

# Wooldale Pre School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 311315

**Inspection date** 02 July 2007

**Inspector** Jill Lee

**Setting Address** Wooldale Community Centre, Robert Lane, Holmfirth, West Yorkshire,  
HD9 1XZ

**Telephone number** 01484 685602

**E-mail**

**Registered person** Gillian Flowers

**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](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 good. 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?

Wooldale Pre School Playgroup was registered originally in 1978. It is privately owned and operates from a community centre in Wooldale, close to Holmfirth. The playgroup serves the local community.

Children have use of one large playroom and access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The playgroup opens each weekday from 09.15 to 15.30, during term time only. Morning sessions run from 09.15 to 12.00 and afternoon sessions from 13.00 to 15.30. A lunch club is offered between 12.00 and 13.00.

The playgroup is registered to care for a maximum of 26 children. There are currently 59 children on roll, of whom 37 children are in receipt of funding for early education. There are seven staff employed to work directly with the children, four of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification. The playgroup receives support from the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children love playing in the fresh air each day. They are able to choose outdoor activities freely and spend much of their time outdoors. They run about and chase each other with great excitement. They learn to pedal the bikes and scoot along fast, avoiding obstacles and negotiating the slope safely. They practise balancing skills, walk on the stilts and learn to throw and catch balls. They clamber delightedly up and down the indoor climbing frame and wriggle through the tunnel, developing confidence and coordination. They hang upside down for a 'bat-nap'. Children skilfully use a wide range of equipment, although there are few resources for them to build large structures outdoors. They sometimes enjoy building dens. They are developing a healthy independence and feel secure because staff give them confidence to explore and try out new challenges. Physical play is well planned to help children use their bodies in a variety of ways.

Children are protected from infection, as staff implement health and hygiene guidelines systematically. Arrangements for first aid and administering medication effectively protect children. Staff use daily routines well to help children learn how to keep themselves healthy. For example, they know why they must wash their hands when they have used the toilet and that they must only use their own, named towel to dry their hands. They become increasingly independent in attending to their own personal care.

Staff are well informed about children's individual health and dietary needs. The snack menu is balanced and healthy, although children are not always offered a choice. Children are introduced to different foods at snack time, encouraging them to try new tastes and textures. They often help prepare their own snacks, for example, they have made vegetable soup and fruit salad. Staff do not fully maximise opportunities during snack time to talk about healthy eating and help children to think about ways to keep their body healthy. Children choose when they want to have their snack and enjoy sitting with others while they eat, sociably sharing conversation. They are able to access drinks independently.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by staff who confidently balance children's opportunities for freedom and exploration within safe limits. Children's understanding of safety is strongly promoted because staff constantly reinforce limits and boundaries within everyday activities. They routinely remind children about safe practice, like why they should not throw the cars and why waving a cardigan with a zip may be dangerous. They ensure children learn appropriate skills to manage the large play equipment. Appropriate planning raises children's awareness of how to keep themselves safe, for example, they have talked about road safety and made stop signs. Children are well supervised and encouraged to behave in responsible ways.

Children learn to use the large and well planned space purposefully, as staff enable them to access all areas of the environment with safety. A well considered range of good quality resources is stored at child height, so that children can select them without help. Appropriate risk assessments are conducted. For example, as the building is shared with other users, children do not go to the toilets unsupervised and the playroom is always kept gated. Registers are kept

correctly, evacuation procedures are practised routinely and details of visitors are recorded. Different coloured flashing bells alert staff to any visitors to the building.

Children are cared for by staff who enable them to feel confident to share their feelings and make their needs known. However, most of the staff have not recently updated their knowledge of child protection issues and procedures, for example, by access to training. They are not fully informed about their responsibilities within the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the child protection policy has not been updated to reflect recent requirements. There are systems in place to record any concerns. Sufficient detail is not recorded in existing injury records and parents are not currently asked to countersign the record.

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

The provision is good.

