



Willowdene Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	507837
Inspection date	09 March 2007
Inspector	Jacqueline Munden
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Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

Willowdene Nursery School is privately owned and opened in 1990. It offers sessions and full day care, before and after school care, and a holiday club. The setting operates from the ground floor of a house that has been adapted to provide nursery accommodation in Chineham, Basingstoke. Children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 34 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year.

There are currently 112 children on roll aged from two to eight years. This includes 57 funded three and four year olds. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and or disabilities.

The nursery employs eight members of staff; of whom seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. Up to an additional three staff supervise the lunch time period. All staff hold first aid certificates.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn about the importance of being healthy through planned topics and discussions with staff. Children are well nourished as they are provided with regular meals and snacks throughout the day. For example, children arriving after school enjoy a snack and drink with tea being served soon after. Children choose from a selection of healthy snacks such as fruit, cheese, toast and the occasional cakes. They are learning why it is important to have a healthy diet. For example, staff talk about the milk they drink making their bones strong. Children can access drinking water at all times and benefit from a cooked, healthy and nutritious tea.

Parents are encouraged to follow the settings healthy eating policy when providing children's packed lunches. Information about children's dietary requirements is obtained from parents and an effective system ensures all staff are made aware of what children may or may not consume.

Efficient procedures protect children from the spread of infection. These include suitable nappy changing routines and the provision of individual bedding. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own personal care and can independently access the toilet and washing facilities. Most learn to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet, although staff do not always ensure they are all reminded to do this.

Staff maintain good records of children's health, accidents and any medication administered; which are shared with parents and carers. Staff follow clear procedures if a child is unwell. Children's health records are maintained well. Staff are well prepared to deal with medical emergencies as they are all trained in first aid. First aid kits are taken on outings as well as being readily available in the nursery.

Children take part in a very wide and varied range of activities which promote their physical development both in and outdoors. They enjoy the many opportunities for music and movement sessions; they move around carefully following the instructions to jump, gallop and stretch. However, the grouping of children for these sessions does not always ensure they can move as freely as they might wish or to prevent accidents.

Children relish the free access to the outdoor play area where they can develop large muscles as they climb and balance. They develop many skills, such as throwing and catching balls, and benefit from being in the fresh air in all weathers. Children notice the change in their bodies after exercising as they are hot and tired.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, warm and welcoming environment. Access to the nursery is well monitored by staff and a video surveillance system is used throughout. Children are protected from harm by the use of safety procedures, which are built into the daily routine and shared with parents. This enables them to play and learn in a secure setting. Risks of accidents or injury are minimised as staff carry out daily visual risk assessments.

Efficient procedures ensure children's safety on outings and as they travel to and from school; staff carry a mobile phone and children's emergency contacts and supervise children closely. Children and staff are involved in regular fire drills that are recorded appropriately. Children learn to protect themselves from harm as they are reminded why it is not safe to run indoors. They learn about road safety through planned topics, reinforced by a visit from a lollipop man who practises crossing the road with children and staff.

The secure gardens are an extension of the learning environment with areas to play as well as grow plants. An area with a safety surface and awnings allows children to explore climbing equipment in greater safety and have the benefit of playing outdoors in all weathers.

The playrooms are organised so that children can move freely to the different activities and resources. There are displays of children's work on the walls. There are also photos of the children taking part in many interesting activities, shown as programmes on a monitor in the reception area for parents to see. Staff generally make good use of the available space both in and outdoors. For example; a creative area for water, sand and painting and an office area for writing and computer use. Children make good use of the various areas set up for role play, which are changed regularly to stimulate and trigger ideas. However, when children come together for indoor physical activities space is not always adequate for the size of the group.

Children can access toilet facilities safely and independently. However, as some toilet cubicles do not have individual doors children cannot easily have privacy.

The sleep area is cosy and children needing to rest cuddle up under blankets.

A broad range of play equipment that is clean and in a good safe condition is stored in boxes and units. These are at child height allowing them to make independent choices, although some books are not always easily accessible.

