

# Walford Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	223607
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 May 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Josephine Mary Hammick
<b>Setting Address</b>	Walford Village Hall, Walford, Ross-On-Wye, Herefordshire, HR9 5QS
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<b>Registered person</b>	Walford Pre School Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day 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](http://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?

Walford Pre-School has been open since 1975 and operates from the village hall near Ross-on-Wye. The group serves the local community and surrounding villages. There are currently 40 children from two years to five years on roll. This includes 25 Nursery Education Grant funded three-year-olds and nine funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 to 12:00, and until 15:00 on Wednesdays.

There are eight part-time staff who work with the children. Over half of the staff have early years qualifications to level three or above, others are currently attending training. The setting receives support from a mentor teacher from the Local Authority, they are a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and are working towards quality assurance.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy and are very well-protected from infection because staff have procedures in place to protect them. For example, tables are wiped prior to being used for snack and meal times and colour-coded cloths are disposed of after use. Children are learning why routines are important through everyday conversations with staff; for example, they know that germs spread if they don't wash their hands thoroughly.

Children are well cared for in the event of an accident. Sufficient staff hold first aid qualifications to enable them to deal with accidents effectively. Appropriate documentation is kept and shared with parents to safeguard children, including reporting of accidents and administration of medicines. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through regular routines for washing their hands before snacks and lunch times, after using the toilet and playing outside.

Children learn about leading a healthy lifestyle through everyday practical experiences. At snack time children enjoy fresh fruit, seeds and vegetables together with toast, low sugar juice and milk. Snack menus are varied so that children have many opportunities to experience different tastes and textures. Although parents provide packed lunches for their children, they are learning to make healthy choices about the foods they eat through discussions with staff and through planned activities.

All children benefit from the strong emphasis on physical development. They enjoy a range of indoor and outdoor activities which promote their physical development. For example, they frequently play outside using a range of equipment such as bikes, building bricks and climbing frames. Games of skittles and music and movement sessions ensure that children benefit from opportunities to stretch and let off steam when they can't go outside. The wide provision of resources ensures that activities provide sufficient physical challenges to children of all ages. Children also have opportunities to use cutters, scissors, paintbrushes and other small tools to develop their manipulative skills.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well-maintained and child-focused environment. Staff prepare the room with a wide range of stimulating resources before children arrive each day to create an inviting environment for them. Children are able to access a range of developmentally appropriate toys and equipment which ensure they play safely and are happily occupied.

Children's safety is enhanced by well thought out safety procedures which are used to restrict access to the setting. For example, access is restricted into the pre-school by the door being locked and visitors being supervised at all times. However, the display screens are becoming unstable and could pose a safety risk to children. Children enjoy well planned outings to places such as the miniature railway. Full risk assessments are carried out before each visit and a high adult-to-child ratio is adhered to at all times. This helps children to remain safe. Children's safety in case of fire is promoted. Regular discussions and fire drills help children to learn how they could evacuate the premises safely to protect themselves. Children's welfare is well protected. The group have a written policy on child protection, staff are up to date with their

training and current legislation, and are aware of their duty to protect children. This protects children from harm or neglect.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

All children are happy to attend, they enjoy their time in the stimulating and well resourced environment. Children throughout the setting are happy, confident and have built secure relationships with each other and their key worker. Staff provide a good balance of child-initiated and group projects to ensure that children have access to a range of stimulating activities. For example, stories and songs during circle time ensure that play is linked in with the themes; the painting and gluing activities stimulate interest and extend learning in a fun and informal way. Children are keen and motivated by what is available to them and demonstrate a sound understanding of the overall theme, bringing in objects from home for discussion.

Children's play and learning is very well supported by staff who have a good understanding of how children learn, making links with the Foundation Stage and "Birth to three matters" frameworks. Staff consistently interact with children to extend their learning and play. Children's confidence and self-esteem are developed through the attention and praise they receive for their achievements. However, children do not pour their own drinks at snack times. Consequently, there are missed opportunities to further their independence. Staff value children's creations, displaying them attractively on wall displays or holding them up for all to admire at circle time.

#### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children enjoy being in the setting. They are enthusiastic about the range of activities provided. They concentrate and persevere well, whether playing alone or when benefiting from interaction with their peers or adults. However, responsibility for leading large group activities are not delegated equally, therefore staff are not used effectively to help children attain the early learning goals. Children are confident to express opinions or suggest ideas. Staff ensure children have plenty of opportunities for conversation and discussions, while the less articulate children have good support to help them join in. Good use is made of questions to foster children's thinking and inspire curiosity.

Children enjoy stories and rhymes. They listen attentively and contribute well to discussions about features of stories; for example, when discussing how a character in a story would feel when the central character wouldn't share his apple, the children talk about things not being fair, not sharing or others being unkind. Excellent use is made of props and visual aids. Larger format books and rhyme sacks help children to concentrate and enjoy different aspects of stories and songs. Children sing tunefully and with enthusiasm; rhymes are used imaginatively to reinforce aspects of the topic. Children also enjoy mark-making in different contexts, whether they are forming patterns in sand and clay or writing their names on artwork.

