

Wolfson College Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	134014
Inspection date	15 November 2007
Inspector	Jan Leo
Setting Address	Linton Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX2 6UD
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Registered person	The Governing Body of Wolfson College
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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?

Wolfson College Day Nursery opened in 1976 and is situated on the site of Wolfson College in the centre of Oxford. It is run by the governing body of the college and operates from single storey accommodation comprising two self-contained nursery areas linked by a central open-air courtyard. Children also have access to the extensive college grounds. The nursery serves the local area but priority for places is given to children whose parents are associated with the college, either as students or staff.

There are currently 32 children from birth to under eight years on roll. This includes eight who receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Over half the children attending speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week for 48 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 08:45 until 17:15.

There are 11 permanent members of staff who work with the children. Of these, seven hold a nationally recognised qualifications to Level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because they all feel exceptionally secure at the setting, being welcomed and cared for by their key workers to ensure emotional stability as soon as they arrive. The children play in a clean environment, get regular opportunities for active play, and eat varied meals and snacks to sustain them throughout the day. Young children sleep according to their needs and all have separate bedding to avoid the spread of infection. Staff play soft, restful music to help children relax and settle for their nap. Children learn to wash their hands independently from an early age but staff do not always notice when the soap is missing and cleaning is less effective. Staff reinforce good practice regarding hygiene by reading carefully selected stories about 'Dirty Bertie' for the children to enjoy and join in. The children eagerly finish sentences and make disapproving noises when hearing of Bertie's horrible habits, clearly demonstrating their understanding of good hygiene. Several staff have first aid certificates to equip them with the skills to treat children's injuries effectively, and the first aid boxes have ample, up to date supplies. Staff obtain prior written consent before giving medication but do not routinely obtain an end date to show the length of the course of treatment. All children sit together sociably for meals and snacks. Most eat food provided by the college, with special diets and vegetarian options available by request. Some bring food from home and staff work closely with parents and carers to gain a very clear understanding of the foods children can eat. Staff display the menu for adults to see at collection, helping families balance their children's meals across the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children in the baby room have ample space to move around freely, relax for a cuddle with their key worker, or rest peacefully in a cot. Staff keep floor areas clutter free in the play and sleep rooms, to avoid accidents but the nappy changing room doubles as a storage area, and is rather cramped. The older children have limited space for their indoor activities, but staff make good use of the outdoor quadrangle to enable children to spread out and play safely. The staff generally make the best of the facilities they have, brightening rooms with mobiles and pictures to ensure the environment is welcoming. The building is a comfortable temperature to enable children to play without the need for thick layers of clothing. The construction of the building results in the kitchen and staff facilities being prone to mildew. Staff constantly clean and disinfect these areas to avoid risks to children's health, but the problem re-occurs regularly. Children benefit from a secure entry system with a buzzer to open the gate. The staff have a good view of all visitors to control entry to the premises. Visitors sign in on arrival and staff generally keep an accurate record of children's arrival and departure times. Sometimes however, children are not marked present as soon as they arrive, compromising safe evacuation in an emergency. All children have an appropriate and varied range of resources to play with, but lack of space prevents free access to some equipment by older children. Staff position themselves effectively to supervise children as they play and they remind children how to play safely to avoid accidents. All staff undertook child protection training in 2004 but recent staff changes mean that some of that knowledge has been lost. The management is currently seeking training courses to apprise staff of current safeguarding procedures. Meanwhile, staff receive brief information about signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect and learn the internal procedure to follow if they have concerns about a child. Few of the staff know how to make a referral

