

Olney Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	141861
Inspection date	21 September 2007
Inspector	Dorcas Forgan
Setting Address	The Olney Centre & Library, High Street, Olney, Buckinghamshire, MK46 4EF
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Registered person	Olney 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 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?

Olney Pre-School opened 1968 and operates from two rooms in an old school building that has been converted for community use. It is situated in Olney. The pre-school runs two separate sessions each day with different teams of staff. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.15 to 11.45 and 12.30 to 15.00 during school term times. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 65 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 57 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the town and surrounding villages. The pre-school currently supports children with special educational needs, and also children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 15 staff. The two managers and four staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. Currently four staff are attending training to gain relevant qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children remain in good health because the staff carry out thorough procedures and follow environmental health and hygiene guidance. A member of staff is responsible for health and safety; she attends regular training and ensures all staff are aware of any issues. The committee and staff regularly review the policies to ensure they remain relevant. A very comprehensive health and safety document is part of the operational plan. Staff maintain very good hygiene standards. Children are gaining an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves healthy. They follow clear routines and the staff regularly remind them of any necessary action: such as, where to find the tissues and where to throw them away. All necessary documentation is in place and first aid training is ongoing.

Children are gaining knowledge about eating healthily. Children all sit in their key worker groups at snack time. They choose what they would like to eat from a range of healthy options that include fruit, vegetables and sugar free items. They help themselves to water or milk to drink. The time is happy and relaxed as they talk in their groups about what they have been doing. Activities are included in the plans that help children to learn more about healthy eating especially at harvest time. Children help themselves to water from the dispenser as they wish.

Children enjoy physical activities in the fresh air. Access to the outside area is through the front door with the result that children have to go in groups at specific times. Staff plan these effectively so that all children spend part of the session outside in the garden that has an all weather surface. They take part in a variety of activities from riding bikes, climbing and sliding, sand play, gardening and role-play situations. Children are developing their physical skills very well.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, secure and welcoming environment. Staff ensure the rooms are attractively presented. There are displays of the children's work and information that brighten up the two rooms. Children have access to several comfortable areas that include the home corner and the computer area with a specific room for messy activities. Staff carry out daily checks throughout the premises to reduce the risk of accidental injuries. However, one of the fire doors leading into the main building is jammed shut. Staff maintain effective security at the beginning and end of the sessions with a separate book to record when someone else will be collecting a child. Staff are deployed very well throughout the pre-school to ensure children are well supervised.

Children have access to an extremely good range of stimulating toys and activities that are suitable for the children's needs, they provide fun and challenges and help to resource the whole range of learning outcomes. Children are learning to keep themselves safe and to avoid accidental injury. Staff remind children to sit on their chairs properly and to push their chairs under the tables, when they have finished with them, so that no one will fall over them. They learn to use tools safely such as the scissors. Children are very familiar with the emergency evacuations from the building using a whistle as the alarm.

Children are well protected by the staff from possible abuse, because the staff have a very clear understanding of their role to protect children. There are clear policies and guidance and all receive additional training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the group happily and with growing confidence keen to meet up with friends and their key worker. Adults greet each of the children individually, making them feel welcome and special. Children settle quickly to the activities at their groups' tables, such as puzzles or matching the letters to their names. Children make trusting relationships with the staff and approach them with ease. Staff use the framework Birth to three matters for the younger children to ensure they are making progress and developing in all areas. They adjust mainstream activities to ensure they are presented at a suitable level for individual children's abilities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are very well motivated and keen to take part in an interesting range of activities. Staff have a very clear knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use it well to plan the sessions. Staff use the same plans for morning and afternoon sessions to ensure that all areas of learning are included. Key workers make more in depth plans for the activity that they carry out with their own children. This is so that they can base them specifically on individual children's needs. Children are challenged appropriately. Staff extend the children's knowledge by introducing new facts and ideas. They listen to the children carefully and encourage them to discuss and think about situations, such as, how can all three of them work together in the shop. Staff make observations of the children to ensure they are making progress.

