

Westfields Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	110081
Inspection date	19 April 2007
Inspector	Amanda May
Setting Address	Scout Hut, Monteagle Lane, Yateley, Hampshire, GU46 6LU
Telephone number	01252 879846 or 01252 661626
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Registered person	Westfields Pre-School 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Westfields Pre-School Playgroup opened in 1987. It is a committee run group which operates from the Monteagle Scout Hut in Yateley and has access to the main hall, toilets, kitchen and share enclosed outdoor play facilities. The pre-school serves children and parents from the local area.

The group is registered to provide sessional care for 26 children aged from two to under five years, although children do not usually attend until they are two years and nine months old. There are currently 40 children on roll and this includes 35 children who are in receipt of nursery education funding. The setting supports children who have learning difficulties or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 11:45 Monday to Friday and 12:15 to 14:45 on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. On Mondays and Wednesdays the group operates a lunch club between 11:45 and 13:10. A 'rising fives' club is held on a Thursday afternoon for children who will soon be starting school. Activities such as IT and PE are incorporated into the session in order to prepare children for school life.

There are six members of staff that work with the children, of these, five staff members have an early years qualification to NVQ level two or three. Staff access ongoing training via the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and the setting receives support from the Early Years Childcare Service (EYCS).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a good range of physical activities that include use of a play-park which is situated next door to the pre-school. Children climb tyre ladders and smile as they are pushed on the swings. Children also enjoy walks around the field picking up items to bring back to pre-school to make a collage with. Children visibly enjoy being outside in the fresh air as they pretend to be dinosaurs chasing each other around the wide open space.

Children learn about personal hygiene through daily routines. They independently wash their hands after messy play, and use paper towels to dry them. Staff provide children with damp paper towels to wipe their hands before a healthy snack of banana, apple, melon and raisins. Staff pour children drinks of milk or water, with some children being encouraged to help pour their own drinks from a large jug. Children develop social skills as they sit around tables to eat their snack, with a member of staff sat joining in their conversation. Staff talk to the children about how the fruits taste, and whether the apple is crunchy. This encourages children to think about what they are eating, and discuss with each other their favourite fruits.

Accidents and the administering of medication are managed appropriately and shared with parents. Training has been arranged for staff concerning how to administer an epi-pen. Currently no children with severe allergies attend the setting, however staff are committed to being able to provide good quality care as soon as they start. This demonstrates good organisational skills as well as a clear understanding of issues concerning the protection of children's health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe indoor environment. Staff make daily risk assessments of the building, as well as the adjacent play-park which the pre-school make use of for physical play. All members of staff have a good understanding of risks within the setting, and as a result children play in an environment which is safe. Children benefit from topics such as 'stranger danger' where they talk about what they should do if they get lost, or if someone they don't know offers them sweets. Children show a good understanding of what they should do, and know ways in which they can keep themselves safe. Visitors to the setting are signed in, and alarms are in place on the front door which makes staff aware of any unauthorised entry, protecting children at all times.

Effective fire evacuation procedures are in place, and are practised every two months with staff and children. All staff are aware of their own responsibilities, and as fire drills are practised and evaluated, they are aware of improvements which could be made and practised next time. This ensures children's safety is continuously protected through good procedures. Children are kept safe through the manager's full understanding of issues surrounding safeguarding children. Staff are aware of who they would report any concerns to, and the manager has full procedures in place which she would follow if she was concerned about a child's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children experience a wide and varied range of activities which contribute well to their development. Children benefit from being able to self select resources from small storage units around the room. Children arrive at the setting and confidently choose an activity that interest them, before waving goodbye to their parents. Resources are well displayed throughout the day, and children move confidently around different tables of activities such as jelly play, computerised toys and construction. Children gain high levels of self esteem and confidence through consistent praise and encouragement from staff. They show pride in their achievements as they cut out shapes from Play-Dough. Firm friendships are in place, and children seek out their friends to sit next to at snack time and during play. Children are happy, settled and content as they confidently move around the setting enjoying the activities on offer.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff support children in their learning effectively through their knowledge of the foundation stage and the Birth to three matters framework. All members of staff take responsibility for planning activities with specific learning goals each week, however not all activities have a clear learning outcome for children. As a result, children are not challenged consistently throughout all the activities on offer. To ensure all staff are aware of the curriculum guidance for the foundation stage, they are given details of the stepping stones. These are linked to observations of children individually as well as during group work. Staff therefore are kept aware of specific children's abilities and struggles. Although children's key-workers are aware of these, as they are not currently linked to the future planning, children are not effectively supported to make the next step in their learning.

Although planning does not consistently high-light learning outcomes for each activity, staff members do challenge children in their learning. During jelly play, children are encouraged to think about the texture of jelly, and are also given containers of different sizes to prompt children to discover ideas surrounding the terms full and empty. Children can point out which container can hold the most jelly, and know what would happen if they poured jelly from the big container to the little one. However, there is not consistent challenging or outcomes for these activities, so learning opportunities are not maximised. During their play and learning, children concentrate well. They show wonder and excitement as they discover new things, and enjoy having the opportunity to experience hands on learning. They concentrate well on their activity and persist until they succeed.

Children are confident in their language skills, and talk openly in front of their friends during registration time. Staff question children about their experiences, and children as a result are challenged to think and describe. Children take turns to bring in the alphabet bag from home containing things beginning with the same letter of the alphabet. Children show their friends, and explain why they brought in a recorder and what it does. Children have some opportunities to recognise their own names as they self register at the beginning of the day, and take their name card to the snack table. Children find their laminated names to put on top of their work to take home, however little attempt is made by children to write their own names on their work or mark make. Children enjoy having many opportunities to gain an increased knowledge of the world around them, and this is supported well within the setting. Children play with cameras and telephones during a table top activity. They show interest in where to put a film in the camera, and in opening and closing the lens cap. Children talk freely about textures of

objects such as at snack time, and during messy activities and have opportunities to access electronic toys which begin to develop their IT skills.

