

Widcombe Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	106280
Inspection date	11 May 2007
Inspector	Linda Dawe
Setting Address	Church House, Widcombe-in-the-Moor, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ13 7TB
Telephone number	01364 621465 or 01364621273
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Registered person	Widcombe 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Widcombe Pre-school has been established for over 30 years and is situated in the centre of the rural village of Widcombe-in-the-Moor located in the heart of Dartmoor. The pre-school is run by a committee of parent volunteers.

The pre-school is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, term time only from 09:15 until 11:45. They serve the local community and places are offered to children who come from a range of different backgrounds. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities can be cared for although there are some accessibility problems due to the nature of the building. Funded nursery education sessions are available for children aged three and four years old. The pre-school can also offer places for up to four two-year-old children per session, in the term before their third birthday. There are currently 17 children on the register, of whom 12 are funded.

The pre-school operates from the Church House, which is a listed National Trust building. The group use the first floor hall for its main accommodation with the ground floor hall used for physical activities. Toilet and kitchen facilities are available. Included in the registration is a fully enclosed outdoor play area, laid mainly to grass.

The pre-school employs a qualified play leader who holds the N.N.E.B certificate, four other staff are employed, of whom one holds a relevant level three qualification.

Support and curriculum advice is obtained from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy healthy snacks that fully meet their individual dietary needs. They are offered regular drinks to keep them hydrated and can ask for water at any time throughout the session. However, milk and margarine type spreads are not stored appropriately putting children at risk from food poisoning.

Children's self care is encouraged as they are asked to wash their hands before eating their snack and after using the toilet. Posters in the toilet area help children to think about their bodies and why they need to wash their hands. Paper towels and liquid soap are readily available but the children are only offered cold water to wash their hands with. Children are cared for in a clean environment, with staff ensuring that tables are cleaned with anti-bacterial spray before they eat and children are provided with plates to eat their snack off. There is a clear system for using different cloths for different purposes displayed in the kitchen, to prevent cross infection.

Children have regular opportunity to undertake exercise, which develops their muscles and co-ordination as they climb on climbing frames and rides bikes outside in fine weather and inside when the weather is poor.

Required documentation is in place regarding medication and accident recording and consent is sought from parents to enable staff to access emergency medical treatment for children if necessary. This ensures that children's health needs are fully met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play together in secure premises and the staff organise available space well to provide children with a range of activities. For example, the hall downstairs can be used for physical activities when the weather is not good enough to go outside. The front door is locked once all the children have arrived, keeping them protected against unauthorised persons entering the building in this busy tourist village. Regular fire drills are held to make sure children can be evacuated quickly and safely in the event of an emergency.

Children have free access to an ample supply of good quality resources that promote their development. Staff ensure that the planned activities are attractively displayed prior to children's arrival. Toys and resources are rotated throughout the session to provide children with lots of variety.

Children's welfare is protected as staff are aware of their responsibilities in this area. There are appropriate procedures in place to ensure that any child that they may be concerned about receives support and protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive happily at the pre-school and immediately become enthusiastically engaged in the broad range of planned activities that are very well prepared for them by the staff before the children arrive. Children are secure with the familiar routines and children who are not yet three years old are integrated well. Children are confident to make their needs known to staff who respond positively to them.

Nursery Education

The quality of the teaching and learning is good. Children are enthusiastic and confident learners. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals as a result of the way that the staff are implementing the Foundation Stage curriculum. They have good social skills, interacting positively with adults and each other. They use small tools such as scissors competently, developing their small muscles and pre-writing skills. Children are encouraged to use writing materials such as pencils that are freely available to 'write' their names on their work for example. They learn about number in a real and meaningful way as they count how many children are present and how many pieces of fruit they can have at snack time. Children enjoy stories, both by being read to and through being able to choose their own books from a good selection provided by staff. This, along with the labels around the room, gives them the understanding that print carries meaning.

