



Wootton Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	220169
Inspection date	25 January 2007
Inspector	Andrea Ewer
Setting Address	Wootton Memorial Hall, High Street, Wootton, Northamptonshire, NN4 6LW
Telephone number	07980 960 391
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Registered person	Wootton Playgroup
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 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?

Wootton Pre-School Playgroup has been in operation for approximately 40 years. It is run by a committee of parents for the benefit of the local community, and is based on the outskirts of Northampton. The Pre-School is registered for a maximum of 26 children from two years to under five years old. There are currently 75 children on roll. Of these 55 receive funding for nursery education. The Pre-School opens from 09:15 until 12:15 each weekday and 12:45 until 15:15 on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, during school term time.

A total of seven members of staff work regularly with the children, two of whom hold the equivalent of a Level three qualification in early years, five staff are working towards a qualification.

The pre-school playgroup receives support from a local authority advisory teacher. The group are members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing a very good understanding of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. They are cared for in clean and tidy premises, where children start to learn the importance of cleanliness. Children start to take responsibility for their personal care as they wash their hands before eating and after visiting the toilet and staff explain that this washes away the germs that can make you sick. Children receive appropriate care in the event of minor accidents or illness because sufficient staff hold an up-to-date first aid qualification and a well stocked first aid kit is readily accessible. Records that support staff to maintain children's good health are well maintained, such as, accident and medicine records and written consent is obtained for staff to seek emergency medical treatment or advice.

Children benefit from nutritious snacks that are planned using information from their parents about any specific dietary requirements. They choose from various fruits and drinks, such as grapes, apples, raisins and milk or water which contributes positively to their healthy growth and development. Children are encouraged to develop their taste by trying new foods such as apricots and they understand that eating healthy food gives you lots of energy. Children confidently identify which foods are good for you whilst cutting out pictures of the foods they like, and during stories they talk about sweets not being good for your teeth.

Children enthusiastically participate in physical play both inside and outdoors. They develop their large muscles as they ride on wheeled toys and run around vigorously to let off steam outside. Children climb on the climbing frame with increased skill and walk carefully along the balance beams which helps to develop their co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Overall children play safely in the well-organised environment where positive steps are taken to minimise any hazards and prevent accidents. Careful monitoring of access to the premises ensures children are protected from unknown visitors, and are unable to leave unsupervised. Effective systems are in place to ensure children are collected by authorised adults only and regular risk assessments ensure furniture, equipment and resources are in good condition and suitable for their purpose. Children have fun learning about road safety during indoor activities that help them to understand how to cross roads safely. Although most of the time space is used effectively and allows children to move around freely, occasionally, the organisation of some activities limits staff's ability to supervise children well enough which compromises their safety. Children confidently choose what to play with from the range of stimulating toys and activities that meets their play and development needs well.

Children are well protected from harm or neglect because staff have sound knowledge of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and understand their role and responsibilities in implementing procedures. Good attention is given to ensuring all staff understand the correct procedure to follow and some staff have attended training to update their skills and knowledge. This ensures children's well-being is safeguarded effectively at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the pre-school. They share very good relationships with staff who make every effort to meet children's individual needs. Children develop a sense of security because careful thought is given to helping them to settle into the pre-school environment. For example, at the start of term new children participate in various 'getting to know you' activities such as, bringing in friendship bags containing family photographs and favourite toys to show during circle time. This helps children to make new friends and become familiar with pre-school routines.

Children purposefully engage in the wide range of stimulating activities planned using the 'Birth to three matters' framework. This helps children develop their physical, social, emotional and intellectual skills well. Children start to make their own decisions as they choose which activity to join, whether to play inside or outside and when to have their snack. They become independent as they pour their own drinks and make their own sandwiches at snack time which helps children feel confident in their own abilities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals because staff understand how children learn and successfully use a variety of teaching methods. Most staff have sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and excellent arrangements are in place to support less experienced staff to develop their knowledge. This ensures children continue to make good progress and that more able children are sufficiently challenged to reach their potential. Staff plan and provide a stimulating range of activities, based on the six areas of learning, that captures children's interest. They do not, however, evaluate activities well enough to show clearly where children's learning has been successful or to identify how they could be improved. Children's progress records show clearly what children can do and identifies the next steps for their learning. Although staff know each child well and adapt activities to meet their individual needs, information from children's progress records is not used sufficiently well to plan for individual children.

Children are keen to participate in the activities provided, and make good links in their learning as they enjoy a variety of activities around a theme. They play co-operatively, sharing and taking turns appropriately because they understand what is expected of them. Children are forming friendships with each other and often seek out their friends to share experiences. For example, children chat away contentedly as they draw pictures together. Children speak confidently to express themselves both in small and larger groups. They share their news during circle time where they talk about the animals they saw at the zoo over the weekend. Children respond well to open ended questions and conversations which help to extend their language

and thinking skills. Children have many opportunities for mark making and older children are starting to write their names independently. They are well supported to develop pencil control as part of various activities such as using rulers, stencils and making out receipts in the home corner set up as a shop. Children are developing their early reading skills because good emphasis is placed on encouraging them to enjoy books and stories. They often choose to look at books for pleasure and participate in the pre-school book sharing scheme where they borrow books to take home. Children find their name label to sign themselves into nursery and start to link letters to sounds as staff sound out and point to the first letter of their name.