Children love coming to the playgroup. The atmosphere is child-friendly and relaxed, so that children are very settled and secure. They are cared for by staff who show interest in everything they do and listen closely to them. They develop very high levels of confidence and independence, as they plan their own play and freely explore the whole environment, both indoors and out. Activities are child-led, so that children's play is uninterrupted by routines.

Children freely explore their own ideas using lots of different media like sand, water, paint and dough. They fill and empty containers, roll and stretch the play dough and make wonderfully colourful pictures. Their imaginary play is very well developed. They form strong friendships and learn to work together very cooperatively. They negotiate roles in the hospital, developing extended imaginary scenarios using the oxygen mask and blood pressure monitor. They creatively make up their own stories, using the cars and small world people. They love dressing up and caring for the dolls. Children become interested in the natural world, as they observe and care for creatures, like the tortoise and stick insects. They enjoy the 'boating lake' made by rain in the sandpit outdoors and watch their boats float onto the 'sandbanks'.

Children under three years settle very well and play contentedly alongside the older children. Staff observe children closely and talk frequently with parents, so that their needs are well known. The planned environment and relaxed routines enable them to play and develop at their own pace, becoming fully engrossed in the activities which absorb them most. Staff are aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework but do not currently use it actively to inform their planning.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and children's learning is satisfactory. Staff have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Well considered planning of the daily environment ensures that children enjoy a broad range of appropriate activities and experiences, which sustain their interest. Children are motivated and enthusiastic. They learn to concentrate and persevere very well with activities they enjoy. However, detail in planning does not sufficiently clearly identify the focus of teaching and what children are intended to learn in each area of the continuous provision. Planning of the continuous provision does not clearly include the learning opportunities offered by the outdoor environment.

Children use language well to share their own ideas; they are very confident communicators. They are introduced to new language in planned activities. Children love stories and listen attentively. They enjoy a wide range of factual books, which extends their knowledge and

promotes their awareness of the world around them. They have many opportunities to write for real purposes in their role play. They learn to recognise and write their name and staff promote their interest in letter sounds in everyday conversations.

Children count and become familiar with number concepts and shapes in everyday activities. At group time, they count all the children, act out number rhymes and find the correct numbers for the date. They enjoy an activity which helps them to think about more and less. They investigate mathematical ideas as they roll and shape dough, fill and empty containers in the water and construct models. They routinely enjoy baking activities. Staff do not actively maximise opportunities, for example, in construction, for children to explore maths language independently in practical activities and to solve practical problems.

Children develop awareness of the natural and wider world. They talk about the seasons and the weather at group time. They find out about different forms of transport. They grow peas and have planted seedlings found in the woods to grow trees, which they will return to their natural habitat. They enjoy using the computer and use the cassette player independently to listen to music. They access the creative workshop freely to explore their own creative ideas, although the range of tools and resources routinely made available is quite limited.

Staff interactions with children very effectively stimulate their curiosity and consolidate learning. They model skills and consistently reinforce expected behaviour, so that children learn to work cooperatively and use all activity areas productively. Staff have developed clear and varied systems to observe children's interests and monitor their individual progress. Assessments of progress are clearly linked to the stepping stones. However, staff do not always fully utilise this information to plan next steps and differentiate learning opportunities, to challenge children within the everyday environment.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop a strong sense of belonging to the playgroup. They are cared for by familiar and well known staff in an inviting and welcoming environment. They develop secure and trusting relationships, which promote their confidence and self-esteem. Children learn to be kind, caring and polite. Their good behaviour is sensitively encouraged and supported. They learn to keep the play environment tidy, to share, take turns and think about others. They tidy away their own dishes after snack time and put toys away at the end of the session. Staff very clearly explain why certain behaviour is unacceptable, so that children feel supported and know that staff will always help them to resolve any difficulties.

