

The Village Pre-School & Woodfall Out of School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY253466
Inspection date	02 May 2007
Inspector	Suzette Butcher
Setting Address	Woodfall Primary School, Woodfall Lane, Little Neston, Merseyside, CH64 4BT
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Registered person	Margaret Valerie Price
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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?

The Village Pre-School and Woodfall Out of School Club is one of two provisions that are privately owned by the registered person. It opened in 2003 and operates from a designated mobile unit in the grounds of Woodfall Infant School in Neston, Cheshire. Out of school care sessions are held each weekday from 07.50 to 08.50 and 15.00 to 18.00 during term time only. Pre-school sessions are held each weekday from 09.00 to 15.00 during term time only. Children attend for a variety of sessions and share access to outdoor play areas within the school rounds.

There are currently 70 children aged from two and a half years to five years on roll in the pre-school. Of these, 45 receive funding for early years education. Out of school care has 75 children on roll who attend for different sessions. There are eight members of staff employed, of whom, six hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are unqualified. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and the out of school care achieved an Aiming High award in 2005.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health needs are protected through satisfactory procedures and documentation. All areas are cleaned by staff on a daily basis to prevent the spread of infection and cross-contamination. Staff are trained in paediatric first aid to respond appropriately to minor injuries. Appropriate arrangements are in place to care for children who are ill and a sickness policy is available for parents. Children are supported as they learn to follow health and hygiene routines, such as washing their hands before eating and after toileting. Notices and pictures remind older children of the importance of washing away germs. However, children in pre-school are always closely supervised and not actively encouraged to develop independence as they do not learn to accept responsibility for their own health needs. Staff promote a healthy lifestyle in topics and themes but they do not regularly revisit and reinforce good practice to ensure that children fully understand their purpose. Children's independence is promoted in a few innovative ways, such as carefully putting their own shoes on colourful shoe pictures on a mat in the playroom. However, independent learning is not actively encouraged throughout the pre-school. For example, children often sit in a large group and wait while staff find their coats, clear tables or serve food.

Daily physical activities promote a healthy lifestyle for children and help them to make good progress in their physical development. However, opportunities to play in the outdoor area is restricted to set times and limited to fine weather days. Children enjoy their time outdoors as they choose an activity from the inviting resources, such as scooters, bicycles, hoops or large blackboards. They learn to balance on wooden stepping stones and have fun pulling a trailer along behind a tractor. Physical opportunities are available indoors with a daily choice of activity, such as a wooden climbing frame or small trampoline. Children in out of school care enjoy energetic games outdoors or they join a lively rounders match after school.

Children learn about some of the benefits of healthy eating in interesting topics and during informal discussions with staff at lunch or snack time. They enjoy each other's company as they sit together in small groups for lunch or snack and good manners are promoted and praised by staff. Some healthy options, such as fresh fruit, are available for snacks but this is not consistent and children are given sweet biscuits and a choice of sugary cereals for breakfast. Parents provide their own child's packed lunch and children are encouraged to eat everything. Individual dietary requirements are recorded and made available to all staff, to protect children's health needs. Children in pre-school do not have access to fresh drinking water at all times and they are not reminded of the importance of regular drinks, especially during hot weather or after exercise. However, older children in out of school care carry their own water bottles and confidently serve themselves drinks and food from the selection provided for breakfast and snacks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally safe within the setting, where locked doors and central points of entry ensure that visitors are challenged and children are protected. Children and their families are warmly welcomed by the staff and displays of children's art work, photographs and informative notices create a familiar environment where children develop a sense of belonging. Staff, who have the responsibility for health and safety, carry out annual risk assessments on the indoor

and outdoor environment. Subsequently, potential hazards and risks are identified informally by staff on a daily basis and activities are reviewed regularly for safety. Older children in the out of school care move about freely and confidently between the two main play areas where they are offered an appropriate level of independence according to their level of maturity. However, the general organisation of areas and equipment inhibits children's freedom of movement and limits their choice of suitable activities. Consequently, children in the pre-school are restricted to one playroom at a time and they are closely supervised by staff as they move between the main areas to protect them from potential hazards, such as heavy doors, in the building. A cosy area with a large settee and comfy chair is available for children across the age ranges to relax and enjoy each other's company. This is also the area that is identified for young children to rest or sleep if they stay all day. However, the whole group of children currently sit in this area to watch television after their lunch. Children who are tired are frequently disturbed because other children become bored and irritable. This restricts children's comfort and sense of well-being. A wide range of suitable toys and equipment is available to meet the needs of children in the pre-school and out of school care. Resources are rotated to maintain children's interest and equipment is checked on a regular basis to ensure that it is safe and clean. Numerous resources are available, around the different play areas, for children to help themselves and make their own choices.

