

Whitley Lodge Under 5's

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	310255
Inspection date	10 July 2007
Inspector	Jim Bostock
Setting Address	Whitley Lodge First School, Woodburn Drive, Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear, NE26 3HW
Telephone number	0191-2972002
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Registered person	The Trustees of Whitley Lodge Under 5's 1023284
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?

Whitley Lodge Under 5's is situated in Whitley Bay, to the north east of Newcastle. It is registered under a trusteeship which is the parent's committee. The group has been established for nine years, is registered to provide sessional care for 18 children aged from two years to under five years, and serves the local community. It operates from a mobile building in the grounds of Whitley Lodge First School. Sessions run term-time only from 09.05 until 11.35, Monday to Friday and 12.35 until 15.05 every afternoon Monday to Thursday except Tuesdays when the group is closed.

The group provides funded nursery education for three and four-year-olds. There are currently 52 children on roll and 20 of these are funded three-year-olds attending a variety of the sessions. Teacher support is provided by the local authority.

There are six staff working with the children and two of these staff members share joint responsibility for being in charge of the group; all staff have a relevant childcare qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children thrive because staff follow effective procedures and practices which meet children's physical, nutritional and health needs. Staff help children gain a good understanding of hygiene and a real desire to become increasingly independent in their personal care. For example, the children know why they need to wash their hands before snack. All staff have current first aid qualifications and two have a food hygiene qualification to ensure children are well protected. Staff work closely with parents to safeguard children with allergies and have very good procedures to ensure children's health is protected.

Children develop and test their physical skills through stimulating daily indoor and outdoor experiences. Staff have a good understanding of each child's stage of development which means the youngest are confident to try out new skills. For example, the two-year-olds are thrilled as they successfully use wheeled toys with pedals. Older children develop a positive attitude towards physical exercise. They delight in the challenges of using equipment such as climbing frames and slides, kicking balls and playing with hula hoops. Children learn about nature as they walk around the grounds watching birds, collecting leaves and visiting the sensory garden.

Children have access to drinking water throughout the session as the provision has a water cooler. Snacks are good as children regularly have fruit, vegetables, cheese, crackers and milk. Children say they enjoy having fruit such as grapes, apples and oranges. Children demonstrate good social skills as they sit together to eat, however, they are not always extended to include responsibility for others by helping serve food at break time.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children use an excellent range of high quality toys and equipment that is appropriate to their age and stage of development. The premises are bright and welcoming with many examples of children's work and photos that help to make them feel comfortable in the setting. Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because staff are extremely vigilant and use risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. Although some fire safety checks, such as for smoke alarms are completed, all fire safety checks are not completed as the provision does not have a fire safety log book and fire safety risk assessments have also not yet been done. Staff understand how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits. They help the children develop their understanding about safety. For example, they practise emergency fire evacuation procedures regularly and arrange for the local fire fighters, police officer and road safety officer to talk to the children to help reinforce the importance of following safe practices. There are good collection and arrival procedures to keep children safe.

Children are very well protected from possible abuse or neglect. Staff attend training in child protection and are fully aware of the types of abuse and the signs to look for. They have a very good understanding of the policies and procedures to follow if they have any concerns and give high priority to children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the pre-school and achieve well because staff are skilled and have a good understanding of the age and stage of development of the children who attend. Children arrive happy and keen to participate. Those who are new to the pre-school settle well because staff are sensitive towards their individual needs and the youngest children make good progress because they are well supported. Staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework well to organise activities that help the younger children progress. Close and caring relationships increase children's sense of trust and helps them to develop a strong sense of self. Early communication skills are extremely well supported through high quality adult-child interactions. Children begin to make sense of the world and express their ideas as they join in with a diverse range of interesting activities and experiences. For example, they enjoy engaging staff in conversations about home. They cut and roll with play dough, dress up and use their imagination and enjoy stories. The activity areas are well organised to support children's play.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress because staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They find out about children's skills, interests and needs and build on this information to help them achieve well. Their good use of questioning challenges the children's thinking and the use of effective systems to observe, monitor and record children's achievements helps them to identify the next steps in their learning. However, these systems do not use parents' existing knowledge of their children which means that there is an assessment period, at the beginning of their placement, which is unnecessary and lost time for progress. They provide a very good range of interesting, well planned activities that cover all areas and have clear intended learning outcomes. Children have access to a wide range of well chosen resources to support their learning.