Mathematical development within the setting is encouraged through children being involved in updating the pre-school calendar. Children are eager to show they can recognise numbers up to 10 as they find the date. As children play with Play-Dough, children explain that by rolling it out with the rolling pin you can make the dough longer. Children have a wide vocabulary surrounding mathematical terms and ideas, however these are not always fully challenged by staff. Activities to encourage children's physical development are not consistently planned, and although children can access hoops and balls as well as parachute games, there is little structure during physical play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children appear relaxed and at home in the comfortable environment. They confidently make choices and take decisions as they initiate and extend their own play and learning. They become aware of the wider society as they make trips out into the local community to the supermarket to buy and weigh fruit, as well as trips on the bus. Children have a wide range of resources that celebrate ethnic diversity. Children develop self-esteem and respect for others as they learn about differences and similarities through discussion. Children who attend with English as an additional language are supported effectively. The setting ensures parents are fully aware of the pre-school's policies through offering them to be translated into the families home language. Signs and posters are also displayed around the setting depicting people in different traditional costumes, and labelled in different languages. This ensures children learn about different people's backgrounds as well as being welcoming to children from different cultures. Children have equal access to all toys and resources, and to ensure children have equal opportunities within the setting, a checklist is completed every half term. This demonstrates the providers understanding of the importance of equal opportunities, and belief in full and fair access to all. Children who attend the setting who have learning difficulties and disabilities receive valuable support from staff. Staff share information effectively with each other and parents in order to ensure children's individual needs are met. Children benefit from one to one care and supervision, whilst being fully included in all activities on offer at the setting.

Children learn about their local community as they enjoy visits from the police and fire brigade. Children have the opportunity to sit in the fire engine, and in the summer help the fire-fighters to spray the hoses on the field. Children also benefit from visits from a lady who uses a guide dog, allowing children to gain a better understanding of disabilities. Children at the pre-school behave very well. They show care and consideration for others as they play together. Members of staff support children through encouraging them to share and take turns whilst playing games in groups. Although secure policies are in place to deal with poor behaviour, these are rarely used as children are kept stimulated and interested in their activities. Staff act as positive role models, and as a result children understand the differences between right and wrong, and there is a mutual respect between children and staff. As a result, children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Parents are kept informed of the their child's progress through opportunities to receive feedback after each session. Parents feel welcome at the pre-school and are very pleased with the service they receive. A notice board is in place in the foyer, which includes the settings policies and procedures. The setting provides a comments box for parents to make suggestions to improve the service. Children benefit from settling in visits before they start at the setting. Parents are encouraged to stay with their children as they look around the setting for the first time, and discover some of the activities on offer.

This also gives parents an opportunity to ask any questions about the care their children will receive.

The quality of the partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are kept informed and involved in their child's learning by being given details about the foundation stage and Birth to three matters framework within the prospectus. Parents also have the opportunity to find out about the topics which the pre-school is covering each week. However, parents are not able to easily view the planning for the week and so are unable to know exactly what their children are learning about. Children's key-worker files are sent home twice a year for parents to view. These files include observation records, and highlighted stepping stones which their children have achieved. Parents are able to support children's learning through bringing in items from home for the alphabet bag, however there appears to be little other input from parents to assist children's learning and development within the setting. Parents and carers are asked when children first start at the session about their abilities, however these are generally more developmental rather than educational. Therefore it is difficult to know what children can already do when they start at the setting, and children may not be sufficiently challenged as a result.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from a well organised setting. Resources and activities are skilfully spread out across the hall, and as a result children are kept engrossed and stimulated. Staff ratios are well maintained, and staff are deployed effectively. Staff work well as a team and work conscientiously together to achieve similar goals. Children enjoy working at tables with staff, and benefit from regular group work with their key-worker. As a result of this, children's abilities and struggles can be easily observed.

The setting has procedures in place that work in practise to promote children's welfare. The documentation that is required is in place and is shared effectively with staff and parents. Documents are organised well to ensure confidentiality is maintained at all times. Robust recruitment procedures are in place to ensure the suitability of all staff members. Good training opportunities are available for staff which ensures the setting continuously improves its service and provides new experiences to all children. The manager makes good use of staff member's individual skills, as they cascade down knowledge during in-house training. All staff members are aware of policies and procedures, and discuss their service at regular team meetings. The setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. Through regular planning meetings the manager reviews each member of staff's understanding of the curriculum for the foundation stage. All members of staff are involved in planning activities to aid children's learning, and have a sound knowledge of the stepping stones and early learning goals. Members of staff are dedicated to supporting children in their learning, and observe children's struggles and abilities to add to their key-worker files. However, the observations are not currently used to support children's specific individual needs in future planning to ensure they are continuously supported in their next steps of learning.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the provider was recommended to ensure that the complaints procedure includes the address and telephone number of the registering authority (Ofsted)

and to ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to access imaginative, role play activities.

As a result of the improvements made, children now benefit from more resources that encourage imaginative play. Children play in a sweet shop and grocer shop with tills, money, shopping baskets and play food. Children have many opportunities to dress up in outfits and look at themselves in mirrors to see how they look, increasing their imagination in play.

The setting has updated the complaints procedure which includes the address and contact telephone number of Ofsted. This is also actively shared with parents, to keep them informed of the settings policies.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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):

- improve and develop methods for ensuring parents are involved fully in their child's learning, and find out about children's starting points in order to ensure they are consistently challenged.

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):

- ensure planning covers activities for all areas of learning which have clear objectives, and support children's needs through using observations to reflect on future plans,

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