



Wilmslow Methodist Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	305443
Inspection date	11 July 2005
Inspector	Jane Shaw

Setting Address	The Methodist Church, King's Close, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AJ
Telephone number	01625 524587
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Registered person	Wilmslow Methodist 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 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?

Wilmslow Methodist Pre-school has been registered as a pre-school provision since 1966 and is organised and managed by a voluntary committee made up of parents, carers and church officials. The pre-school operates from within Wilmslow Methodist Church Hall in the centre of Wilmslow in Cheshire.

Children have access to four main play areas, which includes a music room, the main hall for physical play, a pre-school room and 'wet room' for messy play. There is also

access to toilets and hand washing facilities and a kitchen for the preparation of snacks and drinks.

A maximum of 48 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open Monday to Friday from 09.30 to 12.00 term time only. The group also offer an optional 'early bird' system specifically for pre-school children from 09.00 each week day. There are currently 59 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 48 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come mainly from the immediate locality, however some attend from further afield as parents and carers travel in to work. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.

The pre-school employ 11 staff. Seven of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. A further two staff are currently on training.

The pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. As the pre-school is in receipt of funding for nursery education, they have access to an Early Years advisory teacher and other staff from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a very healthy and hygienic environment. Staff employ thorough routines and procedures to ensure all areas are clean and hygienically maintained at all times ensuring children are kept healthy. Children understand the need to wash their hands after certain activities. For example, visiting the toilet or after craft activities, which is evidenced as they ask to, and undertake these tasks without prompting but with staff support due to the nature of the building. Children learn about keeping themselves healthy and caring for others through themes such as 'People Who help Us', where a visiting mum shows children how to feed and care for a baby. A detailed sick child policy and procedure ensures parents and carers are kept fully aware of the group's responsibilities and that children are cared for sensitively and free from infection. Staff are diligent and very caring towards children who might be unwell, giving very good support and care. Highly effective hygiene routines and procedures are employed by adults when preparing snacks for the children.

Children's physical development is extremely well provided for. They have daily access to an extensive range of physical play activities. Although there is no outdoor play space, staff make excellent use of the main hall to provide a vast range of large physical activities which enable children to develop their skills extremely well. Children competently climb, balance, travel over, under and through and skilfully change speed and direction during music and movement. Children develop confidence when using the variety of equipment offered, staff are able to skilfully balance the supervision of children and equipment with the need to allow children to take risks and develop skills such as climbing and using balancing equipment. Children develop competent small physical skills through access to an extensive

range of equipment and activities. They competently use scissors, a computer keyboard and mouse, a variety of craft materials when being creative, writing materials and join together pieces when using the wide variety of construction equipment.

Children enjoy healthy snacks and drinks mid-morning. They learn the importance of healthy eating at snack time and as they are involved in discussing and looking at different fruits and other foods from around the world. Children independently access drinking water regularly throughout the session or request extra drinks when feeling thirsty. Staff are vigilant about offering children extra drinks during hot weather or when children are feeling a little unwell, further promoting children's very good health and overall development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an excellently planned and organised environment which is conducive to their very good learning and development. Rooms are well set out and prepared prior to the children's arrival offering them access to excellent activities and opportunities which are supported by an extensive range of resources and equipment. Children access a wide and varied range of activities and opportunities on a daily basis. They are involved in physical activities, craft activities, specific pre-school activities and free play opportunities, with time for large and small group work. Children rotate in groups around the various areas with key group staff and have free choice between physical and free play activities, craft/experimental play and pre-school activities when within those particular areas. Children are highly motivated, excited and eager to participate as they arrive which is as a result of a welcoming entrance area, attentive staff at this time of day and the provision of activities and opportunities.

Children have access to an extensive range of toys and equipment which is continually built upon. This wide range of resources supports an excellent programme of themes and activities. Equipment is checked regularly for safety and hygiene ensuring children are safe at all times. Children are independent as they make choices and self select toys and equipment from those on offer.

Children are cared for within a safe environment as staff employ rigorous safety policies and procedures ensure children's safety at all times. Staff are extremely diligent in their care of children and the provision of a safe environment through the use of suitable safety equipment, high staff ratios and supervision. A nominated health and safety officer within the staff team who has undertaken appropriate training in this area completes risk assessments on a regular basis and uses the twice weekly staff meetings to raise or discuss any issues or concerns. Children learn to keep themselves safe through discussion with staff, for example, about the importance of not running indoors or using toys and equipment safely.