Generally children are making good progress in mathematics particularly counting. They regularly count spontaneously during their play and at times, with adult support which helps to secure their understanding and develop their confidence in numbers and counting. Children count how many plates and cups they need for each child as they help set the table for snacks. They show an understanding of simple calculation as they talk about how many siblings they have and add one more to include themselves. Children do not, however, have enough opportunities to gain an understanding of weights and measure. Children use mathematical language confidently and understand pairs, bigger, smaller and 'more than'. They recognise shapes such as squares, circles, and sort and match colours confidently.

Children have regular access to a computer and are making good progress in their use of information communication technology in their play. They show curiosity as they investigate and explore how things work. For example, children use the remote control to move the robot around, operate tape recorders while listening to stories and explore the properties of a variety of materials using metal detectors. Children have very good opportunities to learn about living things. They observe the chicks hatching during a visit to a local farm and plant bulbs and sunflower seeds and care for them as they grow.

Children develop their small muscles as they regularly use a wide range of tools and equipment, such as, rulers and stencils to draw pictures and use rolling pins and potato mashers as they create models with play dough. This helps develop their hand-eye co-ordination. Children have great fun as they eagerly move their bodies to music. They wiggle their fingers as they pretend to play a piano and stretch their arms as they play the trombone which helps children build on their physical skills. Children use their imagination well as they act out real life situations in the home corner where they brush staff's hair at the hairdresser and dress up for Halloween. They explore colour and texture during craft activities where they make sand pictures and use various materials to make collages.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enter the pre-school happily and settle quickly. They share warm, caring relationships with consistent staff who know them well, which helps children to feel valued. Their individual needs are met well because staff work effectively with parents. Useful information is obtained from parents about their children and shared regularly thereafter to ensure children feel secure and receive appropriate care. Children develop a positive self-esteem as they play with toys and activities that positively represents themselves and helps them appreciate diversity. For example, children celebrate cultural festivals such as Chinese New Year and Diwali, play with

dolls of various colours in traditional outfits and act out real life situations as they play with small world people who have a disability.

Children who have learning difficulties receive appropriate care and support because staff confidently implement the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. All children who have learning difficulties are fully included in the life of the pre-school and staff work closely with parents and outside agencies to provide care and activities that help these children reach their full potential.

Children are very well behaved and use good manners. They feel secure because they know what is expected of them and are familiar with everyday routines. Children respond well to the effective strategies that successfully supports them to behave well and take responsibility for their own behaviour. For example, children put their name label on the notice board if another child is using the computer and understand that it is their turn next and that when there are four children sitting at the snack table they must wait until there is a space. This positively helps children understand how to share and take turns. Children look forward to taking the good behaviour bunny home as a reward for behaving particularly well. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs are fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Parents provide valuable information about what their children can do when they enter the Foundation Stage. This enables staff to effectively provide suitable activities that help children make progress. Useful information is given to parents that explains the Foundation Stage, such as, attractively presented monthly newsletters that clearly show children involved in activities related to each area of learning. Children's records are shared with parents regularly during parents' meetings and are readily available on request. This helps parents support their children's learning at home and keeps them up-to-date with their children's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Generally children benefit from the well-organised staff, space, and resources that allows them to play and develop their ideas in a safe environment. Children are grouped with a key worker and sufficient staff are deployed effectively to ensure appropriate care is provided. Staff work well as a team, are motivated, and clear about their roles and responsibilities. As a result children are secure, confident and well cared for.

Clear policies and procedures that are implemented consistently by staff, underpin the practice in all areas of the pre-school. Well-maintained children's records that support staff to provide appropriate care and promote children's welfare are in place.

The leadership and management of the pre-school is good. The welfare, care and learning of all children is promoted successfully. Children receive a high standard of care and nursery education because the management committee and managers work cohesively to implement robust recruitment procedures that ensure staff are suitable, and new staff are well supported during induction. Children benefit from the strong commitment to training and development

of staff which positively supports all children to make good progress. For example, several staff are currently working towards a relevant qualification or updating their skills through training, which will enhance the care and nursery education provided. The use of evaluation and reflection is effective in monitoring the quality of teaching and children's progress towards the early learning goals.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last care inspection recommended that the pre-school develop the equal opportunities policy to ensure that it is consistent with current legislation and ensure that the policy is implemented and monitored by all staff. Children's welfare is now promoted more effectively because the equal opportunities policy has been updated to take account of the Disability Discrimination Act. The policy has been shared with all staff who implement it consistently. This ensures all children feel valued as they continue to be treated with equal concern.

The last nursery education inspection recommended that the pre-school develop further opportunities for children to select their own resources. The pre-school have purchased furniture that is brought out daily and allows children to select additional resources to develop their play and ideas, particularly during creative activities.

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 the organisation of activities promotes children's safety at all times

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):

- provide more opportunities for children to learn about weighing and measuring
- develop the use of evaluation to show more clearly when children's learning has been successful or areas to be developed
- develop the use of children's progress records to inform planning for individual children.

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