

Whitewell Bottom Pre-School Group

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	309529
Inspection date	02 October 2007
Inspector	Alexandra Cole
Setting Address	Community Centre, Whitewell Bottom, Rossendale, Lancashire, BB4 9LB
Telephone number	07821 393896
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Registered person	Whitewell Bottom Pre-School Group
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 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?

Whitewell Bottom Pre-School Group has been registered since 1992. It operates from the Whitewell Bottom Community Centre situated in the area of Whitewell Bottom in Lancashire. The group is run by a voluntary management committee.

Children have access to a large community hall, adjacent rooms, a kitchen, toilet and changing facilities. A secure outdoor area is also available.

The group provides full day care for children aged from two years up to five years, Monday to Friday, term-time only. Sessions are from 09.00 to 15.15. The group is registered to care for 25 children and there are 25 children on roll, of these, nine children receive funding for early education.

There are four core staff working directly with the children, all of them have Level 3 qualifications in childcare. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff suitably address and support all aspects of children's health. Arrangements for administering medication are in place and appropriate, and requirements for first aid training are met. This ensures children are fully protected in the event of an accident or medical emergency. Staff act in the best interests of children when they are ill. Children are protected from illness and infection, as clear policies inform parents of infectious illnesses and the procedure to be followed should a child become ill whilst at the pre-school.

Children are sufficiently protected from infection through sound procedures that include wiping tables before snack time, the cleaning of toys and equipment and staff wearing disposable gloves during nappy changes. Children are encouraged to become independent in self care skills, such as washing their hands before having something to eat. Children's understanding of healthy practices is promoted through the staff organising activities, such as a visit from the local dentist where they learn about the importance of brushing their teeth.

Children are well nourished. Food and drink is stored appropriately reducing the risk to children's health. They are offered a range of nutritious snacks that includes the provision of fresh fruit. Staff have introduced different fruits to the children and talk about what is considered to be 'good and bad' foods; encouraging them to understand the benefits of a healthy diet. Parents are given information regarding what is appropriate food to provide for the children's lunch. They are encouraged to provide food that works towards children's recommended intake of five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. Staff gather information regarding children's individual needs, and they comply with their special dietary requirements to ensure they remain healthy.

Children benefit from regular physical exercise. For example, they access physical play in the outdoor area as well as in the main playroom. They develop their coordination skills and balance as they climb onto the climbing frame, wheel the bikes around and climb in the tree in the outdoor area. They also develop their fine motor skills, when they spend a long period of time connecting poles together to make a tent and have free access to the mark making area.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean, adequately maintained environment which is suitably organised to enable them to move around freely. The staff have overcome the logistics of providing care in a large area by being creative in the way they have organised the space. Different areas of learning have been created through the use of screens and other furniture, ensuring children are able to use the space in a way that promotes their development.

A welcoming environment is provided and examples of children's work and photographs of activities undertaken are displayed, contributing towards children's sense of belonging. Children are able to access a range of toys and equipment that is safe and suitable for their age and stage of development. Staff monitor children's choice of toys to ensure they are playing with equipment that is safe. Toys and equipment are available for self-selection; increasing children's independence and promoting their decision making skills. However, the range of outdoor

equipment provided for the children is insufficient and at times this leads to conflict between children.

Children are able to move safely within the environment. The room is suitably arranged to provide different areas for play and rest. Written risk assessments of the indoors and outdoors are undertaken regularly and any issues are noted, which contributes towards ensuring the environment is a safe place in which children can play and learn. However, these risk assessments are not robust enough to ensure the premises are secure at all times. Children learn about fire safety because the staff ensure that the fire evacuation procedure is practised regularly so that children understand the course of action to take in an emergency.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe through regular reminders and explanations from staff, such as not to put toys into their mouths and to slide down the slide rather than climbing up it. They have had visits from the local fire and police service where they have learnt about the dangers of fire and how to keep themselves safe during dark winter evenings. Children's welfare is promoted because the staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities towards child protection and are able to put relevant procedures into practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled and they are fully involved in their play. Warm and caring relationships are apparent between the staff and children and they are generally confident and happy to arrive at the setting; contributing towards their sense of belonging. Children are confident in their relationships with staff. They play happily together and with adults, enjoying using resources, such as the mark making area, play dough and the book area.

Staff provide a suitable range of activities, allowing for active play indoors and out as well as time to relax. Children can participate in activities of their choice in accordance with their individual needs and interests. They are able to access resources and opportunities that allow them to use their imagination, such as dressing up clothes and when they pretend to carry food whilst practising their harvest festival event. The range of activities on offer is appropriate to the ages and interests of children attending.