Children's welfare is given a high priority because staff have a very clear understanding and awareness of the procedures to be followed regarding child protection. Staff are very clear about their role within this area, there is an identified member of staff with

responsibility for child protection issues. This staff member along with several other staff having undertaken child protection training. This aspect continues to be high on the group's training agenda. Children are safe at all times as a result of comprehensive and detailed written policies and procedures which are known to staff. These policies and procedures are accessible to staff, parents and carers at all times. Staff very clearly understand their responsibility in maintaining a safe environment for all children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

All children access and benefit from the wide range of activities and opportunities which promote their very good learning and overall development. Qualified and experienced staff use the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage extremely well to provide high quality care and education. Children's learning is very well supported by a highly skilled and motivated staff team. High staff ratios ensure children are supervised and supported effectively. Children's learning is very well supported by an extensive range of resources and play experiences.

All children arrive excited and enthusiastic. Staff are extremely attentive at this time of the day, they are encouraging, inviting children's enjoyment and commitment. Children benefit greatly from the excellent staff communication and interaction. Staff actively engage with children and as a result children are engrossed in purposeful and challenging activities and are becoming competent learners.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are effectively challenged and actively engaged in an extensive range of stimulating and exciting activities and experiences. Children access a wide range of excellent resources which support their learning and development across all areas of learning. All children arrive happy, excited and confident showing an eagerness to learn and try the new experiences offered to them. They listen intently to stories, recount and act out favourite ones from a range of different story sacks containing props. Children sit quietly and listen to others as they speak. All children use marks readily to represent their ideas, make marks or to write their names and other words. For example, older children are adept at writing their own names and other words connected to the letter of the week, for example, for the letter 'w' they independently write 'watch' and 'waves'. One child tells a member of staff that the letters 'tb' he has added to his drawing of an aeroplane stand for 'turbo booster'. Through highly effective staff interaction children are developing good language skills and are becoming skilful and confident communicators using a well developed vocabulary. Children have conversations with one another discussing what they did at the weekend and describing their pictures to each other. When discussing finding crabs in the sea one child tells the member of staff that these are also found in rock pools. All adults working with the children give clear and suitable responses to their questions, for example, when looking at a net on the interest table staff and children discuss how this is used by fisherman to catch fish.

Children show care and concern for one another as they ask each other how they are and greet a late arrival excitedly. Children's behaviour is very good, they are polite, well mannered and show an eagerness in the activities and opportunities offered to them. They are inquisitive and interested in new experiences. Children gain confidence in using numbers in their play and respond enthusiastically to challenges to extend their mathematical vocabulary and skills in planned activities and daily routines. When looking at the number 10, staff use an alarm clock to illustrate to children the concept of time, counting 10 seconds in time with the alarm. After experiencing what 10 seconds feels like, children are asked to predict how long they think it will take a balloon to float up to the ceiling and count how long it takes to roll a tin across the floor. Children are involved in developing their understanding of mathematical concepts such as symmetry, sequencing, pattern making and consider questions such as 'how many more', 'next to', through a variety of planned activities.

Children's physical skills are very well provided for with access to a range of equipment to aid the development of large and small physical skills. They show great skill in their large physical movements which is enhanced through access to a wide range of equipment and activities. They competently climb, balance, change direction and speed. Children develop very good small manipulative skills as they are involved in a variety of craft and construction activities. Children's imagination is developing very well through access to a range of good resources. Children access role play areas which are regularly changed to encourage the development of their imagination. Children access a wide and varied range of creative resources and produce interesting and unique pieces of art and craft work, this includes a variety of tactile materials and experiences. A communal roll of paper is available throughout the session which children are able to independently draw on and add to. One child tells staff about his particular part of the drawing explaining that he has drawn the road where he lives including the speed bumps in the road. Children are engaged in a range of themes and activities that enable them to look at the wider world and the world they live in. Visits to the local fire station and visitors to the setting involve the children in a theme about 'People who help us'. A recent theme involved them looking at the work of the lifeboat service. Children are involved in early science and have daily access to water play using different toys and implements. Children competently use a variety of technological equipment.

