tables, chairs and large floor cushions enables children to investigate resources comfortably and sit securely and safely. Bright visual displays of children's own work and posters and resources stimulate children's interest and effectively contributes to their learning.

Children's well-being is promoted through documentation that is relevant, well-organised, accurate and maintained confidentially and securely. The nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is satisfactory

Staff support each other well to offer a varied range of activities that interest children. Staff are committed to improvement and weaknesses at the last education inspection have been addressed. However, the current system in place for monitoring and evaluating the programme for nursery education does not yet ensure that planning reflects the next steps in children's learning, is regularly evaluated and gives sufficient emphasis to all aspects within the six areas of learning. Consequently, the individual needs of children are not clearly identified and children's progress is limited in some areas.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was requested to make the following improvements: to ensure that a record of accidents is always maintained and signed by the parent; to ensure that all staff have induction training which includes health and safety and child protection policies and procedures in their first week of employment and to ensure that there is a system for registering staff attendance on a daily basis, showing hours of attendance. These recommendations have been considered and steps taken to improve the provision. Procedures for the recording of accidents are appropriate and consistently followed by all staff. New members of staff undertake a comprehensive induction of all aspects of the setting; this includes health and safety and child protection policies and procedures within the first week of employment. A clear record is kept of staff attendance. The improvements undertaken by the provider promote children's health and safety, help safeguard them from harm and ensure parents are appropriately informed.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider was requested to make the following improvements: to provide more opportunities for older and more able children to extend their knowledge and understanding of number and calculations, to provide more opportunities for older and more able children to practise letter formation and begin to use writing as a means of recording and communicating and to develop opportunities for more able children to plan, solve problems and build their own projects. These recommendations have been considered and steps taken to improve the provision of nursery education as illustrated in this report.

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 satisfactory.

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 further staff's knowledge and understanding of activities that promote the next steps in children's development by using the Birth to three matters framework.

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):

- develop all staffs knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum to ensure that what children know and do is regularly evaluated against the stepping stones
- further develop planning so that it reflects the next stage in children's learning and ensure that the outcomes of activities are evaluated
- increase opportunities for parents to be involved in their own child's on-going learning
- develop further the systems in place to monitor planning and ensure sufficient emphasis is given to all aspects across the six areas of learning.

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