



Cedars First School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY337754
Inspection date	06 March 2007
Inspector	Kim Mundy
Setting Address	Cedars First School, Whittlesea Road, Harrow, Middlesex, HA3 6LS
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Registered person	The Committee of Cedars 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 satisfactory. 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?

Cedars Pre-School opened in 2006 and operates from a classroom in Cedars First School in Harrow in Middlesex. It previously operated from Cedars youth club in Harrow Weald for 13 years. A maximum of 18 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. It is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 09.15 to 11.45 and 12.30 to 15.00, and Wednesday 09.15 to 11.45, term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 49 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 14 children receive funding for early education. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs five members of staff all of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's well-being is promoted. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place for medication and accidents and two staff hold current first aid certificates. Children are protected from unnecessary illness as they do not attend the setting if they are infectious. They are learning good hygiene practices as staff maintain suitable levels of hygiene, such as hand washing before eating and after using the toilet.

Children are offered healthy and nutritious snacks, for example, fruit and milk. They sit and chat together during sociable snack times. However, the organisation of snack time does not meet the needs of the children effectively because they are all expected to queue up to go to the toilet and their behaviour deteriorates whilst waiting. Children are not able to help themselves to drinking water when they are thirsty.

All children enjoy fresh air and exercise and they are able to make sound progress in their physical development, for example, as they run, balance and steer wheeled toys. Children are using their bodies to explore space as they participate in music and movement. Their fine motor skills are developing well as they access many worthwhile activities, such as threading, picking up and releasing various small objects.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean environment. The organisation of space allows them to move around freely and comfortably. There is a suitable range of furniture, toys and equipment which is well maintained.

Overall, children are safe and secure on the premises because suitable policies and procedures are in place and followed by staff, for example, fire evacuation drills. A risk assessment has not been carried out on the new premises and therefore, children's safety is compromised. Staff work directly with the children in the different areas of the classroom to ensure they are well supervised at all times.

Children are safeguarded from abuse or neglect because staff have a good understanding of their role and responsibilities in child protection. They ensure that they keep up-to-date with local procedures by attending training courses.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery; they are familiar with their environment and feel at home. They communicate their needs and requests well to the staff who talk to them warmly and encourage them to participate in various activities. This increases children's sense of security and as a result, children are confident to initiate their play and extend their learning. All children are offered equal access to the learning opportunities in the classroom. Younger children and less able children are supported to help them to achieve. They are making sense of what they see, hear, smell and touch as they experiment and explore various materials and textures, such as play dough, sand, water, glue and corn flour.

Children have a wide range of individual needs and staff spend time managing their different behaviours well. However, at times this impacts on the other children's learning and ability to concentrate during activities. This is particularly evident during large group story time which does not meet the needs of all the children.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Most of the staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning and overall, they offer a well balanced curriculum. However, planning, observing and evaluating children's progress has not been refined as they are not significantly linked to the stepping stones of the early learning goals. Therefore, some learning opportunities and challenges for more able children are missed. Staff use some sound teaching methods, such as demonstrating new tasks and open-ended questioning to help children to think for themselves and to develop their language skills. Children are making satisfactory progress in all six areas of learning.

Overall, children's personal, social and emotional development is fostered. They are keen to learn and they are able to persist at chosen activities, for example, during a pouring activity at the water play. Children are developing some independent skills, although the classroom is not set up to enable them to make their own choices from a wide range of materials and resources. Children are confident speakers and they begin to initiate conversations with adults and each other. They are able to observe letters and words in the environment, such as their name card which they put on their coat pegs. Children have some opportunities to write spontaneously at the writing table and for a purpose in the baby clinic.

Children are developing their number and problem solving skills as they count, make patterns and compare size. During cooking activities children weigh the ingredients and they explore simple addition and subtraction through number rhymes, such as 'five little ducks'. Children enjoy planting and caring for cress and flowers, observing the changes as they grow. They are finding out how things work as they use magnifying glasses, cash tills and telephones. Children have opportunities to explore colour, shape, space as they paint and stick with various materials. They explore a variety of role-play, for example, in the home corner. Children enjoy playing musical instruments and they sing a range of songs from memory, for example, 'wind the bobbin up'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have close and secure relationships with their carers, especially their key worker who has responsibility for coordinating their care. They are developing confidence and self-esteem as staff offer praise and encouragement, for example, when they are well-behaved and achieve new tasks. Children are provided with a range of resources which reflect positive images, such as dressing up clothes, books, posters and dolls. These resources are beginning to increase the children's awareness of diversity and understanding of others within the wider community. Children are developing confidence and self-esteem as they express their own thoughts and ideas. This means that children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children with English as an additional language and special educational needs are fully integrated and well supported within the setting. Staff use effective teaching methods to help children to develop their understanding by using gestures as well as verbal reasoning and instructions. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals as they set individual targets to help children to make progress during their time at the pre-school.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Information is available to parents about the early years curriculum. Parents receive regular verbal feedback about their child's progress towards the six areas of learning and a written report is provided when they leave the setting. Parents have some opportunities to be involved in their children's learning, such as encouraging their children to bring items from home for the interest table. Parents also enjoy attending festival celebrations, such as Diwali.

Children benefit from the sound relationships between staff and parents. They generally settle well because staff place a strong emphasis on their emotional well-being. Parents are required to stay with their child until they are happy to be left and this contributes to the children's welfare. All parents stated that they are happy with the care and quality of teaching their children receive.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management for nursery education is satisfactory. The manager and deputy have a sound knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals. The setting is generally organised and overall, the children's care, learning and welfare needs are met. However, suitable arrangements are required to meet the needs of all children at snack and story times. A strong emphasis is placed on children's happiness and well-being. The staff work well as a team and appropriate communication systems are in place to benefit the children, for example, staff and planning meetings.

Rigorous recruitment procedures are in place and staff have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities. Staff are kind, keen and motivated. Most of the required documentation is in place to support children's health, safety and well-being. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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

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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):

- ensure that children can access drinking water independently at all times and make suitable arrangements for toileting at snack times
- carry out regular risk assessments and keep a record of the findings
- make suitable arrangements for story time to meet individual children's needs (also applies to nursery education)
- plan learning opportunities in smaller group situations to ensure that all of the children's needs are met at all times (also applies to nursery education)

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):

- continue to develop the planning, evaluation and assessment for all six areas of learning to include outdoor play and ensure that all staff have knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage
- consider the organisation of the classroom to provide more opportunities for children to develop their independence when selecting resources and materials

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