

# Whitworth Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	309530
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Dawn Bonica Brown
<b>Setting Address</b>	Hallford United Reform Church, Hall Street, Whitworth, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL12 8TL
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<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees of Whitworth Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional 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](http://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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Whitworth Pre-School and Out of School Club is a registered charity and is managed by a parents' committee. It opened in 1969 and operates from two rooms in the United Reform Church Hall in Whitworth. A maximum of 25 children may attend the setting at any one time. The pre-school and out of school club is open each weekday, during term time only, from 09.30 until 12.00 for the pre-school and from 15.15 until 18.00 for the out of school club. Children attending the out of school club attend one local primary school. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 35 children on roll in the pre-school, aged from two years to five years. Of these, 16 children receive funding for early education. There are currently 28 children on roll in the out of school club, aged from four to 11 years. Of these, 18 children are aged over eight years.

The setting supports children with disabilities and learning difficulties.

The setting employs six members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is outstanding.

Children have a very good awareness of healthy hygiene practices. For example, they spontaneously show their hands to emphasise that they have remembered to wash them. Their hand washing hygiene is rigorously maintained through and supported by good facilities which promote their independence. These include steps to the sink and toilet and pictures in the toilet to show children what to do. Children reach paper towels easily and tissues for wiping noses are placed in a handy position to help children use them independently. They learn about taking care of their health through visits from the dental hygienist who shows them how to brush their teeth and the nurse who helps them overcome any fears about injections.

Children remain healthy because staff consistently follow good hygiene practice to prevent the spread of infection. Their health is exceptionally well maintained through rigorous maintenance of documentation to help them stay healthy. Children's good health is protected through excellent sick children procedures that parents understand. This is achieved through a comprehensive written policy, which includes the range of contagious ailments, incubation periods and what to do for a variety of symptoms. Children's good health is further protected through good staff liaison with parents.

Children's welfare and well-being are closely protected because all staff hold current and relevant first aid certificates, which also provides reassurance for parents as these are displayed on the parents' noticeboard.

Children are extremely well nourished and learn about nutrition through eating snacks that are nourishing, attractive and easy to eat. They help themselves to fresh drinking water whenever they feel the need. Children's allergies are monitored well because comprehensive notes are taken from parents by their key workers, who collaborate closely with parents regarding special dietary requirements. Children benefit enormously from the setting's good communication with parents. Their sensitive approach to healthy eating and an active lifestyle facilitates discussions between parents, the dental hygienist and the health visitor.

Children are encouraged to be active through regular physical play both indoors and outside as they move in and out of the setting independently when the weather is good. Many of the activities they enjoy are set up in the outside play area so that children's enjoyment of their favourite activities is uninterrupted. Children continuously gain physical skills, such as throwing and catching, balancing, climbing, jumping, running and stopping under control.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely busy with a wide range of stimulating activities that comprehensively cover all areas of learning in a safe environment. The premises are well maintained and space is used with imagination and flair to encourage children's independence and to promote all-round development.

Children use furniture and equipment that are safe, suitable and allow plenty of space to move in between workstations. Children understand the purpose of everything they use and skilfully demonstrate how things work.

Risks to children are minimised through highly effective and thorough risk assessments. For example, safety regarding entry to the building is given paramount importance and staff demonstrate a high level of awareness of changing circumstances so that they monitor children competently. Children practise emergency evacuation of the building regularly so that they all understand what to do in a real emergency. Good safety procedures on outings include prior inspection of venues to check all aspects of safety.

Children demonstrate a good awareness of road safety through well resourced role play as they practise what they have learned from visits by road safety officers and through short trips and outings.

Children are well protected from abuse by extremely competent staff who understand their responsibilities. All staff are well trained in child protection and know the procedures to follow to safeguard children. They are knowledgeable about the signs and symptoms that would cause concern and retain the correct contact details for reporting.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Children play a dynamic role in the setting as they are encouraged to set their own learning agendas and explore the setting independently. This is achieved through the innovative use of resources, which allow them to experiment across the range of workstations. They actively make their own decisions as they play inside and out of the setting, taking resources indoors and outdoors as they need them.

Young children's development is extremely well promoted through excellent delivery of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. For example, their learning is planned and assessed and discussed with parents. Parents also have a good understanding of the framework, as each learning outcome from the activities is explained in the newsletters and on the parents' noticeboard.