Activities are very well planned and involve the children in a range of interesting and stimulating activities across all areas of learning. Long, medium and short terms plans plus themes and activities are evaluated promptly and discussed at twice weekly staff meetings. Staff continually observe, monitor and record children's achievements and use these well to plan experiences that help children take the next steps in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's equality of opportunity is given a very high priority and is very well addressed. All children are included in all the activities provided, their individual needs and circumstances are well known and provided for by staff. Children are

developing a good understanding of the wider world through various themes and visitors to the setting, for example, children taste food from other countries, the role play area is turned into a French bakery and children learn a few French words following a visit and talk from a French parent. Children are involved in thinking about others through themes such as 'People Who Help Us', a recent theme involved the children looking at the work of the Lifeboat service. Children show great care and concern for one another as they greet each other excitedly when a child arrives late or when realising that a child is feeling unwell. Access to an extensive range of resources promotes children's understanding of diversity very well. A nominated member of staff takes on the role of equal opportunities officer ensuring this aspect of pre-school life is considered fully. This very positive approach fosters children's understanding of equality extremely well. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

Staff work very effectively with parents, carers and outside agencies to ensure that children who have special needs are appropriately cared for and given support to enable them to participate fully in all activities.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. Their very good behaviour is a direct result of highly effective staff interaction and involvement with children in their activities. Children receive lots of positive praise and encouragement for their efforts, attempts and achievements aiding the development of their self confidence and self-esteem. Staff are excellent role models, showing respect and consideration for children, each other, parents and carers. Children are extremely polite, well mannered and show care and concern for one another. A very positive behaviour management strategy encourages children to be polite, have respect for oneself and others and the environment.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Children's well-being and development is significantly enhanced by the excellent partnership with parents and carers. Parents and carers have access to and receive plenty of very good information about the setting and what it has to offer in terms of care and education. They also have access to detailed information on themes, along with access to long, medium and short term plans and information on the educational provision. Staff make excellent use of the communal entrance area making this welcome to children, their parents and carers. Staff report excellent support from parents and carers including their obvious commitment to the parents' rota. Parents and carers participating in the parents' rota on a daily basis take an active part in working with the children engaging with them in their activities. Those parents and carers spoken to were very positive and supportive of the provision and what it offers their children. This highly effective communication between parents, carers and staff helps to promote children's learning and progress towards the early learning goals along with their overall development and well-being.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Leadership and management is outstanding. The person in charge, along with all

staff work effectively together to ensure that children are provided with high quality care and education. The pre-school have clear recruitment and selection guidelines, appointments are followed by staff induction and regular appraisals. Comprehensive staff induction and staff information folders are available to all new and existing staff.

There is a very high ratio of qualified staff within the team who are experienced in childcare, understand child development and how children learn and are committed to enhancing their existing skills and knowledge by attending regular training. This commitment to training and development has a very positive impact on children's learning, development and welfare as staff keep up to date with new childcare initiatives. Staff are very clear about their individual roles and responsibilities within the group on a daily basis and staff team as a whole. Twice weekly staff meetings enable staff to discuss issues and concerns, evaluate planning and activities and establish children's development.

The premises are very well organised, available space is well planned to maximise play opportunities for children. All legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being are in place, is well maintained and regularly reviewed.

Comprehensive and detailed policy and procedures files and separate operational plan ensure all staff, parents and carers are aware of the group's procedures. All records and documents are well maintained.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, the setting have improved the outcome for children in terms of being healthy by ensuring children's access to hand washing facilities during messy play. Outcomes for children in terms of positive contribution and staying safe have improved through the amending of the pre-school's behaviour management and child protection policies ensuring all staff, parents and carers are clear about the group's strategies for behaviour management and procedures relating to child protection issues. The organisation of the setting has been improved by ensuring that certain documentation and records are maintained in a confidential manner.

The previous nursery education inspection recommended that the pre-school organise creative resources so that a wider variety is available on a daily basis and that some group activities be organised to sustain children's interest and enable greater participation. Children have daily access to a wide range of creative materials, staff continue to develop this and plans are in place to provide children with opportunities to self select materials during free craft activities. There are daily planned opportunities for children to undertake activities and specific pre-school tasks in smaller groups enabling greater participation.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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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 *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk