



Whitehill Nursery School Limited

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY232973
Inspection date	28 February 2007
Inspector	Joanne Wade Barnett
Setting Address	Luxford Road, Crowborough, East Sussex, TN6 2HW
Telephone number	01892 610816
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Registered person	Whitehill Nursery School Limited
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?

Whitehill Nursery School was registered in 2002. It is a privately owned group that operates from a purpose built building within the primary school in Crowborough, East Sussex. The nursery has two main rooms, toilet facilities, kitchen, use of rooms within the school for specific purposes and use of an enclosed outdoor area. A maximum of 49 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each week day from 09.00 to 15.00 during term time. Sessions are run within the opening times. The nursery operates an after school club and holiday play scheme.

There are currently 105 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 69 children receive funding for early education. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 14 members of staff. Of these, 10 hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a qualification. The nursery receives support from the Local Authority and is accredited with the Pre-school Learning Alliance in January 2003.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The environment is clean and tidy and children receive good support to develop good personal hygiene. There are effective procedures in place to prevent the spread of infection. Staff monitors hand washing after toileting and before snack and staff explains the need to wash hands. More able children are able to describe why they wash their hands.

The popular snack time introduces children to a range of healthy choices such as, oranges, apples and bread sticks. Even the youngest children help prepare the snack for their friends and learn how to help share plates and cups. Fresh drinking water is available at all times and children confidently use the drinking fountain available to them. This encourages children to think about their personal needs.

Clear records and procedures are in place for accidents and the administration of medication and very careful thought has been given to allergies and records of snacks. Up-to-date first aid training has been undertaken by every practitioner and parents' permission is obtained to enable practitioners to act in the best interest of children if they become ill or have an accident.

Children enjoy physical play through music and movement sessions indoors and the use of large equipment outside. Children have opportunities to explore, even in the inclement weather the woodland path that surrounds the schools. They investigate mini beasts and enjoy nature trails.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are safe and secure. Staff wear a uniform that quickly identifies them to children and visitors as a safe person. Careful consideration is given to arrival and collection times to ensure children are protected. For example, staff supervise the door and an effective password system is in place. Fire drills are carried out periodically and fire detection equipment is accessible in all areas of the building. Consequently, children's safety is promoted in the event of an evacuation.

There are regular risk assessments both indoors and out that enable staff to identify and quickly address any potential hazards. Toys and equipment are clean and in good condition. Toys are rotated to provide children with a variety of experiences that meet their developmental needs. The environment is welcoming because staff work hard to develop defined areas for children to play, for example, a writing area and a book area.

Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children's welfare and know what action to take if they have concerns about a child in their care. This ensures staff quickly recognise when a child is in danger and can act in the child's best interest.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The environment is carefully prepared and well-organised; as a result, children settle quickly and are keen to embark on a broad range of exciting and interesting activities. Staff know the children well. They are caring, sensitive and nurturing in their approach, consequently, children are keen to try new ideas, and make effective use of the toys and resources. Children's confidence and self-esteem is enhanced because the staff praise and encourage them and show delight in their achievements. Children show kindness and consideration to others, they talk and respond with animation and laughter to the staff and their peers. Staff use skilful questioning techniques to engage the children and encourage them to talk and explore language. Open questions help children to think about what they are doing and what will happen next.

The framework Birth to three matters is developing throughout the nursery to help staff plan and provide a range of experiences for young children's development. Children are able to make some choices in their play but not all toys and resources meet the range of developmentally appropriate activities for younger children. A variety of role play resources encourage children to express their thoughts and feelings and help them make sense of the world; children pretend to work in a travel agent talking about how they would travel, either by car or plane. Mirrors are carefully placed in the rooms to help young children to explore what they look like and who they are.

Nursery Education

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Children arrive confidently and settle quickly. They are keen to begin activities and become animated as they engage with the staff and their peers. Children speak openly and confidently and they receive regular opportunities to sing rhymes and engage fully in exciting and interesting stories. Children receive regular opportunities to attempt writing for different purposes, develop language for thinking and extend their imagination through story-telling. A well labelled environment helps children learn that words have meaning. Many children count reliably up to five and beyond and receive good opportunities to develop all concepts of mathematics through purposeful planned activities and excellent questioning techniques used by staff.

