

Owlsmoor Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 119250
Inspection date 09 May 2007
Inspector Carol Patricia Willett

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Registered person Owlsmoor 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 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?

Owlsmoor Preschool opened in 1982. It operates from a purpose built building in Owlsmoor, Berkshire. The preschool serves the local area. A maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time. The preschool is open five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 until 11:30 on Monday to Friday and afternoons from 12:30 until 15:00 on Monday to Thursday. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 69 children from two to five years on roll. This currently includes 35 funded three and four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The preschool supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and English as an additional language.

There are ten staff who work with the children; of these five, including the supervisor, have appropriate early years qualifications. Three of these are temporary staff. The pre-school is a member of the Preschool Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The premises where the children play are maintained in a suitable clean condition as staff follow good health and hygiene procedures. Staff ensure children play in a clean indoor environment and wipe down tables before children have their snack; this ensures children stay healthy. Children show an appropriate understanding of good hygiene practice. They get tissues for their noses and wash their hands with soap and water after using the toilet, playing outside and messy play. Staff give gentle reminders and explain the importance when the children are reluctant. They use a hand wash gel at their tables before they handle food at snack time, in order to limit the time spent for all children to wash their hands.

Children develop an understanding of healthy eating through the daily healthy snacks they are given. They freely choose from the range of fruit provided and have as much as they want to satisfy their appetites, accompanied by milk or water. They enjoy toast at other times and enthusiastically choose the topping, showing skills as they spread the butter and the jam. They develop good independence, as well as social and physical skills, as they pour drink from jugs into their cups and chatter about their families. One child explains "he will get big like his brother if they eat their fruit".

Staff obtain relevant information from parents to ensure their dietary needs are known, these are displayed so all staff are aware. Staff are first aid trained ensuring children receive appropriate care if they have an accident; records of all accidents are maintained containing all relevant detail. Staff undertake further training to ensure they are able to deal with any serious allergies, for example, nut allergies. There is no written policy regarding care of sick children or for giving medication, although suitable procedures are followed.

Children enthusiastically take part in daily physical activity sessions. Where they have good opportunities to reinforce and further develop their physical skills to maintain a healthy body. They enjoy lively singing sessions, they match actions and words as they sing head and shoulders, knees and toes. They play outside in the fresh air daily on the wheeled toys, showing good spatial awareness as they carefully manoeuvre round each other. They confidently climb on the range of equipment in the garden and kick and throw balls into nets. They enjoy races and playing games, such as 'What's the time Mr Wolf ', running around with excitement and enthusiasm.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play and learn in a warm, welcoming and safe environment, which is generally well maintained. They have access to two rooms in purpose built premises, which are beginning to show signs of age. However, staff organise the rooms effectively to support children's development and play. A smaller room is used for small group work and wet and creative play. Children easily access the spacious outdoor play area, which is safe and secure. Providing them with a suitable area to develop their physical skills and enjoy a range of activities and equipment, including growing flowers and vegetables in raised beds.

Staff greet children and parents warmly on arrival. They ensure the rooms are set up ready for when the children arrive, so they feel welcome and secure. Displays of group collages and some

children's work are put on the walls, to provide a more welcoming child friendly environment and develop children's sense of belonging. Children access an appropriate range of good quality age appropriate toys and play materials put out daily by the staff. This ensures they can make good progress to the early learning goals. Due to limited storage facilities children are not able to access all the play materials. Staff rotate the toys checking to ensure all children access all the toys and resources. Children are given some choice, as they are able to select from some resources put out in low shelving. This is not always effectively organised or imaginatively stocked, for example, the drawing area shelving has only paper which limits children's choice and creativity.