Children are confident and make informed decisions about what they want to do, so that they become engrossed in their self-chosen activities. They respond to adults' interest as they extend their learning. For example, they make their own play dough, adding scent, colours and other ingredients. Children relish the freedom to choose and readily escort visitors around the setting, showing them how they select and use resources. They are self-assured and knowledgeable as they explain what they are doing and how they achieve results, which boosts their self-esteem and confidence further.

Children are highly stimulated and motivated to learn through well planned and presented play opportunities. These are skilfully adapted to meet their individual needs and stages of development. For example, children attending the out of school club have separate resources and enjoy more advanced activities, such as skittles, tennis, swing ball, skipping ropes, karaoke, puppet making, making key rings and preparing their own snacks.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of the early learning goals through an extremely well-planned curriculum. Planning shows how they link all areas of learning to ensure that children receive a broad and balanced curriculum. For example, the focus activity clearly demonstrates how a theme meets

all aspects of the early learning goals. Activities are carefully adapted in the planning stage and revised during implementation to ensure that all children receive appropriate challenges. Innovative use of resources keeps children at the heart of all decision making. Teaching methods involve children in active learning, as staff fully understand their need to practise new skills.

Children's profiles are exemplary, containing complete, concise and clear information for parents. They highlight when children have reached significant milestones by explaining how this meets the stepping stones. For example, certificates of achievement identify milestones reached, such as when children have found their own name at snack time, helping staff sort dirty aprons, sharing and taking turns, or working independently at a piece of work. Annotated photographs of activities show parents what children are doing and how the activity supports their progress. Examples of children's work carry notes to show its significance. For example, a self-portrait demonstrates a child's self-image, or a piece of writing identifies how a child ascribes meaning to words or pictures.

Children are friendly and very sociable. They are highly motivated to take part in new experiences and have good relationships with each other and with staff. For example, they talk to staff constantly about their experiences outside the setting, such as seeing someone with disabilities, which leads to a conversation on the positive aspects of disabilities.

Children's vocabulary is broad. They express themselves extremely well to make their needs known to staff and negotiate with each other well to achieve common goals. Children help themselves to mark-making resources across a range of provision. For example, they take their completed paintings to the mark-making tables, select appropriate writing materials and make their mark on the artwork before putting it to dry. Children are interested in stories and listen attentively in group story sessions, as well as looking at books in small groups or on their own. In the book corner, children explore their imagination through the use of puppets to tell each other stories and, with support from adults, write their own books.

Children gain a thorough understanding of mathematics through purposeful, firsthand experiences. For example, trips to the green grocer involve weighing the fruit and vegetables, followed by role play with weighing and counting. Good facilitation of their spontaneous role play through strategically placed resources helps them to understand the practical uses of numbers. Children learn to recognise and use numbers meaningfully in a wide range of activities, such as following number sequences in computer games and board games, such as dice and dominoes, and using magnets to sort, match and create patterns.

Children's use of modern technology is promoted through the skilled planning and delivery of activities. For example, children print images from the computer and use these in their artwork. Their understanding of technology is meaningful as they use headphones to play music and listen to stories using a cassette player. Children use a working digital camera to take snapshots of the setting, friends and members of staff, which are included in their books on 'all about me'.

Children gain a sense of the passage of time through compelling activities. For example, they are thrilled and awed as they watch chicks emerge from their shells. Children's interest and motivation to learn are effectively engaged as they learn how to care for the chicks until they are collected from the setting, a few weeks after hatching, by the farmer.

Children are thoroughly engrossed by a visit from a builder, who shows them how to lay bricks, including making corners. The role play that follows is facilitated through comprehensive

planning as children use the range of tools used by a builder, such as a spirit level, trowel, mortar board, wheel barrow, string, sand and full-sized plastic bricks to make their own walls. Children's enjoyment of the activity is enhanced through thoughtful provision of role play material so that children dress up in the correct outfits, using hard hats and builders' jackets.

Children thrive in the free-flow environment as they learn to control their bodies in plenty of space and use the indoor and outdoor areas freely. Inventive use of resources promotes children's independence and helps them gain spatial awareness. For example, the practical use of wheeled trolleys containing useful resources allows children to take them to different work stations. They understand their bodily needs and how to take care of themselves because they recognise when they are hungry and take snacks and drinks when they need to. Children soon learn to be independent and eagerly take responsibility for putting on their hats and coats to go outside.