Children are confident and readily approach adults and their friends. They clearly enjoy each other's company and play together. Staff respond to children's achievements with praise and encouragement, such as 'good cutting' and 'good balancing' and as a result, children are generally well behaved. There are occasions, however when children are not fully engaged in planned music activities and display inappropriate behaviour and therefore unchallenged by staff. Children learn to share and take turns through the routine, for example, they share beads when threading and take turns in using the toys in the sand tray.

The environment reflects the importance of print through signs, labels and notices. A letter is introduced to the children each week, enabling children to link sounds to letters. The book area is clearly defined and used by the children regularly. Children enjoy playing in the writing area and make marks on their paper with different writing materials. Children have opportunities to use the interactive white board to paint and play games. A further range of tools is available and used to develop children's small muscle skills, such as glue spreaders, construction and scissors. Children are very confident speakers and regularly approach staff and friends to chat. They recognise their names because name recognition is a regular feature of the day, for example, during snack time. Counting is a usual element of the routine. As a result, children count confidently. They learn about simple calculation through their active involvement in simple number rhymes, such as the camel song and five current buns. Children explore shape in the environment as they help to fill and empty containers, handle objects and complete puzzles.

The setting has a computer which is a firm favourite amongst the children. Children are able to complete simple programmes to support their learning, such as jigsaw puzzles and memory games. A sand timer is used to help the children to understand a sense of time and to manage turn taking at a popular activity, although not always available. Children receive opportunities to explore and investigate using a wide range of materials, such as jelly, pasta, sand and water. They become involved in growing projects to develop their awareness of change and a clear routine enables children to know what will happen next.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are happy at nursery and respond positively to the kind and caring interactions of staff and have a positive attitude towards diversity. Children become aware of their own and other cultures through a range of resources, planned activities and as they celebrate a variety of festivals. For example, photographs show that children have learnt about making a dragon for Chinese New Year and demonstrate how it is used to the reception children in the school. Children develop a sense of belonging and learn about their own and others needs as staff introduce to the children basic Makaton signs. Visitors into the setting such as, a fire fighter further enable children to find out about the wider world. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff offer good support for children with special needs. Staff are secure in their understanding of the code of practice, which means they are able to meet and plan for children's individual needs. The environment is planned to meet the needs of children with disabilities and therefore ensure that their independence is not compromised; for example, the setting operates on ground level and a disabled toilet is available.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Relationships with parents are friendly and supportive. Parents feel welcome and staff encourage them to become involved with their child's learning and development. Staff ensure parents know how their children are progressing. Parents contribute to an initial assessment of their child. This ensures staff have a good knowledge of individual needs and achievements and helps staff to build on what children

already know. The regular verbal exchange of information, regular newsletters and displays help keep parents informed about their children's care and learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The provider keeps Ofsted fully informed of relevant changes and the recruitment procedures ensure that all adults working at the setting have undergone checks to establish their suitability and qualifications to work with young children. The attendance register confirms that the provider complies with the conditions of registration and the certificate is displayed to keep parents informed of the conditions of registration.

All the required documentation for the safe and efficient management of the setting is in place and understood by practitioners to promote the welfare and care of children. Careful consideration is given to confidentiality and the storage of records to protect children's welfare. The pace and routine is generally well balanced to include times that children can play quietly or engage in active play.

The Leadership and management of the setting are good. Children benefit from qualified and experienced staff who are caring. The staff are committed to attending further childcare training and development courses. This will help them to reflect, monitor and improve the quality of the care and education they offer to all children. Staff are a happy team with a positive approach and are aware of each other's role. They work hard every day to provide the children with a range of activities. Planning and assessment is sound and provides staff with useful information to enable them to provide children with a range of activities. Planning covers all six areas of learning and identifies a learning objective. However, staff provide too much detail on children's individual assessment records and are not always sure for whom the record is specifically for.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection two recommendations were made. These were to ensure behaviour management issues and strategies are fully discussed with parents and ensure parents receive regular information on their children's progress. The behaviour management policy is available and a copy is given to parents when they first place their child at nursery. Parents receive information regarding their child's progress through regular consultation evenings and key worker meetings.

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):

- continue to develop the Birth to three matters planning to include a wider range of developmentally appropriate activities for younger children

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):

- use the useful observations made by practitioners to improve assessment records to provide a clear and simplified picture of children's progress.

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