Staff generally follow good health and safety procedures so children stay safe. They complete risk assessments. Staff use a tick list to check the premises daily, both inside and out. Staff ensure all hazards are removed and resources are safe for use, so the children can play safely and confidently. The entrance door is kept locked to protect the children whilst they are on the premises and good procedures are in place when children are collected. Children develop confidence and awareness as they take part in regular fire drills, which are logged. They develop an understanding of their own safety. Staff use daily experiences to develop children's understanding, such as using scissors safely and not climbing on the chairs as they might hurt themselves.

Children stay safe in the preschool as staff are experienced and suitably vetted. They supervise children closely at all times. Staff have a good understanding of the policies, procedures and documentation in place to protect children, including child protection and if a child is uncollected or lost.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and relaxed and enjoy their time in the preschool as staff are kind and caring. They develop their knowledge and skills within a stimulating and supportive atmosphere. They receive good quality care and occupy themselves well playing independently and in small groups. They access a wide range of resources and have good relationships with staff, who take a good interest in them and support them in their play. Staff provide an interesting range of activities and resources, so children busily occupy themselves during the sessions. Staff have a suitable knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and the Birth to three matters framework to support children's development. They use a pictorial time line to enable children to understand the routine and the passage of time during the session so they become confident and secure.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress in all areas of development. Children busily occupy themselves throughout the session. They are friendly, sociable and can share and take turns when using resources, such as the computer and wheeled toys. They join in well at group times and are confident to share their experience and family life. Most children are confident articulate speakers. They join in discussions with interest as they have their snacks. Discussing different types of fruit they like, their families and how eating fruit makes you big and strong. They are eager to be involved in activities and can concentrate as they use the appropriate software programmes on the computers, use the paints and make collages with a variety of materials as staff support them well. They feel a sense of achievement as they proudly show their pictures to their friends and their parents when they

are collected. They are polite, behave well and show concern for others during play. They show independence as they choose what they wish to play with and understand the daily routines of the setting. Children confidently initiate conversations with each other. They develop an understanding and awareness of word shapes as they select their own name card on arrival. They enjoy looking at books and happily read them to their friends, as they spontaneously sit in the comfortable book corner. However, children do not have access to a wide range of information books. They enjoy mark making on chalkboards and use the writing area to draw pictures and talk to staff. Staff use opportunities as they arise to consolidate children's counting skills. For example, all children join in as they count to the number of friends in preschool. Staff develop children's mathematical skill during daily activities such as, when they thread cotton reels and sing familiar number songs about current buns in the bakers shop. They show a sound understanding of different shapes and name them during the threading activity. They understand comparative language and are able to correctly identify the largest and smallest balls.

Children's observation skills are good. They notice the changes in the weather during the day, as they see if the rain has stopped so they can go outside to play. They develop their awareness of the natural world through planned activities, as they plant flowers and vegetables in the garden. They plant strawberries, discussing who likes them and grow sunflower seeds to take home and observe, in order to continue learning at home and to develop strong links. They learn to be responsible for pets as they help to feed the preschool fish.

Children independently solve problems they encounter during play. They show good hand-eye coordination as they operate the mouse whilst using the computer to support their learning. Children's physical development is very good. They enthusiastically take part in outside play and skilfully manoeuvre wheeled toys, as they pedal and scoot around the playground. They show a good sense of balance as they play on the rocker and take care as they use the climbing frames, slides and the stilts. They love to sing and join in matching actions and words to familiar songs. They enjoy taking part in creative activities as they contribute to the large sunflower display and the spring picture with woolly sheep. They use their imagination well while freely painting and when making collages from a range of materials, such as pasta and shells. The children shout with delight when staff introduce musical instruments into activities. They learn to follow the band leader to see when they should stop and start their playing, as they play the instruments to accompany their singing. Children's creative development is generally good. However, they are not able to freely access a wide range of recycled materials to develop props for their role play or initiate their own creative ideas.