Counting and number recognition activities are practical and fun for children. Many can count confidently beyond ten. Their understanding is reinforced by displays and posters on the walls. During routines, play activities and discussions, children get plenty of opportunities to consolidate their understanding of one-to-one correspondence. For example, cutting out and sticking numbered clothing, in the correct order, on to their washing line. Children enjoy working out simple number problems, such as how many more cups are needed at each table at snack time. Stories and rhymes are also used well to support children's awareness of simple number

operations. Staff encourage children to check their answers so that, for example, they often spontaneously count using their fingers.

Children are inquisitive, keen and interested in how things work. They explore different materials, such as wet and dry sand and clay. They find out how different construction toys and other items fit together. They enjoy using technology, for example, by using the computer and the compact disc player. Children confidently handle tools such as scissors. They design and make their own collage, cutting out paper pieces to fit together to make patterns. Children use mathematical language to describe their pictures' appearance and the position of key features.

Children move confidently. During an enjoyable music session they competently follow different actions, stretching up, wiggling and moving in different directions. For example, they are able to find the correct colour zones when the music stops and manoeuvre a bean bag in time to the music. They talk about how they feel out of breath after exercise, and the consequent need for a rest.

A wide and varied range of collage and creative materials encourage children's imaginative painting and craft work. They often draw and paint expressively, trying out different techniques and using colour well. Role play areas are available throughout the session to enable children to fully develop their own ideas. The scenarios that are provided are realistically resourced and promote children's meaningful play. For example, dolls and baby equipment enable children to come to terms with new or expected siblings.

Planning and assessment effectively support children's learning. Topics are fun, interesting and relevant to children. Staff spend a lot of time researching topics to ensure ideas are exciting. During the topic on prepositions, children enthusiastically demonstrate their knowledge by being able to place a brick over, under, on top of, and beside the dolls-house furniture. They are able to make sense of symmetry and reflection by studying the familiar objects placed on mirrors. They also learn other topics through role play, art and craft work and modelling activities. Plans have clear learning outcomes which are followed through organised, focused activities which stimulate children. Activities are evaluated in order to influence future planning. Assessment procedures ensure a clear audit trail of children's progress whilst they attend the pre-school. Parental contributions and early observations help staff to compile an initial profile on each child, but from then on assessments are based on formal observations of children during play and activities. Staff have systems to check children's progress in relation to the stepping stones and early learning goals; they adapt activities to suit children's differing levels of skill or individual need.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's individual personalities and needs are well known and respected within the setting. The group seek a wide range of information from parents such as children's special interests, festivals that they celebrate at home and things that are special to the family. This information is used to ensure that children are cared for by staff who work with parents to meet their individual needs and also ensures that all children are valued and included in the life of the setting. Children with English as an additional language are very well supported in becoming part of the group. They are actively helped to access resources and interact with their peers. Children's play is supported by a wide range of resources such as books, dressing-up outfits and 'persona' dolls which are aimed at promoting positive images of people from a wide range of cultures. Other examples are multilingual welcoming posters, pictures promoting positive

images of diversity and the children taking part in 'dragon dancing' to celebrate the arrival of the Chinese new year.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are recognised and well-supported by experienced and caring staff. Daily records are kept of children's progress and shared with parents and outside agencies to ensure that the children's changing needs are recognised and can continue to be met. Children behave well, care for each other and share and take turns, sometimes with support. For example, when playing at the sand tray, children know that they are limited to four at a time and must watch the sand timer to know when their time is up. They are developing a good understanding of right and wrong and are able to play happily within clearly set boundaries. Children benefit from well thought out settling-in procedures which are based around their individual needs, to support them in the transition between home and the setting. For example, parents and carers are actively encouraged to stay with their children until they are settled. This helps children to feel secure and confident in the group.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. The well thought prospectus includes information on the Foundation Stage framework and the six areas of learning. Photographs and labels on displays help parents and carers to learn about what educational aspects of learning are possible in any activity. Parents are given a copy of the termly activity sheets, so that children can bring in objects and information from home in order to support their learning. Newsletters and notices on the information board keep parents and carers informed about activities or the many social events. There is an active daily rota of parent helpers. Parents are always welcome to view or discuss their child's progress informally or formally through appointments. This enables parents to be involved and enhance their own child's learning.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The premises are well-organised and good use is made of the space available. All staff work well together and demonstrate enthusiasm for creating a learning environment that stimulates children of all ages. Children are well cared for by suitably qualified staff who have been appropriately vetted to ensure that they are suitable and have sufficient skills and knowledge to work with children.

Policies and procedures are clear, comprehensive and regularly updated. All staff are familiar with their content to ensure children are well cared for. There is a high emphasis on staff training and working with other professionals, such as those from the local authority. As a result, children benefit from practices which are in line with current ideas and legislation.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is good. There is a strong commitment by staff to develop provision to promote learning in all areas; they are competent within their roles and have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage. These skills and knowledge are supporting the children's learning and development well.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the pre-school agreed to continue to increase the children's accessibility to resources to reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. Since then,

the group have accessed more training and have purchased more resources. Positive images of diversity are incorporated into all activities on a daily basis. Children benefit from having access to a wide range of resources promoting inclusion.

### **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):

- promote independence further by assisting the children to pour their own drinks at snack time
- maintain the safety of fittings to ensure children are safeguarded from possible hazards at all times, this is in respect of the display boards

#### **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):

- make use of resources available to enable children to attain the early learning goals.  
This refers to teaching large groups of 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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)