All children are eager to learn, self assured in their play and confident to try new experiences. They enjoy stories and demonstrate good language skills at discussion time. For example, they confidently talk about planting and growing while participating, as a group, in a computer game. All children use marks readily to represent their ideas and older children are very adept at writing their own names. They confidently choose and look at books. Children are very imaginative. They act out both real and imagined experiences, creatively using one object to represent another during role play. They create individual art work such as sand pictures and paintings. The role play area, however, is not used to maximum effect by the children unless staff are present.

Children work very well together. For example, children cooperate with each other in their play and regularly demonstrate care for each other. They gain confidence in using number in their play as they sort different shapes and sizes in the right order. They count regularly and are learning to recognise and order numbers. Their understanding of the wider world develops through a wide range of experiences such as celebrating festivals like Divali. Children have access to programmable toys and particularly enjoy using the remote controlled car as they skilfully guide it to weave in and out between obstacles. However, the computer and other information technology is not used effectively in the setting to increase children's knowledge of modern life. Children demonstrate good physical skills as they move confidently around the premises and skilfully use a range of large equipment. Their fine motor skills are developing well and they show good control as they use pencils, paint brushes and construction equipment effectively.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and play a full part in the pre-school because staff value and respect their individuality and the family context for each child. Children's behaviour is very good. Staff support the younger children in sharing and turn taking. They have high expectations and set consistent boundaries for the three-year-olds which helps them learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Children develop positive attitudes because staff praise them often and are good role models as they treat children with patience, kindness, interest and respect.

The children have excellent opportunities to learn about their local community and the wider world through visitors to the group such as a local road safety officer and police officer. Staff are very proactive in involving the pre-school in the life of the school. For example, they attend the nursery at the attached school which helps them settle easily when they move. Children have many toys and playthings which represent positive images of diversity and celebrate a range of different festivals together. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

The partnership with parents is good. It contributes significantly to children's well-being in the pre-school. Parents' views about their child's needs are actively sought before the child starts at the setting and on a regular basis throughout their time there. Staff ensure that all parents know how their child is progressing and developing, however, access to individual development records is not fully promoted. Parents are very positive about the setting, staff and their child's attendance. They consider that the information available to them is good, staff are very friendly and approachable, their children are progressing very well, love attending and settle easily. Children benefit greatly from the involvement of their parents in projects which contribute to their good health, development and learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The pre-school benefits from both the good organisation and leadership and management of nursery education. The premises are well organised with space laid out to maximise play opportunities for the children. Clear policies and procedures are in place which work well in practice and are consistently applied to ensure the service operates smoothly and efficiently. All legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and is stored securely to maintain confidentiality. All staff are fully cleared to work with children.

Staff are well led and work well together as a team. They are effectively deployed which ensures the children are well supported in their play and learning. The provision demonstrates a strong commitment to the ongoing development of the setting as it is undertaking a quality assessment programme. The joint leaders have been in post for many years and all staff are qualified and have access to very good ongoing training which ensures that children are cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child development. The staff form an effective team, who have defined roles and offer a good range of well resourced activities which capture children's interest. They provide a happy, caring environment for children.

The leadership and management of the funded education is good. The joint leaders are very experienced and well motivated to provide a high quality service. Regular communication in

the form of meetings and discussions ensures that all staff are well informed. Staff have a sound awareness of the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage' and how to apply this in practice to support children's development. They monitor children's progress in relation to the stepping stones and regularly assess how well the setting is meeting children's needs.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provision was asked to improve safety arrangements regarding glass bottles. They have removed all bottles so children are well protected. They were also asked to improve information for parents. This has been met by having regular formal and informal meetings with parents to share information about children's progress. The final recommendation from the last inspection concerned the range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity. There is now a good range of toys, playthings and activities that show positive images of difference and diversity available to children.

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):

- improve fire safety by using a fire safety log book and conducting fire safety risk assessments.

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):

- continue to develop children's access to information and communication technology, particularly in relation to the computer in the setting
- develop access for parents to children's progress files and their input into the assessment process.

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