



## Elm Cottage Nursery, Orrishmere

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	307134
<b>Inspection date</b>	01 February 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Julie Wright
<b>Setting Address</b>	Orrishmere Primary School, Worcester Road, Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle, SK8 5NW
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 488 4471
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Yvonne Thomas
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Elm Cottage Day Nursery at Orrishmere was opened in 1999. It operates from an adapted mobile classroom in the grounds of a local school. Children come from a wide area around Cheadle Hulme. It is open from 08.00 until 18.00, Monday to Friday each week, except for Bank Holidays. It is registered to care for a maximum of 29 children at any one time. Children are aged from three months to four years and attend for a variety of sessions. Currently there are 60 children on roll, 24 of whom are in receipt of funding for nursery education.

The setting provides support to children with additional needs. Nine staff work with the children and they have recognised Early Years qualifications. The setting receives support and training from Sure Start.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Suitable policies and procedures are in place, which help to promote the general health and welfare of the children. Most hygiene practices are satisfactory, although there are some inconsistencies. For example, children routinely wash their hands before lunch, but they are not always reminded at snack times. Children benefit from exploratory play involving some foods, such as cereals or custard type desserts. Some of the containers used for children to play with food are also used for other activities, such as sand and water. As children share the resources, tasting and touching them, hygiene is not consistently stringent. Staff make appropriate preparations for mealtimes as they clean the tables and high chairs used for dining. Nappy changing procedures are suitable and minimise the risk of cross-infection between babies. All staff have first aid certificates and they are attentive towards children who may not be feeling well. Accident and medication records are accurately recorded, the majority of which retain confidentiality.

Children's individual dietary requirements are met well in the setting. Staff work closely with parents and they demonstrate a clear understanding of children's specific health or dietary needs. Children have a variety of nutritious foods and the menus are clearly displayed. Mealtimes are social occasions for the children, when they also develop self-esteem. The pre-school children feel important as they recognise their names on labels, serve themselves and help to give out utensils. These children have further independent opportunities as they have continuous access to a 'snack station'. They are able to help themselves throughout the day to items such as dried fruits and drinks. Children make choices and are well hydrated, however, food hygiene is not fully assured as the snack dishes are uncovered and children use their fingers.

Children benefit from varied and regular physical opportunities, both indoors and outside. Activities are planned to suit the different age groups and promote the children's physical development. Learning is encouraged and extended outside, as children willingly take part in organised games. For example, they talk about colours and shapes as they play a 'stepping stones' game on pieces of carpet. Children are also provided with resources for them to use independently and imaginatively. Children carefully manoeuvre a trailer, which is loaded with building blocks, around the play area. They are confident and show pleasure as they take part in the activities, such as ball games and dancing. Children benefit from the fresh air and enjoy frequent outdoor play times, also in wet weather conditions, when they have use of wellies and umbrellas.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are well cared for in a pleasant and caring environment. The premises are secure and maintained in a suitable condition. Rooms are warm and welcoming with bright displays of children's creativity all around. Children are confident in the setting and show a good sense of belonging. Areas are clearly defined and the activities well prepared so that the children immediately engage in play. Staff make constructive use of the space available as they reorganise

the rooms at various times of the day. Most of the toys and equipment are generally well maintained, however, some resources are worn. For example, there is exposed sponge on a support cushion and some of the spouts on children's beakers are faded and visibly marked.

Clear policies and procedures are in place in relation to health and safety regulations. Risk assessments are routinely undertaken on the premises and for outings. Staff demonstrate awareness of safety issues as they remove potential hazards. For instance, they sweep sand and tend to spillages to prevent accidents for the children. The fire drill is practised each month, which means that children become familiar with the procedures and learn about safety. Staffing ratios are clearly met, however, at particularly busy periods, such as lunch and nappy changing times, vigilant supervision is not consistently maintained.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the staff have a clear understanding of child protection issues. Information from training courses is cascaded to all staff. This ensures that their knowledge and awareness of policies and procedures are updated. Parents are informed of the procedures and the responsibilities of staff to safeguard children.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children have strong relationships with their key workers and form good friendships with each other. They are familiar with the environment, showing pleasure and interest in the activities as they move around. Children are well cared for in groups appropriate to their age and ability. Staff plan a wide programme of activities and are flexible in their approach. They consider the children present and adapt the routines accordingly to meet individual needs. All children are encouraged to make choices and take part in the activities available. There is a good balance of spontaneous free play and more focussed adult led activities. From an early age children show developing concentration and enthusiasm as they play. They gather as a small group to listen to a story or sing favourite songs. They play well with imaginative play resources, such as domestic utensils, animals or vehicles. Toddlers run around the room with delight as they are given the space to chase numerous small balloons.

