

Willington Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 206905 |
| Inspection date | 01 October 2007 |
| Inspector | Sally Ann Smith |
| Setting Address | The Hawser Hut, 42 Castleway, Willington, Derbyshire, DE65 6BT |
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| Registered person | Willington Pre-School Playgroup |
| 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?

Willington Pre-School Playgroup opened in 1972. It operates from two rooms in the annexe to The Old School in Willington. A maximum of 30 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09:15 to 12:15 during school term-time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 38 children from two years to under five years on roll. Of these, 24 children receive funding for early education. The playgroup currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The playgroup employs eight members of staff of whom seven hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children demonstrate a good awareness of appropriate hygiene routines. They help themselves to tissues when they need to wipe their nose and discard them in the bin provided when finished. Children know that they must wash their hands and pull their sleeves up before cooking so that germs do not get into the food. Topics such as 'People who help us' consolidate children's understanding of good hygiene procedures and healthy practices. Visits from a dental hygienist develop children's understanding of effective oral hygiene and the importance of brushing their teeth. They discuss why dentists and doctors wear masks when attending to patients. All the required documentation for the administration of medication and accident recording is in place. Medication is stored safely and a fully-stocked first aid box is available for dealing with emergencies. Staff receive training for any specific medical conditions that children may have so that appropriate care may be given.

Children are provided with a varied range of snacks, all of which are healthy and nutritious. Children are often involved in cooking and preparing snacks such as cheese and fruit scones, cakes and pizza. They regularly eat fresh fruit, vegetable sticks and salad and are encouraged to try new tastes. Well planned activities and forward planning enable all children to participate and eat similar foods regardless of specific dietary requirements. Children have a choice of water or milk to accompany their snack and can independently access water throughout the session. Each child has their own water bottle which they help themselves to as and when required particularly during physical exercise and play. Children and staff sit together whilst eating and discuss the merits of a healthy diet. Children know that sweets can damage their teeth and a 'no sweets' policy operates in the playgroup. Parents are made aware of this and rather than bring sweets in for their child's birthday they provide alternatives such as small packs of raisins or other dried fruit.

Children are engaged in a variety of healthy exercise both inside and outside. They use a variety of resources and equipment to develop their physical skills. They practise their balancing and agility skills as they confidently cross beams or participate in obstacle courses crawling through tunnels and jumping across stepping stones. Children play with different sized balls attempting to throw, catch and kick as well as skilfully aiming large balls into basketball nets. They enjoy playing with streamers watching them swirl and blow in the wind. Children learn about the effects that exercise has on their bodies. They discuss why they feel warm and that their heart is beating fast because of the physical exertion.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a warm, welcoming environment where staff greet children in a friendly, cheerful manner. Rooms are brightly decorated with displays of children's work. Toys and equipment are suitable for children's age and stage of development. Tables and chairs are arranged to enable children to move around safely and also provide sufficient floor space where children can play. Children's safety is promoted because they are cared for by staff who are vigilant and ensure that safety is a priority in all areas of children's care. Access to the pre-school is closely monitored with secure doors and safe boundaries. All visitors are requested to produce identification before being permitted entry. Children's departure is monitored closely to ensure that they go home with their parents or other approved adults.

Children learn about many aspects of safety through planned activities and daily routines. Visits from the police and school crossing warden help children to develop an awareness of road safety. They learn why wearing a helmet and a reflective coat is important in keeping them safe. During outdoor play children stop at the zebra crossing when driving their cars or riding their bikes. They learn that they must not touch berries or plants as they may be poisonous and that holly and brambles are sharp. During cooking activities safety issues are highlighted such as handling knives appropriately and not standing close to the oven.

Staff demonstrate a sound understanding of child protection and the associated signs and symptoms. They are clear of the referral process should they have any concerns. A written policy is shared and discussed with parents, which means they understand staff's responsibility to report any concerns. Staff are familiar with procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff. This means children are well protected from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children generally settle well and those who are less confident or unsure are supported and reassured by staff. There are two rooms which are organised to incorporate different areas of play such as a home corner, maths, writing, small world, reading and role play area. This ensures that children are provided with a range of activities to promote all aspects of their development. Staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to enhance play opportunities for the younger children. For example, using the aspect of 'A strong Child' and focusing on the component of 'Me, Myself and I' staff carefully structure and plan how children under three years settle in to the setting and look at ways of developing their independence.

