

Long Wittenham Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	133716
Inspection date	28 September 2007
Inspector	Susan Victoria May
Setting Address	Village Hall, High Street, Long Wittenham, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX14 4QH
Telephone number	01865 407417
E-mail	
Registered person	Long Wittenham 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?

Long Wittenham Pre-School is a voluntary group managed by a committee of parents and carers. It was established in 1970 and operates from the village hall in Long Wittenham. The pre-school serves the local rural communities. The pre-school shares the accommodation with other local groups and there is a small enclosed outdoor play area.

The pre-school opens on weekdays during school term times, from 09.01 to 12.00, an optional lunchtime session until 13.00 is held each day except Thursday.

There are currently 27 children on roll, this includes 16 three and four year olds who receive nursery education funding. The pre-school supports children with disabilities/learning difficulties and is able to support children for whom English is an additional language.

There are four members of staff who work at the pre-school, over half of whom have appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff provide a clean, safe environment where children can enjoy their play. Staff are good role models and have a clear understanding of effective hygiene procedures such as wiping tables before snack and meals. Children follow routines very well; for example, they wash their hands before eating, after messy play and using the toilet. However, while children are independent in their use of soap and towels that are easily accessible to them in the bathroom; the absence of a basic resource such as tissues is not consistent with good practice. Nappy changing procedures include measures to prevent cross infection, the necessary equipment to promote this; for example, gloves, are easily accessible. Children begin to understand about their bodies and how to keep well through everyday activities and planned topics, for instance, children try different fruits at snack time and talk about how they help to keep them fit and healthy. There are systems in place to record accidents, these are accurately completed in order to safeguard children. Policies for emergency medical consent and for the administration of medication are in place. Staff members have suitable first aid training. This promotes and safeguards children's welfare.

Children enjoy physical exercise and participate enthusiastically in free play and planned activities as they explore, test and develop physical control in daily indoor and outdoor experiences. Staff have regard to the needs of the children and the stepping stones towards the foundation stage. This understanding of each stage of development means the children are confident to try out new skills, ask for help when needed and set their own limits within the environment. Children take part in daily activities to increase control and co-ordination such as, using tools, small and large scale construction toys and organised music and movement sessions.

Packed lunches are provided by parents for children who stay for the lunch time session. Staff store lunch boxes appropriately to ensure the food remains fresh. During the session children receive a snack of fruit, cheese and crackers or breadsticks. Children help themselves from the snack offered, choosing one or more pieces from the selection. Children do not have access to drinks during the session unless they request it, and at snack time staff pour their drinks for them. This does not help promote children's independence. Snack and meal times are a social occasion, enjoyed by all; providing children with a sound foundation for future eating habits.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a large airy hall in which areas have been identified for designated play. The area has been effectively reorganised and is thoughtfully and attractively set out. This provides a secure, appealing environment where children are eager to play and clearly enjoy taking part in the activities. Equipment and resources is stored in large cupboards to which only the staff have access. From here, they select the planned daily toys and activities for the children. Children have some input into what they want to be set out as staff ask them and take note of their requests. Children easily access the interesting and stimulating range of well maintained equipment available and settle well at activities that are entirely appropriate to their age and stage of development. This benefits the children and as a result they are learning effectively through their play.

Children are kept safe from harm through good adult supervision and clear safety practices and procedure. For example, children have free access to a small outdoor area that is accessed via a pathway from the main hall. To keep children safe staff deploy themselves appropriately to be able to see this area at all times. Staff conduct daily risk assessments of the building and the equipment, this ensures hazards are quickly identified and action taken to reduce risks. Children are beginning to be aware of keeping themselves safe through gentle reminders from staff about the possible outcomes of their actions. For example, children demonstrate an understanding of the possible consequences of running indoors. Fire safety procedures are in place and the children practise regularly to ensure a swift evacuation in an emergency. All fire equipment and electrical equipment is checked annually to ensure it remains safe. Staff are vigilant when on outings, have procedures to check drivers and vehicle documentation if children travel in cars and have all the necessary parental consents in place.

Children are protected because all staff are well informed through training and have a good understanding of their role in child protection. Staff make children's safety and welfare a priority and clearly understand how to put Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures into practice when necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive at the pre-school happy and eager to participate in activities that provide good levels of challenge and promote children's development. Staff greet the children and take an interest in their lives. For instance, staff ask the children questions about what they are doing after the pre-school session, this gives children a sense of importance and of belonging while also helping develop language, thinking and communication skills. Staff provide good quality care and education for pre-school children to promote their development in all areas. Staff demonstrate a sound awareness of planning appropriate activities to meet the needs of the children who attend. All children make good progress because staff recognise the uniqueness of each child. For example children who are new are helped to settle by staff that are sensitive to their individual needs. Caring relationships increase children's sense of trust and help them develop their individuality and offers a sound base from which to they can begin to make sense of the world around them.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children have opportunities to experience and enjoy a stimulating range of activities relevant to their needs. They access a broad range of good resources which supports their progress across all areas of learning. Children are self-assured in their play and with staff support; gain in confidence, enabling them to try new experiences from which they benefit. For example, staff encourage children to try new fruits at snack time; this is followed up at circle time with questions and discussions about taste, texture, colour, shape and how and where the fruits grow.

