



Little Furze Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY339025
Inspection date	09 March 2007
Inspector	Julie Whitelaw
Setting Address	Oxheywood Primary School, Oxhey Drive, WATFORD, WD19 7SL
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Registered person	Little Furze 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?

Little Furze Pre-School has been in operation since 1992. They have operated from Oxhey Wood School since September 2006. The pre-school has use of a classroom and a wide central corridor which leads to the cloakrooms and a secure outside play area.

The entrance of the setting is at the back of the school, families do not access the group through the main building. The group serves the local community and is open term time from 09:15-11:30, Monday to Friday. A maximum of 26 children aged from two to five years may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 28 children on role, 11 of whom receive funding for nursery education. A lunch club may be offered at the site, this will depend on demand. This operates from 11:30 until 12:45. The pre-school employs five members of staff, of whom three hold an early years qualification. The setting supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy the benefits of fresh air and exercise as they have the opportunity to play outside most days. Their physical skills are promoted adequately as they ride bikes around the track, push prams and throw balls into the net. Children enjoy playing on the climbing frame. Indoors, they are encouraged to be active as they bend, stretch, hop and skip to music tapes. Children have the opportunity to explore a range of tools that develop their fine motor skills.

Three members of staff hold a valid first aid qualification that complies with the National Standards requirements. A stocked first aid box is easily accessed. Therefore, children's health is promoted as staff can deal with minor accidents or emergencies.

Children learn about personal hygiene through their daily routine. They wash their hands after messy craft activities, following use of the toilet and before eating. However, staff do not explain why they need to do this and when questioned children are unable to say why. Therefore, children are unaware of the importance of hand washing. Effective measures are followed to protect children from illness and cross infection. Children who are sick are excluded from the setting. Staff wear disposable gloves when nappy changing and supporting children with toileting needs. Tables are regularly cleaned with an anti-bacterial solution. This promotes children's health.

Information regarding children's dietary requirements is obtained from parents before children start at the setting. Children benefit from nutritious, healthy snacks such as fruit, cheese and yoghurts. Staff ensure that these comply with children's dietary needs to ensure children remain healthy. Children have a carton of milk at snack time and can independently access water throughout the session. This ensures they stay hydrated. However, children are not involved in the preparation of snacks and there is little discussion about the food they eat, to reinforce their understanding of healthy eating.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, safe, secure and well maintained environment. Staff visually check the premises before children arrive. Steps have been taken to minimise hazards within the setting. Socket covers are in place and hinge protectors prevent children from trapping their fingers in the door. Staff closely supervise the arrival and departure of children. There is a high handle on the door. Therefore, children's safety is promoted as they are unable to leave the premises unsupervised. In the outside play area, there is a secure perimeter fence. The climbing frame has been sited on safety surface and staff supervise children as they use this equipment, which allows children to play independently and safely.

The setting has a good range of toys and resources. These are regularly cleaned and checked for damage. This ensures they are safe for the children who attend. Children demonstrate an understanding of staying safe as they adhere to the rules, such as not running indoors in case

they fall. They develop an understanding of safety as they learn how to cross the road correctly. Visits from the fire brigade and regular fire drills ensure children are aware of how to stay safe in the event of a fire. Children are protected because staff have an adequate understanding of child protection issues and procedures and know what action they should take if they suspect a child is being abused.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children happily separate from their parents and carers and enjoy the time they spend at play group. They are making steady progress in their learning, leisure and personal development. They independently select the resources they want to play with and quickly engage in their chosen activity. Children concentrate well at registration time. They persist, for example, when building towers with bricks and are keen to play with the sand and play dough. Children feel secure within the environment because they know what is going to happen next as there is a clear routine to the session. Most children are happy to join in the planned activities. However, planning and assessment for younger children is not based on an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and some activities are not appropriate. This potentially hinders children's development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Qualified staff have an adequate understanding of the Foundation Stage and plan a range of activities that help children make progress towards the early learning goals. Planning covers the six areas of learning and shows learning intentions. However, not all aspects within the areas are covered. Children are observed and assessed. However, assessments are infrequently completed and do not inform planning or cover all aspects. Staff organise the environment to promote children's independence and free choice in their play. They use repetition to reinforce children's understanding of concepts such as numbers, the days of the week and months of the year. They ask open ended questions that encourage children to think. The flexible approach staff have takes account of children's individual needs.