Staff use their time effectively to prepare the environment and activities before children arrive. All staff take part in planning a good range of activities so children have daily opportunities to progress in all learning areas. Regular observations are made of children's learning. Staff maintain assessment records which show children's progress through the stepping stones. Staff have high expectations of children with regard to behaviour, as a result children behave very well during sessions where they feel secure and well supported.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop good self-esteem as staff take a continual and genuine interest in them. Their work is valued and their artwork of a large sunflower and sheep collages are displayed in the playroom. Children develop a sense of ownership in their environment as they have their own named trays and coat pegs. They show a sense of responsibility as they help tidy away toys

before snack time and at the end of the session. They play happily with one another, for example, children share and take turns with their friends as they pedal wheeled toys and use the computer.

Planned topics and resources within the setting help develop children's awareness of different cultures and diversity within society, although there are limited resources to develop children's awareness of disabilities. Staff appropriately foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through planned activities and daily routines. Staff treat all children with equal concern. They work well in partnership with parents and with outside agencies as appropriate to ensure all individual needs are met.

Children's behaviour is generally good. They respond positively to staff requests and learn good manners from staff who act as positive role models. Staff provide clear explanations when behaviour is not acceptable. Children are happy to share resources and take turns, sometimes using timers for more popular toys such as bikes and the computer.

The partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from this positive partnership. Parents are warmly welcomed into the preschool and encouraged to be involved with their child's learning. They are very positive about the care and education their children receive. They receive regular and detailed information about preschool practice via newsletters, verbal exchanges and information displayed. They are invited to view their children's records at any time. Parents have access to preschool policies. However, the complaints policy has yet to be updated to show the current address of the regulator and some policies are not in place regarding children's health.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children play and learn within a secure stimulating learning environment and are happy and settled within the preschool. Staff are effectively deployed during sessions. They work well as a team, covering for each other as needed. They organise the environment so all areas of development are covered and children can make good progress to the early learning goals. Staff are kind, caring and sensitively support children in developing their knowledge and skills. Professional development is encouraged for all staff, to ensure they have the appropriate skills and knowledge to teach and care for all children. Staff recruitment practices are sound. There are effective procedures in place to ensure staff continue to be suitable through appraisal systems. However, recruitment procedures do not include obtaining information about staff's health in order to ensure that children are fully protected.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. Staff meet regularly in order to plan for development and provide consistency. They work closely with the local authority, undertaking training to improve their education provision in order to deliver education of new initiatives, such as 'Talk Time'. Practice is not always effectively evaluated and reviewed in order to be aware of the setting's strengths and areas for development, such as the drawing area and garden environment. Management monitor the provision for nursery education in order to ensure all records have been consistently completed with all necessary detail.

Most policies and procedures are in place and work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. Documentation to support all areas of practice is maintained. Overall, the preschool meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the preschool were required to improve the recording of risk assessment in order to identify any hazards. The preschool have made good progress in this area. They have produced a daily tick sheet to ensure all areas are checked before children arrive, this ensures children stay safe on the premises. They were also required to provide a complaints policy which is shared with parents with contact details of the regulator. The pre-school has made good progress and a written policy is available and displayed for parents to see. This ensures children's welfare is safeguarded.

The last education inspection did not identify significant weaknesses. The preschool has made good progress on the two issues identified for consideration for further improvement; regarding staff performance to monitor and promote staff development and to use the reassessment systems more fully to plan children's individual progress. There are annual staff appraisals and these are used to identify staff strengths and areas for development. All staff are committed to updating their knowledge and skills, they attend local authority and in-house training. Children benefit from the improved knowledge and skills of the staff. Staff use children assessment records to inform planning and to set individual targets for children's learning in order to identify and maximise their progress and development.

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):

- develop written procedures, that are shared with parents, when children are sick and when giving medication
- improve recruitment procedures to include information about staff health issues
- review and update policies and procedures in line with current guidance.

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 resources to include: the range of information books; resources to develop children's awareness of disability and a range of recycled materials to support children's creative development
- develop reflective practices within the preschool in order to become aware of areas for improvement

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