without seeking help from management, and the safeguarding policy does not reflect recent changes.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive happily and thoroughly enjoy their day. They form very close bonds with their key workers and make firm friends with their peers. Some go out of their way to greet friends by, for example, crossing the room to tap a friend on the shoulder, attracting their attention before giving a friendly wave. Most of the learning is through play and the staff skilfully join in games to reinforce what children know and help them make sense of things. Some staff are like children magnets, seizing an idea from child-initiated play to develop a new activity. For example, when one child climbs onto a log, staff involve others until more and more are speckled frogs jumping down as they sing together, practising number work and physical skills effortlessly while they have fun. The children flock around either joining in the game or watching with great interest to see what others do. Young children are equally interested in their peers, stroking babies and learning to be gentle with the help of the staff. They receive encouragement to develop independence from an early age being told 'go on, you can do it' when trying to get a pushchair into the playhouse without help. Staff in the baby room spend most of their time sitting on the floor at the children's level in order to praise and encourage children in all they do. The children confidently climb onto a lap for a cuddle being enveloped by staff, with genuine affection.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff develop most of the learning through free play and they instinctively know when to join in and when to observe what the children do. They plan the daily activities without differentiating between children's age and stage of development but have a natural ability to focus children's attention and ensure learning is relevant. The children frequently initiate their own games either alone or with friends and staff successfully extend children's interests to include other areas of learning. This helps children understand how things relate to modern life. For example, they look at a map together when one remarks 'that's Pakistan' and enter into discussion about where others live. All children receive a high level of attention and, as a result, have high self-esteem. The staff make very good use of time by introducing activities such as singing and clapping games while waiting for the last few children to finish hand washing before lunch. They automatically include counting and colour work to suit different abilities and test children's recognition skills by holding up some of their personal items. The staff involve all children, helping them to get the answers right and making sure all have an opportunity to speak. This helps children gain confidence and feel very comfortable in the setting. The staff know the children well in order to extend their skills but monitoring is weak. There is no clear record of children's starting point and some observations have no dates. As a result, there is no accurate record of children's rate of progress or information to ensure children consistently have sufficient challenge. This compromises the quality of learning in the event of staff changes.

All children are very sociable. Some of the older children copy what adults do and one said at lunch time, turning thoughtfully to the child next to her, 'it doesn't matter if you don't eat it all, but just try a little bit of potato'. Children learn to be helpful because staff give them simple errands to run and offer praise and thanks when they complete the task. The staff watch from a distance to check whether help is necessary but most children are very independent and need little assistance. All behave very well and have a well-developed sense of self.

Staff timetable the use of mark making equipment because a lack of space prevents equipment being freely available. The children have various opportunities to practise early 'writing' skills and the staff encourage them to 'name' their work to prevent it becoming lost. Children have fun linking sounds and letters by, for example, guessing what is for lunch as staff give clues and initial letter sounds. Most children have a love of books and flock round to see the pictures as staff read favourite stories. The children concentrate for very lengthy periods without losing interest and most join in with the end of the sentences and comment enthusiastically about the story. The children successfully practise number work as they play and staff supplement this with construction and tabletop activities to extend what children know and introduce other mathematical concepts. For example, children order, sort and compare bears along with staff to measure what they know and identify any gaps in understanding.

The children form a very diverse group and show interest in other cultures. They readily share information about family living abroad and events that are important to them. One child explained all about raising money to help poor children as an explanation of why she was wearing her pyjamas. The staff encourage children's interest in the wider world saying 'she wanted to wear her pyjamas today even though Children in Need is not until tomorrow'. The children follow a basic routine to develop a sense of time and most know what to expect. Children have limited access to modern technology with use of equipment currently timetabled at intervals rather than being freely available.

The children can choose whether to play indoors or out and learn to dress appropriately for whatever the weather. Some competently unbutton cardigans while others need a little help to get their coat on properly. The children move well in a number of ways with one showing off his control skills by leaning backwards to cycle backwards, avoiding collision with ease. Children run and play demonstrating a good sense of space, climb and slide with confidence and only have an occasional mishap when moving at speed.