Children develop their artistic skills through an extensive range of mediums including working with clay and weaving, as well as a huge diversity of printing mediums. They mould, shape, cut and stick across the range of resources to create original artwork. Children play musical instruments, sing action songs and nursery rhymes in groups and enjoy moving their bodies to music.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from care by staff who show a real ability to share and understand their feelings. They are valued and included because staff listen to them and value their opinions. Children are given choices and opportunities to negotiate with each other, learn to share resources and to take turns in group games. They have a broad vocabulary so that they explain their needs to each other clearly and demonstrate an ability to reflect on the needs of others. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Staff and parents have an excellent rapport and parents are extremely positive about the setting. They talk enthusiastically about the range of activities their children are involved in, the support they receive and the knowledge and skills of the staff. Parents are made to feel welcome and to talk about any issues and concerns with staff. They also express positive opinions on the extra-curricular activities that are provided for them, such as aerobics classes while the pre-school is in session. Parents play an integral role in the setting and there is a two-way exchange of ideas and information. For example, parents offer their expert knowledge and experience to help children's progress through activities, such as cooking and demonstrating their specialist skills. They help their children's progress at home by borrowing resources, such as reference books and story sacks.

Parents are knowledgeable about how the setting works because they receive useful information about the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum as well as up-to-date policies. They are kept abreast of events through a regular newsletter, information on the parents' noticeboard and informal discussions with staff. Parents of children attending the out of school club also express extremely positive opinions on the care their children receive. They are particularly happy with the way in which children's disabilities are identified and supported within the setting. Positive comments include that the staff are 'caring, supportive and extremely friendly to parents as well as to the children and are always willing to go that extra mile for you'.

Children's behaviour is extremely well managed. All children are given positive encouragement because their individual achievements are recognised and praised, especially their behaviour, so that children understand the boundaries and behave responsibly. For example, they return resources to the correct places after use so that others can use them. Staff are consistent in their approach and understand how to work with children and parents to promote self-esteem and boost confidence. Children attending the out of school club learn to take responsibility for their own actions by setting their own codes of behaviour. They are encouraged to think about how they want to be treated and the need to treat each other fairly. As a consequence, children are well behaved.

Children with disabilities or learning difficulties are comprehensively included in the provision. Staff are highly skilled and very experienced in working with complex disabilities. They are adept at recognising children who need extra support and work with a wide range of specialists in the setting. Parents of children with disabilities or learning difficulties are given substantial support to help them focus on the positives and to help children achieve their personal goals. Staff are pro-active in promoting inclusion and actively seek 'hard to reach' families by developing good links with healthcare specialists who can refer families at an early stage.

Children benefit from activities and resources which help them to value diversity and engage in a range of cultural activities through a variety of child-centred methods. These include traditional songs and stories from many cultures and the involvement of parents with specialist knowledge. They learn to value the differences in society through an extensive range of resources that provide non-stereotypical play and reflect positive images of cultural diversity, disability and gender.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's welfare is exceptionally well promoted through the highly efficient management of the records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision. Policies are robust and fully inclusive. Parents are kept informed of all changes in policies as copies of these are provided for them with each policy update. Children are well protected because staff undergo rigorous vetting procedures and a comprehensive induction process. Children receive expert care from highly qualified and very skilled practitioners who demonstrate outstanding flair and empathy with children, which enhances all aspects of the provision.

The setting is committed to continual development and improvement of the service it provides for all children, and staff receive extensive training in childcare to a very high level. Children benefit from excellent organisation of their day in a well-organised and welcoming environment, which makes a huge contribution to their enjoyment and rapid progress. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is outstanding. The adults who manage the setting are dedicated to providing inclusive provision and clearly understand their role. The manager is successful at motivating staff and parents to provide the best care for all children. Monitoring and evaluation of the provision is effective so that the setting reflects positively on the care it provides and there is an extremely strong commitment to improvement. The setting involves children in the continuous development of ideas and they play an essential role in putting new ideas into practice.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection for care the provider was recommended to ensure that there is a written risk assessment in place in relation to the renovation of in the children's toilet area.

At the last inspection for nursery education the provider was recommended to provide children with further opportunities to access information and communication technology in the setting via the use of a computer.

Children's safety has improved through the completion of renovation work to the building. Children's access to information and communication technology has improved through the acquisition of a computer.

### **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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

#### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)