Children experiment with sound as they make and use rattles and sing rhymes at circle time. They learn how to control their bodies as they play together on bikes or when hopping as bunnies around the room during circle time. Their imagination and creativity is developed as they play together in the role play area, designating roles of the shop-keeper and customer without adult intervention, using a good selection of resources. Children get a sense of time and place as they talk together about events past, present and future such as enthusiastically telling their friends about their birthday parties.

Activities such as pattern making give children an opportunity to learn about shape and colour. Programmable toys such as play tills and electronic books provide children with an introduction to information technology.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are given a wealth of opportunities to investigate other cultures and life-styles in a meaningful way. For example, staff talk with them about the different ceremonies that cultures adopt for weddings following the wedding of their pre-school supervisor. Children are also taken to local beauty spots where they can see nature first-hand and get a sense of the environment in which they live. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children play well together and their behaviour is generally good. Any minor lapses are quickly and sensitively dealt with by staff, children being reminded of the expectations of their behaviour. Their positive self-esteem is raised as a result of the praise that staff give them and the responsibilities that they are given. For example, children help together to tidy up and one child is given the role of helper at snack time, which boosts their self confidence.

Children receive good support from a consistent team of staff, who clearly know them well. Children with any learning difficulty or disability have their individual needs met as staff work closely with their parents and other professionals to provide appropriate care and support.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the friendly and welcoming relationships that the staff have with their parents in this small community group. Parents are provided with detailed information about the pre-school in the form of a prospectus and by information shared on the notice board about the day to day running of the group. The plans for the week and the day are clearly displayed for all to see and some information about the Foundation Stage curriculum is printed in the prospectus. As the current assessment system is under review parents, at the moment, receive somewhat limited written information about their child's individual development with regards to the stepping stones and early learning goals. However, parents are fully involved in their children's learning as they are invited to bring in items such as seeds for the children to plant in the pre-school garden. Parents feel that they are well informed verbally about the children's development.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The nursery is run by an enthusiastic voluntary committee of parents who are committed to ensuring that children receive the best care possible. Children receive good support from a suitably qualified team of staff and minimum staff ratios are often exceeded. In general all regulatory requirements are met, policies and procedures are in place to underpin the children's care. However, as a result of a misunderstanding of the regulations, children under the age of three have been left in the care of staff and this is a breach of the conditions of registration.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Children are cared for by a consistent staff team who plan a range of activities for children that cover all areas of their learning and development. Activities are evaluated at the end of the session to give staff an idea of what worked well. However, the current assessment tools provide insufficient information about children's individual achievements and the key worker system is not yet being used to its full potential. The pre-school is working with the Foundation Stage advisory teachers to implement a new system but this is not yet fully operational.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous care inspection the pre-school was given several recommendations. They were asked to attach a lower handrail on the stairs for smaller children to use, which they have. This has improved care for the children. They were also asked to develop induction procedures for new staff and include the name, address and telephone number of Ofsted in the complaints procedure. Induction procedures have not yet been drawn up as the pre-school has had no new staff since the inspection but the registered person gave assurance that this will be done. There is now an Ofsted poster displayed which clearly shows the telephone number to contact in case of complaint. These improvements have had a positive effect on children's care.

At the previous nursery education inspection the pre-school were asked to develop and improve current assessment and planning systems. The pre-school are currently working with Foundation Stage advisory teachers to achieve this and it remains an area for development.

The pre-school were also asked to extend the opportunities for children to solve simple number problems, explore and investigate and have access to modern day technology and creative resources to initiate their own art and design and express themselves on a regular basis. Children now have access to a variety of resources and programmable toys to enable them to explore and investigate.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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):

- improve children's health by ensuring that they have water of a suitable temperature to wash their hands with and that perishable foods are stored appropriately
- ensure that the conditions of registration are adhered to 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):

- devise and implement an effective system for recording children's achievements and use this to inform planning for individual 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