Children sing regularly to make the day fun. They know the words of several songs and successfully clap out rhythms along with adults. The children express themselves freely, acting out home making scenarios in the role-play corner and telling tales of a talking leopard, intriguing others by explaining how it only talks to her father when no one else is there. Some have a vivid imagination and relish the opportunity to share ideas with others.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

A large percentage of the children have English as a second language but, nevertheless, they mix exceptionally well and make themselves understood easily. Staff learn a few simple words in their key children's home language, speak slowly and clearly to the children, and use body language and gestures to help children's understanding. All staff treat children fairly and with respect to ensure everyone feels welcome and joins in fully. The staff assess the premises to ensure they can meet any special needs children may have and willingly adjust the level of support to ensure all children are fully included. Older children are beginning to understand right and wrong and some can stick up for themselves when necessary. For example, one child protested when another knocked down the fence he was building as he rode too near on his bicycle. All are friendly, helpful, and enthusiastic learners and they behave extremely well. The partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff have an open door policy to ensure adults feel welcome and can be as involved as they like in their children's learning. Staff provide information via regular emails and newsletters to keep parents up to date about how the setting operates, and the key workers make themselves available for verbal feedback to keep adults

informed of their children's progress. Children's observation records are available for parents to see at any time, and staff offer private appointments, on request, to discuss children's progress in detail. The management acknowledges weaknesses in the current monitoring and planning systems, and is reviewing the processes to make records more effective in offering valuable information about children's development. Essential information is fairly easy to see at both the entrances, with more detailed policies on a parent's notice board within the baby room. The complaints policy contains outdated contact details for Ofsted. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The leadership and management of the provision are good. The children benefit from a well-qualified and caring group of staff who are dedicated to making the day fun. They provide a high level of supervision to support the children and have a natural ability to keep children fully focused and productively occupied without detailed planning or robust observation systems. Children thrive because staff address most aspects of health and safety well, but some have a scant knowledge of the safeguarding children board and lack confidence in following the referral procedure. The management adopts a formal recruitment process when selecting new staff, and involves all staff in regular team meetings to review practice and agree improvements. Ongoing training is encouraged to address weaknesses, and enable staff to continue their personal development. A number of staff have special responsibilities in order to get them fully involved in running the setting, and they work well as a team. All the documentation, required by regulation, is in place but some is out of date.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were three recommendations made at the last care inspection and two at the last nursery education inspection. For care, the staff were required to improve space in the baby room; add more detail to the child protection policy; and seek permission from parents to obtain emergency medical aid for children if necessary. The baby room play and sleep areas are now tidy and uncluttered to provide more usable space for children to move around and play. Staff have limited space in the nappy changing area however, because the room is also used for storage. This has little impact on the children, as the nappy changing unit is still accessible. After the last inspection, the staff updated their child protection policy as recommended to include the necessary detail in line with September 2003 regulations. More recent changes have not been incorporated into the policy and new staff are unclear on what to do if they have concerns. The management is currently looking for training to address this weakness but meanwhile, there are always long standing members of staff present to give advice and ensure children's safety is preserved. The staff now routinely obtain permission for emergency medical treatment, applying three different levels according to family cultures and beliefs. This ensures all children receive appropriate medical care approved by their parents and carers.

The two recommendations made at the nursery education inspection required the setting to evaluate activities in relation to children's individual needs; and increase opportunities to develop early writing, calculation and creative expression in everyday situations. The staff now complete activity evaluations in relation to individual participation and achievement, and provide an overview of the success of the activity on the monitoring form. This information is used by staff to help children make progress but is not incorporated into planning to provide a means of tracking children's development and help plan their next steps. The staff now let the children

initiate most of the activities and they offer resources to develop children's ideas to make learning relevant. They link learning to help children make sense of things and develop their interests further. A lack of clear space for the older children hampers skills practise and free expression to some extent, because resources are not freely available at all times.

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):

- improve staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures and ensure they all know how to make a referral if they have concerns about a child
- ensure all policies contain up to date information, and children's arrival and departure times are recorded promptly to provide an accurate record of who is on site 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):

- improve children's progress records to give a clear starting point, track progress, and help plan for their next steps
- develop planning to ensure children have regular access to a full range of equipment and show how activities will be extended for the more able 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