

Wellhouse Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY244377
Inspection date	15 October 2007
Inspector	Angela Margaret Ellis
Setting Address	c/o Crossley Fields Junior and Infant School, Wellhouse Lane, Mirfield, West Yorkshire, WF14 0BE
Telephone number	01924 493216
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Registered person	The Trustees of Wellhouse Pre-School
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 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?

Wellhouse Pre School is long established but opened on its present site in 2002. The group operates from a mobile building on the site of Crossley Fields Junior and Infant School in a residential area of Mirfield. It is managed by a committee. The accommodation comprises of an entrance and cloaks area and a large playroom organised into areas of play. There is an enclosed outdoor play area and wild garden.

There are 53 children on roll aged between two and four years of age. Of these, there are 33 three and four year old children who receive funding. There are no children attending with identified learning difficulties or disabilities. There are 10 children attending for whom English is an additional language. The playgroup is open each weekday morning and afternoon during term time, sessions run from 09.00 until 11.45 and 12.45 until 15.15. The group also provides extended hours as children can bring a packed lunch and attend all day. There is a manager and two supervisors as well as a staff team of seven, with a further three staff available for supply cover. Supervisors and staff have appropriate levels of qualifications and experience or are working towards them.

The pre-school has access to advisory teacher support from the local authority. The setting has been awarded quality assurance with Kirklees Early Years Service.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment, where they are helped and encouraged to develop good personal hygiene practices most of the time. They wash their hands before snacks, lunch and baking, and after going to the toilet and creative play. They are generally supported by adults to follow hygiene routines based on good policies and procedures. Although these are inconsistently implemented by adults, in particular in the monitoring of hand washing after children have handled food at snack and lunch time, before going to play with equipment.

Children are developing an understanding of a healthy diet well. Practitioners talk to them about healthy eating as part of the daily routine to help children understand about which foods are good for them. The café is an inviting area and fresh flowers on the table adds a finishing touch as well as a talking point. Snack time is a pleasant social occasion where children can independently make a choice of when to take part. They are offered a very good variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. Children enjoy good quality interaction with practitioners at lunch time and they are given plenty of time to eat at their own pace and enjoy their food. Staff take into account children's individual preferences and dietary needs and plan accordingly.

Children thoroughly enjoy regular physical play through their free choice of indoor and outdoor opportunities. They enjoy a wide range of activities that contribute to them being healthy and develop their physical skills. They control their bodies well and enjoy using large apparatus, such as climbing equipment and balancing with stilts, to build confidence and learn new skills. The outdoor area is used to its full potential to broaden the children's experiences and many activities available indoors are also set up outside, such as mark making and musical instruments. Children of all ages move around the playroom confidently and show good coordination using equipment, building models using large and small construction, drawing, painting, exploring malleable materials and cutting. Action songs and rhymes both indoors and outdoors enable children to experience having fun and getting out of breath at the same time, such as 'head shoulders knees and toes' and 'wheels on the bus'.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a secure and stimulating environment. Their security is given utmost priority to ensure there is no unauthorised access to the premises. Staff control entry to the premises and there are clear procedures for the safe collection of children.

Children are learning how to keep themselves safe through gentle reminders from practitioners as situations arise, for example, by being asked to walk and not run indoors. Practitioners understand well that suitable types of activities and appropriate levels of support give the children confidence to take risks and try out new skills. Children can set their own limits and know when to ask for help.

Increased adult to child ratios keep children safe. Children learn the procedures for emergency evacuation, because procedures are practised with them. The health and safety officer has

developed efficient systems to ensure fire alarms are tested and a record is kept of them. A risk assessment is undertaken each day to ensure all areas are safe before children arrive.

Children are appropriately protected because sufficient staff hold a first aid qualification. Staff have a good understanding of child protection issues and local procedures to protect children. Management has a clear understanding of vetting procedures and employs staff who have relevant experience, knowledge and skills in caring for children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to develop their own learning because skilled practitioners support and challenge them to build on what they already know, and to extend their skills. Interaction is good between children and adults because having fun and enjoyment is a key element. There is a good balance between free play offered through the continuous provision both indoors and outdoors, adult led activities and spontaneous events. Practitioners make effective use of the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage' and 'Birth to three matters' framework, incorporating the framework within the planning and assessments for children under three.