Children are willing and eager participants. The toddlers thoroughly enjoy the 'Tumble Tots' sessions, where they sing, dance and move their bodies to instructions. They develop confidence, coordination and self-esteem as they see their reflections in the low level mirrors. Varied, sensory play opportunities are planned and routinely incorporated into the children's activities. They experience a wealth of textures and tastes as staff provide resources imaginatively, which promote the children's interest. Creativity is encouraged throughout the setting. Younger children make marks with chunky crayons on large pieces of paper taped to the floor. They have fun as they use brushes, their fingers, hands and feet to paint with. Other children show their curiosity as they prefer to watch the activity from a distance. Imaginative play areas are prepared appropriately and used well by the children. The younger children have resources set at a lower level, such as tools and building blocks on a large cushion. They carefully investigate the easily accessible hand puppets and books. Resources in the pre-school room are used to provide children with continuous play and learning opportunities.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The well planned programmes of activities link to the early learning goals and effectively promote the children's overall development. Staff extend the children's learning as they ask them open ended questions during the activities. Children have opportunities to consolidate their learning in free play as they have access to a wide variety of resources. They take part in small and large group activities and have good levels of support from staff. Children are consistently engaged in play and are motivated to learn. Staff make regular observations and are clearly aware of individual progress and children's capabilities. However, the children's progress records do not clearly link with the planning for individual next steps, such as challenges for more able children.

Children are confident, sociable and happily play together. They talk to each other and make interesting observations about their activity. For example, they share resources as they mix porridge with water and notice that the consistency changes. They show concern for each other, such as when a friend is hurt as they fall. Children are competent and independent as they go to the bathroom to wash their hands, serve themselves at lunchtime and help themselves to drinks.

Children express themselves clearly and are confident speakers. They have good communication with staff and each other. Children share their thoughts and ideas as they play and use descriptive language to talk about their experiences. They understand that print has meaning and recognise labels, signs and symbols around the setting. Children begin to overwrite or copy letters and link letters to sounds. They make marks with a purpose, such as in the role play area when they write as they use the toy telephone. Children enjoy activities in which they write letters or invitations and put them in envelopes.

Children use mathematical language in most areas of play. They compare weight, height and size as they measure with scales or build a tower. During focussed activities staff encourage them to consider 'which one is tallest?' or if an item is heavy. However, in everyday routines, such as mealtimes, children are not always involved in simple problem solving or calculation. Children understand capacity as they use various containers to fill and pour from in sand or water play. They confidently count during singing or independent play and recognise or match shapes in various table games.

Children investigate and explore a good variety of sensory play materials. They play with animals placed in a mixture of sand and custard, or dinosaurs in crispy cereals. Children use malleable materials to knead, roll and make shapes with. They have regular opportunities to play with information, communication and technology equipment. For example, they use the computer and mouse with confidence and operate the remote control fire engine. Children begin to understand about cause and effect, or how things work. They show a good sense of time within the routines as they recall events, or talk about a future activity. Children develop awareness of the wider world through well planned activities and celebrations. They go for local walks and talk about nature, the weather and seasons during outdoor play. Children meet some people from the community, such as fire officers and the 'lollipop' lady.

Children are competent in their use of physical play equipment. They are very cooperative and follow directions well in the activities. For example, they like to run around, stop and stand still on command, then walk at different speeds, taking big or small steps. Children respond with

great enthusiasm at the weekly football and ballet sessions. They also develop good spatial awareness and coordination as they take part in regular music and movement activities. Children use a variety of tools and equipment which promote the development of fine motor skills.

Children use their imaginations in the role play areas. They confidently select and put on dressing-up clothes as they play with their friends. Children use the puppets to retell stories which link to the current theme. They use a wide variety of materials in their creative activities, such as making pictures with sand, glitter, feathers and tissue. They make potato prints, which provide more opportunities for them to consider colour, shapes and texture. Children are proud of their achievements which are displayed throughout the setting, or taken home to share with their family. They also express their creativity as they sing, dance and play musical instruments. Overall, children make good progress towards the early learning goals given their capability and start points.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

The individual needs of children are effectively met in the setting. Staff have a good understanding of the equal opportunities policy and implement it well in their everyday practice. They clearly know the children's personal requirements, preferences and personalities. Staff act as good role models to the children and promote positive attitudes and behaviour. Children learn to share, to take care of the toys and to develop respect for other people. Children take part in a variety of celebrations and activities which help them to become aware of diversity. Resources around the nursery provide children with positive images of similarities and differences in people. The setting actively promotes inclusion, working closely with parents and other agencies as required, to meet the specific needs of children.

Children are very well behaved, cooperative and constructive in their activities. They clearly understand and follow staff instructions throughout the daily routines. Children like to help with small tasks and contribute at tidy up time. They are friendly and sociable as they form very good relationships with staff and each other. Children enjoy seeing their photographs and creative achievements displayed, which promotes their self-esteem. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Staff warmly welcome parents into the setting and promote positive working relationships. Effective systems are in place to share information on a regular basis and ensure consistent care. Initial information from parents about their children provides staff with the starting point, on which they plan for developmental progress. Parents may contribute to their child's report each term and they also have access to the records of achievement. Newsletters inform parents of the planned themes and invite them to contribute their ideas towards activities. Parents are also involved in children's learning when children take 'Austin Rabbit' home to look after. The setting provides annual questionnaires in order to seek parent's views of the provision. Parents provide very positive feedback on all aspects of the setting and quality of care.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are settled, secure and very well stimulated in the nursery. They are happy in the care of a suitably qualified and consistent staff team. The setting operates an effective key worker system and staff work well together. They demonstrate a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities towards individuals and groups of children. Staff are efficient in their organisation of the rooms and routines to the benefit of the children. Recruitment and vetting procedures are in place, however, they are not sufficiently robust to fully ensure the health suitability of staff. Induction procedures for new staff are clear and persons with incomplete checks work under supervision to ensure safety for children.

Leadership and management is good. Most staff have attended the 'Birth to three matters' framework training, which is reflected in their practice with the younger children. The pre-school children benefit from a comprehensive range of activities to promote the six areas of learning. Staff demonstrate a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and effectively plan for children's development. They observe children in their daily activities and make notes of their progress and achievements. Children make good progress in all areas of their development.

Management and staff effectively evaluate and monitor their practice in the nursery. They attend regular team meetings, have staff appraisals, discuss planning and review children's activities. Staff apply to attend relevant courses to update their childcare knowledge. Records and documentation are very well organised and maintained in good order. Policies and procedures are comprehensive, available to parents and effectively contribute to the care, safety and welfare of children. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provider was asked to; ensure that there is a trained member of staff who has responsibility for child protection issues and to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues; inform Ofsted of any serious accidents that occur in the nursery and to ensure control of who enters the garden; ensure that any hazardous plants are inaccessible to the children. Since then, staff have attended child protection training and there is now a designated person who takes lead responsibility. Staff are aware of the requirement to notify Ofsted of serious accidents and a gate has been fitted to promote security and restrict access to hazardous plants. These actions result in improvements to the safety and welfare of children.

## **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 good.

### 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):

- improve the vetting and recruitment procedures to ensure that they are fully robust and effectively cover health suitability issues.
- ensure that hygiene routines are consistently encouraged and implemented with 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):

- further develop the planning to clearly link with identified next steps for individual children and ensure sufficient challenges for more able children
- develop the opportunities in every day situations to extend children's mathematical learning in calculation and simple problem solving.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)