Children's self-esteem is developed through the staffs' appropriate use of praise and support. For example, they praise children for counting to 10 and when they have helped to tidy the toys away. Children play well together, they learn to share and have respect for each others feelings. Children are involved, interested and enjoy their play, for example, as they spend a long period of time making models with the play dough.

Nursery Education:

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and of how children learn. They plan a suitable range of activities and experiences to cover all areas of children's learning. Planning is sufficient to ensure that children are able to progress in all aspects of learning within the curriculum. The plans are flexible so that they can change in line with children's interests and activities are evaluated to ensure the next steps in children's learning are identified. Staff know the children well and give them opportunities to contribute their ideas through general conversation.

Overall children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. Staff use open questions to promote their thinking, such as asking children to name characters in a story and what colour the dinosaur is. Children are developing early reading and writing skills, through the use of the mark making area where they are able to ascribe meaning to marks and as they confidently handle books in the book area. Children are learning to recognise their own name through the use of a self registration system.

Children can recognise colours and numbers and can count to 10. They develop their creativity as the staff hold regular 'music appreciation' sessions with the children. Children respond well to this activity as they enthusiastically join in with the 'dingle dangle scarecrow' song and twirl the ribbon batons whilst dancing to music. Children are encouraged to be independent through activities, such as putting their own coats on. However, opportunities for them to further develop their independence are sometimes limited.

Children are developing an understanding of the natural world through activities, such as planting seeds and watching them grow and caring for tadpoles whilst learning about the life cycle of a frog. Children are cared for in an environment where they can independently select activities that are laid out for them and self-select from other resources; encouraging choice and promoting their independence.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are adequately met and they are fully included in the pre-school. Staff ensure all children have access to the activities on offer. For example, they have ensured that the climbing frame is put out on days when all of the children attend so that all children have access to it. The children develop a positive attitude to others and an understanding of the wider world and community through celebrating festivals and having access to a range of resources which show positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Children are well behaved because they are made aware of the boundaries and expectations. Behaviour is managed in a way that is appropriate to children's age and stage of development. Staff give them explanations as to why certain behaviour is unacceptable, such as the reasons why they should not hurt each other. The staff help children to learn to share and have respect for each others feelings. They consistently praise and reward good behaviour through a sticker system for achievements, such as writing their name on a painting. Children are very pleased with themselves when this happens and tell the other children 'I've got a sticker'; building on their self-esteem.

Partnerships with parents and carers is satisfactory. Staff record all of the necessary information from parents and share policies and procedures with them. They are invited to attend parents evenings where they are able to discuss their child's progress with staff and view their child's developmental record. Although parents are given general information about activities provided through the use of a newsletter, they are not provided with information on ideas of how to extend their child's learning at home. Children's progress is shared verbally at the end of the session in an informal way, ensuring continuity of care between home and the playgroup.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The staff organise the setting well. They have overcome the logistics of sharing the space with other users and are creative in the way that they use the space. The suitable presentation of activities and resources enables the children to initiate their own play and learning. Generally children benefit from well deployed staff that give appropriate support and encouragement, which helps them to feel secure and confident. All staff are appropriately vetted, ensuring children's welfare needs are met.

All of the documentation for the safe and effective management of children is in place and appropriate. However, staff do not consistently record their attendance at the setting. The required adult to child ratios are met and provide suitable levels of care and support. In response, children are confident and secure in their surroundings. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The staff work hard as a team to provide activities that promote children's development. Staff are involved in the planning for the curriculum to help children to develop in all areas. However, on occasion staff are too involved in organisational tasks resulting in missed opportunities to interact with children, impacting on their learning. The staff are able to identify their strengths and weaknesses and have a positive attitude to improvement. They have a commitment to attending training in order to provide an appropriately qualified and skilled workforce.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the pre-school was asked to ensure parents sign medication consent forms and to develop the details included in the child protection procedure. Good progress has been made. The staff now ensure that parents sign the medication consent forms and the child protection procedure has been updated to ensure it contains all of the required information.

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 the premises are secure at all times
- develop the range of toys and equipment available for outdoor play
- develop the registration system to ensure staff attendance is recorded.

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 parents are given information of how to extend their child's learning at home
- review the way that staff are deployed within the setting to ensure opportunities to develop and challenge children's play, learning and development are not missed
- develop the opportunities that are available to children in order for them to develop their independence.

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