

Westhaven Pre-School/Kids Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	141017
Inspection date	28 November 2007
Inspector	Carol Johnstone
Setting Address	Westhaven Infant School, Hereford Road, Weymouth, Dorset, DT4 0QB
Telephone number	01305 782727
E-mail	
Registered person	The Trustees Of Westhaven Pre-School Playgroup
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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Westhaven Pre-School opened in 1979 and the Kids Club opened in 2000. Both aspects operate from three rooms in a building within the grounds of Conifers School in Weymouth. A maximum of 56 children may attend at any one time. It is open Monday to Friday from 08.00 until 18.00 all year round. The Kids Club accommodates children up to the age of 11 years. There are currently 73 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 41 receive funding for early education. There are 74 children on roll for the Kids Club. The club employs 15 members of staff. Of these, 12 hold appropriate early years qualifications and four are working towards a further qualification. The club receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are protected from the spread of illnesses as exclusion guidelines are given to parents when they first attend advising them of how long to keep children away for when unwell. Staff

keep their first-aid training up to date in order to give appropriate care when necessary and there are several first-aid boxes available for use.

Children learn to wash their hands in the bathroom before snack and lunchtime and after using the toilet. They use running water, liquid soap and paper towels. However, after activities, such as hand and foot painting, they use a communal bowl to wash off their hands and feet which does not minimise the risk of cross infection. Some toys and equipment, such as the seating area in the book corner and outdoor toys, are grubby which does not promote hygiene or make them inviting for children to use.

Children are given healthy snacks, such as fruit and carrot sticks, on some days, however, there are unhealthy snacks given on others. This is also the case for children attending after school. Children are not currently given plates at snack or lunchtime. Cartons of milk are given at snack time, however, water for independent access is only available in one of the playrooms which makes it difficult for all children to see and access.

Children are able to use the outdoor area at any time so they get plenty of fresh air and exercise. There is a choice of slides, a parachute, hoops, balls, bikes and trikes. There are also milk crates which are used to make obstacle courses and stairs. Staff play music and movement tapes and children practise stretching, hopping and jumping. Children practise their fine motor skills when they hold brushes and pencils to paint, colour and draw. There are also opportunities for them to use cutters and rollers to model clay and play dough.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff decorate the entrance hall and play rooms with bright posters and displays of children's work to make a child friendly environment. However, space is very limited and children are often interrupted during floor play by others walking through to get past.

The front door is kept locked and only opened by a member of staff thereby minimising the risk of children escaping. All visitors are signed in and out and escorted. At collection time, staff are careful to make sure that the children are only allowed to go one at a time to ensure that only known carers are collecting them.

The fire drill is practised each term and children have had a visit from a fire officer who gave a talk. Staff complete a daily visual risk assessment which children join in with to raise children's awareness of safety issues. Staff also complete weekly written risk assessments. However, some play items in the role play area are inappropriate for young children.

The manager and two key staff have a very clear and thorough understanding of child protection issues and are very confident of how to identify and report concerns. Some other staff have a more basic knowledge but are due to attend updated training soon. There is a clear child protection policy that is on display for parents as well as information leaflets on wider topics, such as domestic violence and child safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are able to choose from a wide range of resources and most of these are easily accessible in low-level storage drawers and shelves. Children can independently select what they want to

play with by either helping themselves or asking. There is a variety of construction toys, board games, a role play area, books, small world play, puzzles and art and craft materials. Children under three are able to play puzzles, paint, use play dough or access the role play area. However, there is a lack of challenging activities for this age group. For children attending the after school club, there is cookery, art and crafts, team games and music. Interaction between staff and children of all ages is friendly and comfortable.