Staff consistently interact with children by talking, smiling and making regular eye contact. The quality of staff's interactions with children are good and they continually extend and consolidate children's knowledge and understanding through appropriate questioning. They listen to what children have to say with interest and respond appropriately. At times children are cared for in their key groups where they take part in discussions and activities linked to topics and themes. Children are encouraged to take turns in speaking and listening and maintain concentration according to their level of understanding. This provides children with opportunities to bring items from home to 'show and tell' or to share any exciting news with their peers.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff demonstrate a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and the six areas of learning. Continuous learning plans are used to very good effect by staff to ensure that they focus on a specific area of learning and promote discussion and conversations that challenges children's thinking. However, staff also recognise that areas of learning are inter-related and children develop skills and competencies across several areas of learning. For example, whilst children draw pictures of their house staff introduce mathematical concepts such as the shape of doors and number of windows. They develop children's understanding of the world and environment in which they live as they talk about whether the milk they drink is delivered to their door or bought from a shop. Whilst learning intentions are identified for activities linked to the stepping stones, planning does not consistently identify how activities can be adapted and extended for children. At times, activities are adult-led reducing opportunities for children to develop their imagination, creativity and free play. However, staff discuss and evaluate activities at the end of each day to determine their effectiveness and any amendments to be made for the future.

Children show a sense of belonging and are motivated to learn. Through stories, role play and planned activities children learn to care for each other, share and take turns. Some aspects of children's independence is encouraged as they visit the toilet independently or put on aprons for messy play but they are not encouraged to develop their personal independence further by pouring drinks and serving their own food at snack time.

Children enjoy writing and making marks and encouraged to discuss their picture. When they have finished staff say 'how do I know that is your picture.' Children think for a while and are further prompted by staff, 'what do you need to write on it so that I know that this is your picture?' and then follow up by sounding the initial letter for name to give children a clue. Children are encouraged to recognise and select their name cards on arrival. When playing in the hairdressers or hospital children make appointments and regularly write for a purpose as they play. Children enjoy listening to stories, joining in discussions and recalling what they have done. Questions such as 'can you remember what we have been talking about' help children to consolidate and link ideas. For example, children talk about the weather and remember songs associated with thunder, wind and rain.

Children develop mathematical concepts as they explore number, shape and positional language. When rolling out play dough to make snowmen they work out that they must divide the dough into two pieces. They know that they need a big piece for the body and a smaller piece for the head and they are circles. When playing with cars children count how many are at the top of the ramp and how many at the bottom. Children talk about placing objects next to, under and behind. Children enjoy playing with peg boards where they count, match and sequence creating different patterns.

Regular discussions and activities develop children's awareness of their environment and the world in which they live. They look at different modes of transport and observe the narrow boats on the canal. They discuss the merits of travelling by hot air balloon, submarine and scooter. Themes incorporating 'Egypt' show how some people move around by camel. Children receive visits from the fire service, midwife and nurses as they learn how to look after themselves and stay safe. Great fun is had when the police visit and children sit in a van used to transport prisoners to jail. This evolves further as the role play area is transformed into a police station and jail and children have fun capturing and containing their prisoners. Children enjoy talking about significant events and investigate construction materials. For example a cardboard box is transformed into a fire-engine. However, children have limited opportunities to look at how and why things happen and work.

Children partake in regular physical exercise both inside and outside. They move their bodies in different ways when discussing the weather. For example, they pretend to get dressed in preparation for a snowy day and then pretend to build snowmen. They show curiosity as they anticipate what is inside a large bag. Staff gently move some items inside and children guess that they are musical instruments. Children excitedly say 'is there one for me' before being handed different shapes and styles of shakers. These are used to good effect to interpret the weather. Children move the shakers gently when it is 'drizzling' and then shake more vigorously as the rain gets heavier.

