

Whiston Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY283915
Inspection date	22 November 2007
Inspector	Tracey Jane Outram
Setting Address	Whiston Junior & Infant School, Saville Road, Whiston, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S60 4DX
Telephone number	01709 828003
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Registered person	The Trustees of Whiston Pre School
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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Whiston Pre-School has been established for a number of years. It is run by a voluntary management committee and it serves the local community of Whiston in Rotherham. It operates from a purpose built building, which is situated within the grounds of Whiston Junior and Infant School. The premises consist of a cloakroom, main playroom, kitchen and office. The children have access to an all weather covered veranda. A maximum of 20 children can attend the setting at any one time. The group operates Monday to Friday between the hours of 09.15 to 11.45 and 12.30 to 15.00 during the school term time.

There are currently 40 children aged from three to under five years on roll. Of these, 22 children receive funding for early education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school employs eight members of staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a qualification. The setting works closely with the reception class in school and receives support and advice from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The children's good health and well-being is appropriately addressed because members of staff implement appropriate cleaning procedures. For example, the premises, furniture and equipment are hygienic and the children are encouraged to develop independence in their personal care. However, good hand washing practices are not constantly applied because, on occasions, the soap is not stored within reach of the children. A detailed policy, which is shared with the parents, to exclude children when they are unwell means that the risk of cross-infection within the setting is effectively reduced.

The children benefit from a well balanced and nutritious diet. Members of staff talk to parents to ensure that the children are provided with food and drinks that address their individual health requirements. Snack times are a sociable and unhurried occasion. The children benefit from a range of fresh fruit, vegetables and a selection of different types of bread, which broadens their knowledge of food from around the world. Drinking water is available throughout the session and children are also encouraged to understand the health benefits of drinking milk.

The children have limited opportunities to benefit from vigorous physical play because the setting does not have access to a spacious outside play area. As a result, the children do not have daily opportunities to increase their large motor skills, strength and balance through large scale movement, such as running and climbing.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are warm and the good organisation of space, equipment and activities means children can move around safely and freely. For instance, the playroom is effectively arranged into different areas of learning and the children have ample space from which to play and explore, with a good range of suitable and developmentally appropriate resources. Similarly, the environment is bright, colourful and interesting. Examples of children's art work are prominently displayed to demonstrate how free expression is encouraged through using a range of different mediums.

Members of staff take good precautions to ensure that children remain safe within a secure environment, which is effectively managed and supervised. The staff are extremely vigilant and conscious of the necessity to complete a thorough risk assessment in order to ensure that children remain free from harm. There are robust procedures in place to verify the identity of any visitors to the setting and the systems of monitoring children's safe arrival and departure maximise children's welfare. Equally, the fire safety procedures are effective; there is a designated fire officer who ensures that the children participate in frequent emergency evacuation drills.

The children are safeguarded because members of staff have completed training, which helps them to understand many of the indicators of child abuse or neglect. Clearly defined procedures are in place, which support staff to swiftly report any cause for concern or worries about the children's well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

There are positive trusting relationships between the children and adults. Members of staff provide the children with high levels of encouragement and a range of activities that promote their social, emotional and intellectual well-being. The children's growing knowledge and independence is fostered appropriately through the provision of an interesting range of activities. They demonstrate pleasure and a good ability to concentrate as they use resources, such as play dough, arts and crafts materials, games and role play equipment. The children are motivated learners who are encouraged by staff to openly communicate as they begin to recognise shapes, count, sort and name colours. However, the children's ability to make choices and extend their play is occasionally restricted because they are not able to freely change equipment or access additional resources.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Members of staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage; they are aware that young children learn through making connections as they participate in a range of planned and spontaneous activities. The curriculum planning is closely linked to the stepping stones and the early learning goals. Additionally, activities are differentiated to take account of the fact that children are at various stages of development and learn at different rates. Key workers systems are in place and members of staff know a lot about the children who are assigned to them. However, some of the children's assessment records are insufficiently maintained and they are not used to monitor children's starting points and progress over time. Equally, activities are not planned to address the individual developmental needs of the children or plan for the next stage in their learning.

The children attending the setting are successfully supported to develop independence and high self-esteem. They are very confident and benefit from the many opportunities to explore and participate in both small and group work. The children are very happy in their surroundings and they have forged some good relationships with their peers. For instance, the children assist each other to complete tricky tasks, such as securing paper on to the easel and managing the fasteners on some of the dressing-up clothes. In addition, the children are very settled and demonstrate a strong sense of belonging.

Mathematics is an integral part of the curriculum and staff support children's growing understanding of shape, space and measure; the children confidently rote count, and recreate patterns. They are confident to name shapes and they skilfully use language to describe position, size and quantity. However, daily activities offer less opportunity for the older and more-able children to compare numbers and calculate.

Members of staff support the children's physical development by teaching them about different food types and nutrition. The children have very good fine motor skills and they are able to use a range of small tools and one-handed equipment with skill and ease. Likewise, they demonstrate good designing and making skills; they are able to build and construct with a growing confidence. The children benefit from the use of information technology but there are fewer activities aimed at helping them to investigate how things work and why things happen.