Children learn about different cultures and lifestyles as they engage in activities, like role play and dressing up, which reflect their local community and wider world. They sometimes do fundraising activities to help others, for example, when the tsunami occurred. They learn about how people celebrate special events in different ways. They use books and resources which show positive images of other cultures and abilities. Outings in the local community are planned and regular visitors to playgroup, like the lollipop lady, help to promote children's awareness of the people who help us. Children enjoy visits to the wildlife park and tropical world. Staff very successfully create an environment in which children join in actively, making lots of their own choices and decisions. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents enjoy relaxed and comfortable relationships with staff, which promotes children's sense of security. Staff work very hard to encourage parents' active involvement in playgroup. Parents

are confident to raise any concerns. Policies and procedures are displayed, along with the Ofsted poster for parents, although some policies need updating. The complaints procedure clearly reflects current requirements but is not made available for parents in the policies folder.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents receive an information brochure, which includes some detail about the Foundation Stage curriculum. Photographs are used well in development records to record and share children's experiences. Parents communicate informally about their child's progress on a daily basis. They are able to access their child's development profile, and may contribute to it, but few parents take this opportunity. Staff are developing ways to encourage parents' active involvement in their child's learning. For example, children may borrow books to read at home and they take Millie Monkey and Dilly Dinosaur home for parents to record the activities they share.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The playgroup is well organised to promote children's welfare and safety. Daily routines are relaxed and flexibly implemented to respond to children's varying needs and interests. Staff are deployed very effectively to ensure appropriate levels of care and supervision. They sensitively support children's interests.

The leadership and management of children's care and education is satisfactory. Space and resources are organised well to promote children's independent participation. Staff work together effectively as a team and consistently review and evaluate their practice. Observations of children help staff to monitor children's progress and there are systems in place to monitor the quality of teaching and its impact on children's learning. Children's experiences are enhanced, as staff access appropriate training and development opportunities.

Required policies and procedures are in place and mostly implemented effectively, so that children's welfare is safeguarded. Recruitment systems are robust, ensuring that staff are suitably skilled and experienced to work with children. Documentation is accessible and stored confidentially. Appropriate induction procedures and systematic, if informal, appraisal of staff development needs help to ensure staff are able to support children's individual needs. Required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place, although procedures for their regular review and updating are not clearly established. Parents' wishes regarding their child's care clearly influence day-to-day practice and clear written agreements are recorded.

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 playgroup was asked to undertake regular checks on electrical and gas equipment, to ensure that there is always a member of staff with a current first aid certificate and to improve documentation in respect of the complaints policy and the recording of existing injuries. With regard to nursery education they were asked to develop more detailed plans for the use of the outdoor play area and evaluate systems used to assess children's progress and achievements. They were also asked to plan more opportunities for children to practise calculating skills through practical activities and to provide parents with information about the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Systems have been implemented, in conjunction with the community centre management committee, to ensure electrical and gas appliances are checked as required. Planning now clearly ensures that a qualified first aider is present at every playgroup session. Required documentation relating to the complaints policy is clearly established. Existing injury records are appropriately kept but detail recorded is still not sufficient. These measures are helping to ensure that children are kept safe.

With regard to nursery education, there are clear systems in place to record and assess children's progress. Staff recognise that they do not always clearly link these observations directly to planning of activities, so that children's learning is extended. This means that they do not consistently maximise challenge and stimulus in all activity areas. For example, planned activities encourage children to use calculating skills, although there are missed opportunities to promote practical problem solving in free play. Planning for use of the outdoor area is still developing, as staff wish to further extend the range of everyday activities routinely offered to children when playing outdoors. Parents receive some written information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and information is included in each play area about what children are learning there. This is helping parents to be more aware of what their child is learning.

### **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 good. 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 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):

- increase use of everyday routines to actively promote children's awareness of how to keep themselves healthy
- ensure all staff have an up to date awareness of child protection issues, that sufficient detail is recorded when any concerns are identified and that records are countersigned by the parent, where appropriate.

#### **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):

- define the teaching focus and enhance planning for differentiation in all areas of the continuous provision, to challenge children and extend their learning
- continue to develop the ways in which observations of children are used to actively plan next steps in their learning
- continue to develop opportunities for parents to become involved in their child's learning and ensure up to date policies are shared with them (also applies to care).

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)