Children make good progress in all areas of development as practitioners are experienced, knowledgeable and offer activities and experiences that are stimulating and keep most children interested and motivated most of the time. However, the organisation of the routines does not effectively support those children that are not interested in sitting and listening to a story or joining in large group activities at the end of a session.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. There are several children aged three and four-years-old that are in receipt of funded nursery education. Most practitioners have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use a variety of teaching methods. Those staff that are less experienced are closely supported by the development champion officer and other experienced practitioners. Effective systems are in place to monitor how effectively they are implementing the Foundation Stage. A good understanding of how individual children learn at their own pace is demonstrated by staff.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is nurtured well. Children eagerly join in a wide range of purposeful first-hand experiences, and developmentally appropriate activities. They are confident and independent within their own self-care and take initiative in their play. For example, children put on an apron before playing with the water. Children learn to develop good relationships with each other and they interact well with staff and other adults, confidently initiating conversation.

Children's language is developing well. They talk to describe what they are doing. Most children enjoy stories, songs and rhymes to support their learning and most of them join in enthusiastically in large group activities. Children are keen to practise their writing skills as they freely access a range of mark making resources. However, there are less resources within other areas of play to enable children to practise writing for a purpose or recognise their name in the mark making area.

Practical, everyday activities are used effectively to enable children to begin to use their knowledge of mathematics to solve simple problems. For example, they count as sugar is

spooned into the bowl during the baking activity. Children tidy the wooden blocks and they sort them onto the correct silhouette, naming shapes and working out which shapes fit where. Children use size and positional language in their play, such as when talking about their activities on the climbing equipment. For example, they talk about climbing up the steps and going down the slide.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developed because practitioners offer a good range of resources and activities that enable children to explore and investigate. Children enjoy designing, constructing and joining things together with a variety of resources. Children have a natural curiosity when they see small creatures in the outdoor area, such as a snail that was slowly moving on the slide. Practitioners sensitively encourage the children to be kind to other living things.

Children express themselves creatively in a variety of ways, using their imagination through painting, drawing, imaginative role play, exploring musical instruments and singing action songs and rhymes. Children use their imagination to good effect to recreate real and act out pretend experiences. For example, a child in the book area was sitting with a book open so that the imaginary audience could see the pictures while she recalled the story that had been read to her earlier in the day by a practitioner.

Children have access to a good range of large and small equipment that enables them to develop their physical skills both indoor and outdoors. Children clearly enjoy playing ball games, such as throwing and catching with practitioners, and climbing up the steps to go down the slide. Children enjoy handling a range of small tools, such as the shape cutters with the play dough and scissors to snip and cut paper.

The planning of activities and experiences covers the six areas of learning well. There are effective systems in place for assessing children's learning. However, they do not clearly identify the child's next step of learning, in order to inform future plans.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's own routines from home are adhered to and as a result they are settled within the playgroup. This is because they are cared for by enthusiastic, friendly staff who are interested in them and give praise, support and encouragement. Practitioners are sensitive to the transitional needs of those who are new to the playgroup and understand well that children require time to settle in according to their individual needs.

Children learn to develop positive attitudes towards others and an understanding of diversity through a good range of activities. These include resources which show positive images of ethnicity, culture, disability and gender. Children and their parents share their own cultural and religious festivals with the other children at the setting and practitioners organise celebrations of other festivals, too.

Outings within the local community further enhance children's awareness and extend their experiences to learn about themselves and others. Visitors are invited to come in to share with children their own skills, interesting experiences and join in activities.

Practitioners have a good understanding of children's individual needs and they ensure all children have fair and equal opportunities to join in with all the activities. There is effective

support in place for children who have learning difficulties and disabilities and there is close liaison with parents at all times to ensure individual objectives are met.

Children behave well because practitioners have realistic expectations based upon the children's level of understanding. Positive interaction with plenty of meaningful praise and encouragement is used consistently with all the children. They are regularly reminded to use kind words and to have kind hands and feet. Good manners are reinforced at snack time and children learn to respect each other and other living things through routines and activities. They are learning to take turns and share toys through sensitive explanations and good role modelling from staff. Children are encouraged to appreciate other people's feelings and they are developing a sense of fairness. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. A well presented notice board keeps parents well informed about the curriculum and events. Children's own routines from home are closely adhered to help settle them and feel secure. Information is exchanged daily with parents which means that children are cared for according to each child's needs. Parents are welcomed and included in all aspects of the provision and they give their support to special events, such as parties, outings and fund raising events.