Children are well protected regarding child protection issues. Staff are clear about their roles and the setting's procedures for safeguarding children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children in the nursery are happy and well cared for. They are actively involved in purposeful activities that promote learning in all areas of learning. They relate well to adults and ask questions as they play. Staff respond with encouragement and praise which promotes children's

confidence and self-esteem, enabling them to take a positive role in their own learning. Children enjoy a mix of adult-led and self-initiated activities, as the setting practises a free flow method of play. Children benefit from the opportunity to take a book home from the nursery library to share with their families; this fosters their interest in books and promotes links with parents. Children with disabilities and or learning difficulties are fully included; individual play plans are developed and their needs considered.

Children under three years benefit from staff's sound knowledge and use of the Birth to Three Matters framework. Staff make good observations of and track children's progress well; they write plans to accommodate their age and stages of development. Skilled staff make good use of unplanned learning opportunities. For example, children are encouraged to count the legs of a model spider a child has. Children benefit from the continuity of care from their key workers, with whom they spend time during the day in small group times. At other times they mix with children over three years and are offered the same wide range of learning opportunities. These include using the outdoor play area and sharing access to the snack bar where they learn independence pouring their own drinks.

Children attending the out of school and holiday care are catered for well. The emphasis is on having fun. Staff make loose plans around areas of play but children are free to make choices of activities also. All activities children take part in are evaluated. They benefit in learning independence and about healthy foods as they often prepare their own tea. For example, they select fillings for and make toasted sandwiches. In the holidays additional play equipment is provided for the older children attending, including a basket ball net and snooker table. Each day a physical session is planned, with a professional from outside coming to deliver the activity.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make sound progress in all areas of learning. They have access to a wide range of resources which are arranged in various areas, children move freely between them.

Children benefit from the staff's sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and the six areas of learning. Staff know the children very well; they use this knowledge and observations of them to inform the planning of daily focus activities. Children meet in small groups with their key workers at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session, to take part in the planned activity linked to the Stepping Stones. These sessions are generally well managed. Staff make good evaluations of children's achievements which are recorded and shared with parents. On occasions, the large group times do not always fully ensure children's learning reaches it's full potential. This is because of the high number of children and that staff are not always deployed effectively at these times to fully support them. For example, at story time some children are distracted by others and cannot always hear what is being read. Also when children are asked to contribute to discussions and do not get a chance to speak, they lose interest.

Staff use effective strategies for teaching children and make learning interesting. They encourage learning by asking probing questions and offer good explanations when required. Staff ensure the garden is used as part of the learning environment; they provide equipment that promotes

development in all areas of learning as well as physical play, such as a table with paper and crayons for mark making. Staff use spontaneous events to promote children's learning. For example, as it begins to rain staff provide beakers to collect rain in and children investigate how much water is collected.

Children enjoy having stories read. They often look at books themselves through the day and even take books outside to staff who read them as they sit in the large wooden ship. Some children are beginning to recognise their name as they find labels on their work drawers and at snack time. Children practise pencil control in many situations as staff provide opportunities throughout the day. For example, an office area is set up and pencils and paper are available in the garden. However, children are not always encouraged to write their names on their art work. They learn sounds and letters at group times as there is a letter of the week which is reinforced at snack time. For example, The letter T is used as children use triangle shaped plates and eat foods that start with T such as tangerine and toast.

Children count regularly throughout the day as they join in with number rhymes. They learn to recognise numbers in the garden as parking bays for wheeled toys are numbered. Skilled staff use incidental opportunities to introduce number, shape and size into conversation. Children use paper cut into circles and squares for art work. Children learn to solve problems and calculate as they work out how many ducks are left when one is taken away at the maths table.

Children have many opportunities to explore the natural world as they frequently use the outside play area. Over a few days they observe changes in a snowman they make, taking photographs for reference. Children have regular use of the computer and enjoy simple programmes. Children learn about the world we live in as they use resources and observe posters which reflect diversity.