Children choose activities with enthusiasm. Such as the hand painting with bright colours that they mix energetically. They are becoming independent through the choices that they make. They are learning to take responsibility for their own care and to have regard for others. They understand that they need to sit quietly during times such as registration and story time and that they can help by tidying up after an activity. Children have opportunities to talk in small group situations. They are gaining confidence. They discuss topics of interest such as their holidays. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories, they become involved and like to anticipate what will happen. Especially when they enjoy a book, like The Enormous Turnip. Children have various forms of mark making opportunities from the wipe boards and slates to the chalks on the easel and clipboards in the shop.

Children use maths and numbers naturally, as they play. They have frequent opportunities to count during the session such as counting the number of coins in the shop. When they use the wooden bricks, they talk about the shapes and the different sizes lining up the smallest cylinder to the largest. Some of the children can write their house number independently, some need help. Children use calculation naturally working out that the adult has two spaces left in her puzzle to fill and he has one. Children are gaining a very good understanding of the world around them as they grow vegetables and flowers in the garden. They learn about windmills; how they work and what they produce, as they make a collage. They experiment with balloons to see how they can stop them blowing away in the wind. The variety of interesting well-planned activities develops their curiosity and wonder.

Children are able to be creative and express themselves through paint, chalks and other drawing media. They have plenty of opportunities to use their imagination they invent interesting scenarios when playing with the small world figures such as houses catching on fire and bold rescues being planned. They enjoy dressing up and playing roles such as mums and babies.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are learning to respect one another and to be considerate of others. Staff are good role models, they listen carefully to the children and help them to negotiate and work with others. Older children are encouraged to befriend less confident children. Children are becoming aware of the wider society, through different activities and resources. They celebrate other festivals such as Divali with the help of parents and their own local traditions such as holding pancake races. The pre-school has very affective arrangements to care for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. All children are treated as individuals and their needs are met very well. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are beginning to understand responsible behaviour, they behave very well. They work harmoniously with other children in various situations such as the shop and in role-play situations. Staff work in a consistent way; they talk quietly with the children and remind them of what they need to do. Staff give praise when it is due and are very encouraging. There is a very positive atmosphere.

Partnership with parents is good. Children's care is enhanced by the close relationship developing between the staff and parents. Good communication through newsletters, notice boards and open evenings ensures that parents are knowledgeable about the pre-school and the opportunities offered to the children. Parents are encouraged to help in the group to develop the partnership. Information is exchanged informally on a daily basis with the key workers to be certain that individual children's needs are met.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from their care being well organised. The pre-school has a very comprehensive operational plan. This includes relevant policies and procedures. The committee have a rigorous vetting and employment procedures. The managers' roles have recently been changed so that they have more opportunities to manage the staff daily, provide support and training and evaluate the sessions. The rooms are well organised so that children can move around safely and the daily routine makes sure that children have optimal time at activities. All necessary documentation is in place but the daily register is not well organised.

Leadership and management are good. The committee have been in place for one year, are now confident of their roles and responsibilities, and have put systems in place to provide support for the staff. The managers lead their teams of enthusiastic dedicated staff very well. They all work together co-operatively to ensure the children's welfare and progress. Staff have annual appraisals at which training needs are identified. There is an action plan in place to ensure 50% of staff will have relevant qualifications. Staff evaluate the activities to ensure learning objectives are met. Through the observations made of the children they ensure that children are making progress in all areas of learning. The committee do not have a formal method of monitoring the nursery provision. All involved in the group are committed to further improvement. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection a recommendation was made that policies and documentation should be reviewed to ensure that they are accurate and sufficiently detailed. The committee and staff have reviewed all documentation and made improvements so that all are now accurate and suitable. Following the nursery education inspection it was recommended that consideration should be given to displaying the children's art work. Display boards have been supplied so that art work can be displayed to enhance children's self-esteem.

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):

- compile the register effectively so that it is in order and easy to refer to
- ensure all fire safety doors are in working condition

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):

- develop further the means of monitoring the educational provision.

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