Nursery Education

Children are happy to leave their carers when they arrive and enter the playrooms confidently to see what activities there are that day. Children learn how to be independent by being able to choose what they want to do and moving freely as they wish from room to room. However, at times this makes the general atmosphere very busy and bustling as space is very limited. Children generally get on well with each other and are making friendships. Children also have opportunities to meet children from the adjacent school that they will be attending. Some children chat during their play but others are very quiet. Children enjoy listening at story time but do not show awareness of linking sounds and letters. Children have opportunities to use paper and pencils during their play but do not often attempt to give meaning to marks, for example writing lists or trying to write their names on their pictures. Children independently access books and enjoy looking through them. Children use tools with purpose, for example when cutting play dough, and can build towers from bricks. They understand the difference between past and present and talk about what they did at the weekend. They learn about mini beasts and how to plant and grow in their garden. Children have free access to a computer and learn how to use the mouse to control the programs. Most children can count low numbers but do not do this spontaneously during play. There is little use of number problems or positional and size language. Children have some awareness of shapes and make house pictures from triangles, circles and squares. They are able to freely express themselves during creative play and can use chinks, paints, crayons and glitter to make pictures. They also enjoy marble and leaf painting. Children are able to use their imagination in the role play area which is currently a 'beauty and hair salon'. They style each other's hair and 'paint' each other's nails with water and a paintbrush, putting on shower caps until their hair is 'done'. Children learn about different textures by playing with spaghetti, shaving foam and corn flour. They join in with ring games, such as 'Farmer's in his Den' and can stop and change direction when told. However, many children have poor spatial awareness and there are frequent collisions when children bump into each other. Children can confidently pedal trikes and climb the slides. They learn how to hold paintbrushes and use scissors which increases their hand-eye coordination.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff understand the areas of learning and how they relate to the activities. However there is inconsistency in the use of effective levels of challenge to extend children's learning. This results in some children not being fully engaged in the activities and moving on quickly to something else. The system for free access of activities has recently been introduced to the provision, as have new procedures for recording children's observations and assessments. Consequently, the period of change is affecting how well children's progress is being tracked and how effectively the next steps for learning are being identified. Staff have some understanding of where their key children are in their progress, but observations are not currently being done frequently enough. Those that are being done are not being utilised to build on what children know and to help plan future activities to facilitate their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's awareness of other cultures and religions is raised in the pre-school. There are celebrations of religious festivals and children have heard and played musical instruments from around the world. There is a selection of bilingual and multicultural books and frequent use is also made of toy libraries, where multicultural resources are used to support themes. Staff working with children and their parents who have English as an additional language use photos and simple words to explain the activities. Religious preferences are taken into account when staff prepare activities for Easter and Christmas and the nativity play is adapted to ensure inclusion. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children with additional needs are very well supported. There are several staff who have experience in this field and one designated special needs coordinator who oversees the planning of specific activities. There are strong links with external agencies, such as Portage and the speech therapy department. The coordinator works closely with these agencies and with parents to ensure that children's needs are met through consistent work at home and in the pre-school.

There is a very busy atmosphere in the pre-school as children move through activities and from room to room independently. Most children behave well and know what is expected of them. When problems do occur, such as two children wanting the same toy, staff remind children of the 'kind hands rule' and encourage them to take turns and share. Staff praise the children when they behave well or complete an activity.

Partnership with parents is good. The staff work extremely hard to engage parents in the learning process. Staff have carried out parent workshops to explain how children learn through play and there are weekly newsletters and parent meetings. For parents of funded children there is a clear and simple explanation of the Foundation Stage and parents are consulted for a baseline assessment of what their children can do. Parents meet with staff each term to discuss children's progress. Staff are currently redesigning the assessment records to make them more parent friendly and to make it easier for parents to continue children's learning at home. There is an active parent committee who carry out regular fundraising and community events.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are protected from having unsuitable staff working with them as there is a comprehensive recruitment policy which outlines the necessary checks to be taken. All new staff complete an induction period to make them aware of health and safety procedures, such as the fire drill. New staff are also monitored for six months to ensure that they are working appropriately with the children.

Documentation is very comprehensive and well ordered. All aspects necessary to support the children are in place, such as medical histories and parental consent for observations, the taking of photographs and emergency medical treatment.

Staff are deployed flexibly between the rooms. However, the layout and organisation of the rooms does not allow for some activities to be carried out undisturbed, such as floor play.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff are formally appraised each year, with an update discussion six months after. Staff are offered training when it arises and also as part of the appraisal system when training needs are identified. The manager monitors the quality of teaching once a year with written observations. She invites comments from parents about the provision provided and the activities are evaluated by staff. There are regular team meetings. The staff team have positive relationships with each other. They are clearly committed to the work they are doing with the children.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the registration system clearly show the times of children's arrival and departure. This is now done so the correct number of children present could be obtained in an emergency.

It was recommended that the rooms were used to ensure children were grouped appropriately. There is now an open access system so children can move from room to room giving them more independence.

It was recommended that the staff increase their awareness of child protection issues. The manager discusses child protection issues on a regular basis within team meetings and several staff have a very clear working knowledge. Some staff are less confident. However, training relating to recent changes has been arranged for all staff which will take place imminently.

The nursery education recommendations were to extend opportunities and challenges for children to develop their independence and confidence in large group situations. There are now no large group activities and staff feel that smaller groups allow children to be more confident.

It was recommended that the children's use of numbers and simple calculation on a daily basis through routines and activities be extended. Mathematical activities have been increased, however, children still do not use numbers spontaneously during their play and calculation is limited.

It was recommended that the assessment systems were developed to record children's achievements and identify their next steps. Also, to enable parents to contribute and comment on children's learning. This has been partly met but is still an area that needs development and is currently undergoing a process of change.

It was felt that improvement was needed in the systems for sharing children's written records of progress with parents. This has been met and parents are now more involved in this.

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.

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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):

- ensure that the procedures for washing children's hands after messy activities promote effective hygiene
- ensure that toys and equipment are cleaned on a regular basis
- increase the ratio of healthy snacks and provide water for children's independent access in all playrooms
- ensure that inappropriate resources are not available to young children

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 that the levels of challenge are consistent across all activities in order to engage children and extend their learning (also applies to care, particularly in the under three age-group)
- continue to develop children's assessments so that observations are fully utilised to identify the next steps for children's learning and use the planning to facilitate them

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