Children enjoy the many creative experiences offered; they paint, mould dough and create collages. They particularly enjoy role play. They have very good opportunities to develop their imaginations and express and communicate their ideas. They dress up using costumes; they enjoy home role play and "going to a party". Another area is set up as a teddy bears picnic; children enjoy packing food and read stories to the soft toys sat in the area.

Children use a variety of instruments and listen to different types of music that is often used to encourage thoughtful movement. They are excited as they find out how the ribbons and scarves they wave around to the music behave differently when they are taken outside.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from very positive relationships with staff; they are valued and their individual needs met well. They are fully included in the life of the setting as they help to tidy up and have equal access to the toys and resources. Children are independent and serve themselves drinks and fruit from the "snack bar" at snack time.

Staff know the children well and plan for the children's individual needs and preferences. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or English as an additional language are

welcomed and included at the nursery. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure children are appropriately supported. Diversity is promoted throughout the setting. Children use a suitable range of play equipment and books that promote positive images of all people in society. Children become familiar with other cultures through planned activities. They are aware of their community through visitors to the nursery, including a police officer. Children enjoyed exploring their village as the local bus. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children generally behave well in the calm and friendly atmosphere of the nursery. They follow clear rules and routines, are polite and kind towards each other and adults. Good behaviour is promoted by staff who use praise and positive reinforcement at all times.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. They receive a wide range of information regarding policies and procedures in a handbook, when their children start at the nursery. This includes information about the nursery education. Parents are very well informed of daily activities and learning objectives. They are kept up to date with regular newsletters and opportunities to attend open days. This encourages parents to become involved in children's learning. The notice board provides them with extra information, such as the daily menu. Parents are invited into the nursery to share information about their child with Key workers; also to share their skills and knowledge with the children. For example, a parent helps staff and children celebrate the Hindu festival, Diwali.

There is a complaints procedure in place. However, the policy does not fully inform parents of the process of making a complaint. Parents find staff approachable and feel able to discuss any issues which may arise. They are welcomed into the nursery and form good relationships with staff.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children are very happy and settled in the nursery. Most aspects of the provision are well organised ensuring children's health and welfare are promoted. Children are supervised by enthusiastic staff who are suitably vetted. Appropriate staff ratios are maintained. The organisation and grouping of children is in the progress of being reviewed. Staff are well qualified and committed to improving their practice. A number of familiar supply staff support the regular staff team as required. Space is well organised to allow them free access to numerous resources and activities.

Policies and procedures are implemented effectively to successfully promote children's care and well being. However, not all adults working with children are recorded in the staff register.

Leadership and Management is good. The setting is committed to improving care and education for all the children; it has recently gained the "Aiming High" accreditation from the Pre-school Learning Alliance. It has high expectations of staff and children. Staff are knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage and experienced in working with pre-school aged children. The proprietor/manager and staff work closely, they meet regularly and discuss the settings strengths and weakness. They work very well as a team together. They know what needs to be improved

and have devised a development plan outlining the main issues they want to address. Staff evaluate the effectiveness of the activities they provide. The manager seeks feedback from parents.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Children Act inspection a recommendation was made to improve storage for supplies and cleaning agents. Children are well protected as hazardous materials are inaccessible to them.

At the last education inspection two key issues were raised. These were to ensure staff track children's movements around the nursery to ensure they access all the activities, and to make the book area a more inviting area for children to use.

Good progress has been made as children enjoy moving around the nursery. They make full use of all the areas available including the outdoor area. This is a result of an action plan, made to introduce a free flow system, allowing children to select where and what to play with. Staff continue to monitor where children play. They use a board with the areas of the nursery shown on it and invite children to draw a line to show where they have played that session.

Children enjoy looking at books and are frequent visitors to the comfortable book area. They sit on a small sofa and bean bags and can easily access a generally wide range of books.

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 children's dignity and privacy are respected when going to the toilet

- continue to develop the organisation of children and group sizes, record the times of arrival and departure of all staff working with children and ensure information is available to parents on how to make a complaint.

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):

- ensure group times are suitably organised enabling all children to reach their full potential.

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