Children behave generally well and accept responsibility for their actions. They have a secure awareness of right and wrong, and show a good respect for others. They listen with interest to stories and recall favourites. A 'library' system is in place to encourage children and parents to share books at home. Children treat books with respect. Children have a designated table where they can use pencils, crayons and scissors when they choose, less consideration is given to providing opportunities for children to mark make relevant to their play. Older children are beginning to write and recognise their own and others names. However, there is little opportunity

to recognise the written word in everyday play or naming of familiar objects. Systems are in place to support children for whom English is an additional language and staff offer good support to children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children use their imagination and are creative in expressing themselves, for example, small world role play with the farm and house help them make sense of the world around them. They are inquisitive about their surroundings, have some use of everyday technology and wonder at changes they observe such as the ripening fruit and vegetables they have grown outdoors. Children gain confidence in using numbers in their play and respond to challenges to extend their mathematical vocabulary and skills in planned activities and daily routines.

Staff are perceptive to children's interests and extend their language and thinking skills successfully through questioning and dialogue. All staff are involved in observation, monitoring and recording of children's achievements. An evaluation system to help improve the quality of teaching and inform future planning is currently being developed. Staff have a clear understanding of children's skills, interests and needs. Planning provides a balance of adult and child led activities to allow the children to develop at their own pace.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are highly valued as individuals and staff ensure they have good background information about them to effectively meet their needs. All children are welcomed warmly into the setting. Staff value and respect children's differences, individuality and family context, they take time to get to know each child well. Staff consider children's and parents' contributions important. Through topic work and regular outings within the local community children become aware of the wider society and have opportunities to learn about themselves and each other. However, to help children value diversity they would benefit from access to a wider range of toys and resources depicting positive images of different cultures, gender and varying needs.

Behaviour strategies have been introduced, using discussion and distraction to help children begin to understand and learn what is right and wrong. Children receive regular praise and encouragement. As a result children generally behave well; take turns and share resources with each other. Children are kind to each other, for example, an older child protectively places her arm around a younger child during their play at the sand tray and offers advice on where to pour the sand. They show an increasing understanding and concern for living things around them, for example, as they plant flowers and vegetables, care for them and see the results of their efforts. Staff have experience in supporting children with disabilities and learning difficulties and demonstrate a willingness to work with outside agencies to meet children's individual requirements. Overall; children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Relationships are friendly and relaxed benefiting the children's welfare. Staff communicate well with parents at the beginning and end of the sessions. Informal sharing of information about the children's achievements takes place but the formal record keeping system is not effectively shared to inform parents of their child's learning or their progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Comprehensive and thorough recruitment and induction procedures are in place; these ensure children are cared for by staff and helpers who are appropriately vetted. Children receive good

support through appropriate staff deployment and the well thought out use of the play areas. Regularly reviewed and updated policies and procedures are in place and known by staff to promote the well being of the children. All legally required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and wellbeing, is in place. The certificate of registration is displayed during operational hours alongside information of the complaints procedure and details of the regulator.

The leadership and management of the provision is good. The caring and committed staff receive good support from the committee who recognise the importance of identifying staff's training needs in order to continue to improve the quality of care and education. Staff appraisals have been introduced and staff are booked onto training courses to further update skills and knowledge. Staff are allocated non-contact time to complete the planning and children's records of achievements. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the setting had one recommendation for the Care inspection and three key weaknesses for the Nursery Education inspection. The provision have made significant improvements in most of the identified areas, benefiting the children's wellbeing and developmental needs.

The complaints procedure for parents is now clearly displayed on the notice board and in the parents information pack and provides all the required contact details of the regulator.

Strategies to manage children's behaviour effectively have been addressed and improved through changing the room layout to provide more definitive areas for the children to complete activities. Techniques that include distraction and discussion appropriate to the age and stage of development of the children and a consistent positive approach by all staff help further promote good behaviour.

To establish ways to evaluate the effectiveness of the pre-school provision staff regularly request feedback from parents and complete some self assessments on activities and the outcomes to inform future planning. This continues to be a work in progress.

Opportunities for children to express their own ideas with a variety of art materials has increased as staff provide regular sessions for free creative expression with boxes/modelling materials, paints and collage materials. Children have daily access to crayons, pens, pencils, paper and scissors to use as they wish.

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 children are able to follow good personal hygiene practices through the provision of appropriate resources
- provide children with the opportunity to access drinks throughout the session and develop independence skills at snack time
- extend the range of toys and resources which reflect diversity and show positive images of different cultures, gender and varying needs

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):

- provide children with the opportunity to mark make relevant to their play and increase word recognition skills through labelling
- establish a formal system to enable parents to share their observations of their child's learning and to be informed of their progress.

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