Parents of children who receive nursery education funding are kept well informed about what their children are learning and have effective information as to how they can participate in their child's learning at home. They can access their children's progress record at any time as well as through attending open evenings where they can meet with their child's key person. Systems are in place for parents and carers to provide compliments and complaints about the service provided.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care and learning are well supported by the effective organisation of the setting. Knowledgeable and experienced senior staff who understand their roles and responsibilities support new and less experienced staff to ensure that children's individual needs are mostly met. Staff are enthusiastic and have fun with the children. They work well together and there are effective procedures in place to monitor and evaluate the provision, which enables them to identify gaps in the provision and make improvements when necessary.

Recruitment and vetting procedures are quite rigorous and management do ensure that any person who has not been vetted is never left alone with the children. There are systems in place to ensure continued suitability to work with children and less formal measures in place to assess continued medical suitability of staff. The manager, supported by the management committee, ensures that all staff are effectively involved in reviewing practice and adopting new procedures.

Leadership and management is good. practitioners are encouraged and supported to undertake further training and development to consolidate their practices to enhance the service. The manager has recently completed the Early Years Professional Status training in preparation for the delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. The setting has successfully achieved accredited quality assurance status through the local authority. Very recently, the pre-school have been awarded membership into the Local Authority Childcare Affiliation Scheme. Practitioner qualifications and commitment to in-service training is a contributing factor to this.

An effective operational plan and a comprehensive range of policies and procedures is in place to support good practice and a good quality service. However, changes to some regulations within the policies and procedures have not been up dated, such as safeguarding children and complaints. Staff have opportunities to meet together regularly, share information and develop good working practices. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Progress has been made since the last inspection. The provider agreed to make improvements to the procedures for ensuring that staff qualifications meet the requirements, that the policies and procedures show how children who speak English as an additional language are supported in making progress and the procedures for ensuring that information to parent's regarding the Foundation Stage is made more accessible.

Most of the practitioners employed at the setting now have appropriate level three qualifications. The manager is highly qualified for her role with additional qualifications. Therefore staff qualifications more than adequately meet the requirements in order for children's needs to be met effectively. Additional information has been added to the policy file regarding how the needs of bilingual children's needs will be met and also lots of information has been translated into different languages. Translators are accessible through the local authority for those that require this service. This helps to ensure that all children and parents feel included. A comprehensive range of information is available to inform parents of the Foundation Stage. This includes information on the parents notice board, in the welcome pack and through parents attending open evenings. This ensures that parents are clearly informed and enables them to be involved in their child's learning in a variety of ways.

Nursery Education

Progress has been made for three and four-year-old children in receipt of nursery education funding. The provider was asked to improve the opportunities for children's emergent writing and writing for a purpose, the range of resources within the creative area to provide more challenge and to monitor the grouping of children to ensure individual needs are being met.

Writing areas have been created both indoors and outdoors and dot to dot work sheets have been created for children to practise writing the letters of their name if they wish to. However, there are still limited opportunities for children to practise writing for a purpose within other areas of play. For example, in the role play area. Resources within the creative area have been extended in order to provide more challenge for the children by the introduction of split pins, sticky tape, paper clip and rubber bands. All of these aid the children to assemble and join materials together. At team meetings, practitioners discuss children's individual needs and may incorporate a shy child into a group with a more confident child. They have also reorganised the sessions to incorporate a café system for snack so that children's play is not interrupted by practitioners, and they can choose when to have their snack which is working well.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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 that the child protection policy is updated in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and that the complaints policy is updated in line with the requirements
- review the organisation of planned, large group activities in order to meet the needs of all children
- ensure consistency between staff when promoting children's hygiene procedures to prevent risks of cross infection

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):

- extend the resources within other areas of play both indoors and outdoors to enable children to recognise print and practise writing for a purpose
- identify the next step for children's learning within their record of achievement files and use this information to inform future plans

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