Communication and language freely flows within the setting because members of staff support children's developing vocabulary making a special effort to listen and value their anecdotes.

The children are articulate and demonstrate a wide vocabulary; they use some difficult words within the correct context. For instance, when referring to size they confidently shout 'it's enormous'. The children thoroughly enjoy story times; they listen attentively and demonstrate very good concentration skills. The children confidently respond to what they have heard by making observations and asking pertinent questions. Members of staff effectively introduce phonics and support children's growing ability to link letters and sounds. As a result, the children begin to experiment with rhyme describing the texture of the play dough as 'squishy and wishy'.

The children have access to a varied range of creative play opportunities. For example, arts and crafts activities, colour mixing, singing and exploring with different textures. The children enjoy imaginative play; they are confident to make-up their own stories and they effectively act out familiar narratives, such as 'sleeping beauty' in the correct sequence. However, there are fewer opportunities for the children to express themselves through movement, dance and listening to different types of music.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Robust systems are in place to identify and support children who have learning difficulties or disabilities. Members of staff are familiar with the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice and they work closely with external professionals in order to support children and monitor their progress. Sign language is a valuable and recent addition to the curriculum. The children have embraced this initiative and are prepared to communicate with a range of other people who use Makaton.

The children are cared for in an inclusive environment where staff engender a positive approach to learning, which promotes equality and challenges discriminatory attitudes. Children enjoy a variety of activities that help them to learn about different faiths and celebrations and they benefit from using a range of accessible resources that positively represent a multicultural and multiracial society. In addition, staff value children's backgrounds and make positive efforts to value children's home language. For example, staff work closely with parents to learn some words of their home language in order to support the children's developing use of English.

The children's behaviour is very good. Staff are very caring towards the children; they provide lots of praise and they spend time reinforcing what children do well. They are skilled at handling a range of different behaviours and they recognise the importance of working closely with parents in order to provide children with familiar boundaries and high levels of consistency. Consequently, the children are happy, settled and comfortable with the daily routines and show consideration and respect for each other. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents in relation to the nursery education is good. Parents receive some basic information relating to the six areas of learning, and there are some systems in place to assist parents' understanding of the Foundation Stage. This includes how to support children's progress towards the early learning goals. For example, staff have recently started to devise a method of sharing information through the provision of a book that can be transferred between home and the pre-school. In addition, the setting has recently reviewed the newsletters in order to inform parents of the current themes along with ideas of how to continue some play and learning activities at home.

Parents are welcomed into the setting and staff are friendly and approachable. They value parents' contributions and they are keen to ensure that parents are included in their children's time at the setting. For instance, a recent initiative to invite parents into the setting was very successful and offered parents an opportunity to see first hand how children spend their time. There are effective settling-in procedures for all children. Members of staff encourage parents to share information about the children's pets, interests and family in order to form relationships and ease the transition from home. Parents are highly satisfied with the high levels of care that the children receive and they are confident to leave their children in the charge of the attentive staff. Systems used to keep parents informed of children's achievements are informal and mostly oral. Conversely, the arrangements made to discuss any concerns relating to children's development are more rigorous.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children are well supported by a well established staff team who work together very effectively. There are good systems in place to recruit staff and complete the required background checks. All students to the setting are supervised and complete an induction to ensure that they are fully aware of their role in relation to the children's welfare. Most staff are qualified and they demonstrate a keen commitment to attending further training in order to improve outcomes for children. Likewise, they are well prepared to deal with any minor accidents or emergencies involving the children because they each hold a valid first aid certificate.

A selection of clearly written policies underpins the smooth daily operation of the setting and contributes to children's safety and learning. However, parents do not have free access to the policies and procedures, which include what to do if they wish to make a complaint. Documentation is well maintained and the systems for maintaining records of the children's attendance, staff and students' details, visitors to the setting and accidents occurring on the premises meet national requirements. The children's personal details are stored confidently and include a range of emergency contact details and written parental consent to obtain emergency treatment or advice.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The manager and the deputy manger both have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and they work together to plan an interesting range of activities for the children. The manager takes positive steps to ensure that all staff attend relevant training and newly initiated appraisal systems provide opportunities for staff to discuss their personal growth and ideas for the development of the setting. The manager has forged good working relationships with staff from the local authority and she is happy to further develop practice in the setting by listening to advice and acting on any recommendations that are made. However, the programme for nursery education has some areas for development; particularly, in relation to planning for children's individual needs and assessment records. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to improve food hygiene procedures and children's access to outside play. Since then they have continued to work with health and safety guidance in relation to hand washing, including the safe and hygienic preparation of food. Additionally,

management have continued to work with the school head teacher to negotiate an outside play space and funding to equip the area.

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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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 the opportunities that children have to enjoy vigorous physical play (also applies to nursery education)
- provide opportunities for the children to extend their play by freely accessing equipment and resources
- provide parents with free access to the policies and procedures, which underpin the daily operation of the setting.

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):

- link the curriculum planning to children's individual development needs and use assessment records to support the next stage in their learning
- improve the systems for maintaining assessment records
- provide children with opportunities to enjoy and interpret different types of music through movement and dance
- provide opportunities for the older and more-able children to compare numbers and calculate.

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