Children are encouraged to consider the consequences of their actions as they learn about what is dangerous and how to keep themselves safe. They have fun dressing up in hard hats and yellow jackets during building work at the school. They consider the importance of builders wearing safety goggles and ear defenders to protect their eyesight and hearing. Practising crossing roads or observing signals, such as traffic lights, in role play further develops their awareness of potential hazards. Staff have a sound understanding of their responsibility to safeguard children's well-being and they attend training regularly to update their knowledge. Policies and procedures are available for staff and parents and information includes the recent changes and provides contact details for the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Younger children are included in daily free play and whole group activities. They are offered extra sensitive support as they settle and begin to enjoy being part of a big group. A pictorial time line of daily routines helps them to develop a sense of time and predict what will happen next. Staff have sound knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and implement some aspects to promote young children's play and learning. Activities are adapted during the day to provide small group times for younger children which are adult led. Current topics and games differentiated to meet their needs appropriately. For example, children explore their environment in the school grounds or learn to identify and match colours and patterns in a game with different textured hands and feet. They enjoy singing action songs together or investigating sand and gloop but they are not offered enough time for free play or opportunities to practise and consolidate their learning. Effective assessment systems are in place to create a smooth transition from 'Birth to three matters' into the Foundation Stage. Written observations and relevant photographs are collected in a file for each child to record their individual progress. However, next steps in learning are not clearly identified for each child or used to inform future planning.

Children in out of school care are happy and relaxed in the familiar environment where they relate well to staff and each other. They confidently make their own decisions and enjoy choosing their own activities from the wide range available. They have fun organising clubs together,

such as bird watching, chess or cheerleading. They relax after school and enjoy reading books or watching television together. They play competitive board games or go outside to join in more energetic games. They experiment with creative activities or enjoy special events to celebrate Halloween or Bonfire Night. Improvised concerts or annual summer wet play days provide further exciting opportunities. Children's ideas and suggestions are valued and they are invited to take an active role in reviewing activities and organising future planning.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good and has a significant impact on children's learning within the Foundation Stage. This enables children to make steady progress through the early learning goals. Children are confident and beginning to accept an active role in their own learning experiences. Effective recording systems identify children's progress and Foundation Stage profiles are collated for each child. This information is supplemented by relevant photographs of children's activities, examples of work and written observations. Consequently, staff know the children well and identify what each child already knows and can do. However, the appropriate next steps in learning for each child are not consistently identified and are not used to inform future planning. This weakens the links in the planning and assessment cycle. Children's progress records are regularly shared with parents and weekly plans for themes and topics are clearly displayed in the entrance hall. Planning systems are organised annually with identified topics for the year ahead. This programme is discussed, reviewed and adapted in staff meetings each half-term. Key activities are informally and regularly evaluated to continually improve the overall quality of teaching. Individual children's preferences and interests are taken into account and staff identify regular opportunities to differentiate activities and challenges for more able children. For example, a group of older children are all involved and concentrate eagerly in interesting learning activities on the computer. Daily planning identifies different opportunities for the morning and afternoon sessions to ensure that children who stay all day do not repeat activities unnecessarily.

Children enjoy choosing from the selection of opportunities available during free play sessions. They have fun initiating and developing their own role play games in the home corner where they decide it is time to make dinner for everyone or choose a dressing up outfit from the inviting range available. Staff skilfully respond to children's imaginative ideas and sensitively support them as they introduce new ideas or offer suggestions as the game develops. For example, children are fully absorbed and engaged in a spontaneous role play activity involving pirates and a treasure chest. They explore many different aspects together and develop an elaborate, imaginative scenario with exciting imaginative adventures, rich language and experiences. Interesting topics and themes provide further imaginative opportunities where children learn to make connections between different areas of learning and explore practical opportunities. For example, a story about 'Edward the Explorer' provides a focus for children to explore and investigate their natural environment and learn more about the world around them. Small groups of children take bags and binoculars into the school grounds and use their different senses to find interesting objects, smells or sounds. They count how many spiders they found and compare big and small insects when they play with a selection of plastic items afterwards. A list of what they found is recorded in a notebook and children make their own satchel to keep their possessions in. A group story session further reinforces the exciting adventures and children are delighted to recall the colourful phrases in the book, such as 'splosher washer', 'puddlequackers' or 'croakey jumper'. Children are confident communicators and eagerly chat about past and future activities with adults and other children.

Children concentrate well as staff work alongside and gently extend their learning experiences. Informal learning opportunities are maximised when, for example, children consider initial sounds and letters on pictures in a construction game or calculate how many more are left in a song about speckled frogs. Children experiment with mark making materials as they choose colourful pens to create patterns or write letters from a range of different writing materials. They have fun mixing and watching the changes in the consistencies in salt dough and create their own fish to add to the jelly fish they made previously.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally well behaved and considerate towards adults and each other. They relate well to each other and learn to share, take turns and play together cooperatively with support and guidance from staff. However, children sometimes become restless and agitated when they are expected to sit still or wait a long time for their turn in a large group activity. Minor disagreements are dealt with in a way that is appropriate to each child's age and stage of development. For example, staff intervene sensitively when children squabble or want the same toy and quietly redirect the game or talk to children about the consequences of their actions. Older children's level of maturity and understanding is acknowledged and respected in out of school care where they regularly review and agree the setting's rules. Consequently, they understand that rules are required to maintain a safe and fair environment and respect clear boundaries.