Children confidently express their needs. For example, they say which toys they want to play with and inform staff when they need to go to the toilet. Their self-care skills and independence is promoted as they are encouraged to put on their coats and wash their hands after messy play and before eating. Children interact well with their peers and play co-operatively in the home corner. They understand the need to share and take turns. Children's communication skills are developing well. They concentrate and listen attentively at registration time and during group activities. For example, children play the instruments loudly and softly when asked, during a music session. Children independently select books, enjoy looking at the pictures and understand that print carries meaning. They are keen to trace or write their name, which they are familiar with as it is on their coat pegs and name plates.

Children develop an understanding of number as each morning they count all the children who are present at registration time. Their knowledge of shapes is promoted as they complete jigsaw puzzles and through planned activities. Children's understanding of calculation is promoted

through songs. However, the daily routine is not utilised to reinforce children's understanding of mathematical concepts. Children appropriately use cameras and electric kettles and so become familiar with everyday technology. Their understanding of nature is promoted when they explore the grounds of the school and complete activities such as bark rubbing. However, there are few opportunities for children to learn about the local area and develop a sense of place. Children enjoy playing with sand and manipulating play dough. Opportunities to explore different materials are limited, which hinders children's development in this area. Children's understanding of different cultures is developed through planned activities.

Children are keen to paint, however there are limited resources available that children can independently access to promote free creative expression. They enjoy singing songs and rhymes. They enthusiastically play their instruments in time to the music. Children have opportunities to develop their physical skills in the outside play area, as they ride bikes, play on the climbing frame and aim balls into the basket ball net. However, planning does not cover outside play and staff do not track the progress children make in this area or fully utilise this time to promote children's learning in all areas. Children use their imagination well when playing in the home corner. For example, three children fill a basket with play food and move around the classroom, pretending to be on a journey to visit their Nan. Staff interact with them and ask questions which extends their play. The combination of planned activities and free play ensure children make progress.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are treated with equal concern and their backgrounds are valued. They develop a sense of belonging when they see their work displayed and their names on their coat pegs. Children learn about the wider world through planned activities and discussion. There is a satisfactory range of resources that develop children's understanding of differences in society that includes books, jigsaws, dolls, small world toys and musical instruments.

Children with special needs are welcomed into the setting. They are supported adequately as staff are aware that they may need additional support or resources to enable them to reach their potential. Staff actively seek support from outside agencies to ensure children's needs are met. Children behave well. Staff manage their behaviour in a calm, consistent manner that promotes their welfare and development. They use praise and encouragement to reinforce positive behaviour. Children's spiritual, moral and social development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents praise the setting and feel that staff are friendly and approachable. They receive basic information about the Foundation Stage in the prospectus. Curriculum planning is displayed in the hall for parents to view. Parents verbally share information about their child with staff informally. They are made aware that they can discuss their child's progress but few take up this opportunity. Therefore, parents are not informed of the progress children make towards the Early Learning Goals. Ways to involve parents in children's learning are limited

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a small team of staff who work well together. Over half the staff hold an early years qualification. This ensures that they have a sound understanding of how children learn through play. Staff demonstrate that they are aware of their roles and responsibilities which ensures the smooth running of the daily routine. They are planning to up date their knowledge of child protection, food hygiene and special needs by attending further training. This will improve the outcomes for children.

The environment and resources are effectively organised to promote children's independence and free choice in their play. The familiar daily routine ensures children are busy, have fun and feel secure. They have the opportunity to experience a range of activities and the daily opportunity to play outside.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff informally discuss the daily plan and children's progress for half an hour before each session starts. The manager leads by example and demonstrates to new or unqualified staff how to implement activities. This develops staff's skills to benefit children. However, there is little focus on monitoring and evaluating the provision for nursery education or care provided and therefore there is no clear vision of how the setting plan to improve the care and education for all children. Staff are committed to promoting and inclusive environment in which every child matters. Overall, children's needs are met.

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 the 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):

- develop further children's understanding of good health and hygiene
- develop planning and assessment of younger children in an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework

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):

- develop planning to ensure that all aspects within the six areas of learning are covered and assessments to show how children make progress along the stepping stones. Ensure assessments are regularly updated and inform planning
- develop the partnership with parents to ensure there are formal channels of communication to share children's progress and establish ways to involve parents in their child's learning
- develop the leadership and management of the setting to ensure that systems are in place to assess the strengths and weaknesses and monitor and evaluate the provision for nursery education to improve the outcomes for children.

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