The inclusive environment promotes equality of opportunity for every child and creates an atmosphere where children are valued as individuals. Staff work in partnership with parents and relevant support agencies to support individual children with disabilities or learning difficulties. Key staff have a sound understanding of code of practice procedures and attend relevant training to increase their knowledge and experience. Children learn about diversity and the wider world in stories, topics and during celebrations of different festivals and cultures. For example, children have fun learning about life in Africa, participating in events on Australia day or celebrating Chinese New Year. Annual fund raising events are organised for the local children's hospice which raises children's awareness of diversity in their local community. Every child has access to a broad range of resources and play opportunities, which reflect diversity and acknowledge cultural differences. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Friendly relationships are formed between parents, carers and staff to promote effective continuity of care for children. Information is shared during informal chats and a key worker system is in place for parents to identify staff who have more contact with their child. Settling in procedures are organised to meet the needs of individual children and families. Regular newsletters and notices keep parents informed of special events and current topics. Family members are invited to come into the pre-school to read a story to the children or share their skills or experiences, such as playing musical instruments or introducing a new baby to the group. Parents have fun joining in planned activities or learning new skills. For example, parents proudly display their hats at an Easter bonnet parade or create models from recycled materials on a messy play day. Many parents comment on their overall satisfaction with the quality of care and education provided and state that they receive all the information they require. However, some parents state that they do not feel involved in their child's care in pre-school and consider that they do not receive enough information on their child's individual progress.

The partnership with parents and carers for children in receipt of nursery education is good. Parents are invited to an annual meeting to learn more about the Foundation Stage and how it is implemented in pre-school to meet their child's needs. Further meetings are arranged informally between staff and parents to provide a fuller opportunity for parents to discuss their child's profile, contribute information about their child's progress at home and share any concerns. Staff suggest meaningful tasks for parents to undertake with their child at home to enable them to become more actively involved in their child's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Management are committed towards the continual improvement of the quality of care that they provide for children across the age ranges. For example, the out of school care staff and children worked hard to achieve a Level 2 Aiming High award in 2005. Staff meetings and informal discussions take place to review the setting's strengths and weaknesses and prioritise areas for improvement. Adequate recruitment and employment procedures are in place, to ensure that new members of staff are carefully vetted and suitable to work with children. Induction procedures and staff appraisal systems continue to monitor staff's suitability and identify training and development needs. Most staff have appropriate early years qualifications and they bring a number of years experience of childcare to the setting. Staff attend relevant training to increase their knowledge and enhance their skills. Training sessions are arranged within the setting on important issues, such as, 'Birth to three matters' framework or first aid. Staff communicate well with each other which creates an effective team where everyone has a sound understanding of their individual roles and responsibilities. Areas are designated within the play areas for different learning activities and the outdoor environment in the school grounds offers opportunities to visit vegetable gardens or explore wooded areas.

Documentation relating to the continuity and care of children are in place for children in pre-school and out of school care. Policies and procedures are readily available for parents and staff, parents sign their acknowledgement that they have read and understood the policies when they register their child. Policies are reviewed and updated on a regular basis. However, the complaints procedure has not been reviewed to reflect changes in legislation and an appropriate procedure to record complaints made by parents has not been maintained. This is a breach in regulations and has a negative impact on children's overall care.

The quality of leadership and management for nursery education is good. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined within the staff management team to support children's learning. Stronger links with the adjacent primary school have recently been developed and the school's Foundation Stage teacher has become more actively involved within the pre-school. Informal systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in early education, although, key areas for improvement are not clearly identified to enable staff to work towards achievable goals. Meetings are held to share good practice and pre-school staff attend cluster groups with other early years groups in their area to discuss relevant issues.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the providers agreed to revise their documentation to protect children's health and safety. Registers and health records, lost children and the complaints procedures have all been amended to further safeguard children. Required records relevant to

staff members' suitability are also recorded to protect children. All these changes improve the overall quality of care for children.

This is the setting's first nursery education inspection.

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.

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 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):

- actively promote a healthy dietary options as part of a healthy lifestyle for children
- ensure that children have access to fresh drinking water at all times
- increase opportunities for children to develop independence in their self-help skills
- provide a suitable area for children to rest and sleep safely during the day and provide a range of suitable activities for children at lunch times
- increase appropriate play and learning opportunities for younger children
- increase opportunities to share information about their child's progress with every parent
- revise the complaints procedure to meet regulations and implement a system to maintain an appropriate record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request.

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):

- further develop observation and assessment systems to clearly identify next steps in play and learning for individual children and use this information to inform future planning (also applies to care)

- formalise systems to effectively monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning.

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