Children play with a variety of malleable materials and enjoy manipulating play dough into different shapes using their hands and a variety of tools. However, whilst there are planned activities for painting these are often adult-led and there are limited opportunities for children to design and freely access paint and other art and craft materials.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are given time to settle in to their environment and staff are sensitive to individual children's needs recognising that some children take longer to settle than others. Children bring comforters or a favourite cuddly toy to help them feel secure. Parents are encouraged to stay as long as necessary so that children gain confidence and become happy and relaxed. Staff liaise closely with their parents to help with the process and offer support. Children feel a sense of belonging as they select their name cards on arrival, bring in items from home to show to the other children and share birthdays and special celebrations. They enjoy sitting with their key groups of children and member of staff to talk and share news. Children have named trays where they place art work or drawings to take home. However, many of the activities are planned for the children therefore reducing the opportunities for children to make decisions about their play.

Children learn about different countries, their traditions, dress and food. Whilst exploring India they make flower garlands, listen and dance to traditional music, look at different styles of writing and make mehndhi patterns. Children celebrate different festivals and some planned activities help children to look at each others' similarities and differences such as hair colouring, skin tone or people who wear glasses. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are made fully welcome and supported in the setting. This is because staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the individual needs of the children and plan for these accordingly. Time is taken to ensure children with additional needs are included in all aspects of play and learning and their confidence nurtured. However, there are few positive images displayed to reflect non-stereo-typical roles or racial, cultural diversity and disability which potentially limits children's understanding of anti-discriminatory good practice.

Children are very well behaved and know the routine well. They learn to share and take turns when playing with toys and listen to each other when speaking in a large group. Children learn about feelings and discuss these, why they feel happy, sad, worried or angry. Staff create a calm atmosphere where boundaries are consistent and raised voices discouraged. Staff never use the word naughty when discussing a child's inappropriate behaviour as this is humiliating for the child. They prefer to use discussion, explanation and praise to promote good behaviour. A clear written statement regarding behaviour management is shared with parents and carers.

Parents receive good quality information regarding the pre-school to include all the relevant policies and procedures. They have regular discussions with their child's key worker regarding their child's progress. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnerships with parents and carers are good. Parents are well informed of their child's progress and can approach their child's key worker at any time. They have regular opportunities to discuss the educational programme with staff and receive a report regarding their child's progress. Parents are invited to discuss the report with staff. Planning for the educational programme is displayed and parents receive regular newsletters to keep them updated regarding topics and themes. They are also provided with activities and suggestions to help with their child's learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children play and learn in a warm, welcoming and well organised environment. Staff are warm and approachable and greet parents and children in a friendly manner. They work well together to ensure that the routines run smoothly and children feel settled and secure. Good induction procedures ensure that all staff are fully conversant with the operational plan and the effective policies and procedures which underpin children's care, learning and play. Staff are given time to familiarise themselves with the children, their specific roles and daily routines so that they know what is expected of them. They deploy themselves effectively to ensure that children are interested in their play. Most staff have an early years qualification and are keen to attend training courses to keep their knowledge up-to-date in line with current guidance and legislation. The welfare and safety of the children is a priority for the setting and correct ratios are always maintained. Registers accurately record children's attendance.

Leadership and management is good. The manager ensures that staff are valued, respected and their ideas welcomed to ensure that the routine runs smoothly and children's learning is promoted effectively. Daily meetings ensure that activities are planned and staff have the relevant equipment and resources to implement these effectively. However, at times the emphasis is on planned activities which can be adult-led therefore limiting opportunities for children to explore freely and initiate their own activities. Regular staff meetings enable staff to share elements of good practice and identify areas for improvement. Management and staff are receptive to any advice and support to enhance the already good practice and improve children's care, learning and play. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was required to: produce a record for lost or uncollected children; ensure fresh drinking water is available to children at all times; ensure that the complaints procedure names the regulatory body and provides its contact details. A written procedure is now in place for lost and uncollected children which staff are familiar with. This is also included in the information available for parents and carers. Children bring in their own bottles of water which they are able to access at any time throughout the session. Bottled water is also available for parents to purchase on a daily basis should their child forget to bring his/her own bottle to playgroup. The complaints procedure has been revised to include the name of the regulator and contact details.

With regards to the nursery education the provider was required to: increase children's opportunities to learn about the importance of keeping healthy, how they are to achieve this and look at changes to their bodies when they are active; review the procedures for completing child assessment records so that they are regularly updated and clearly evidence children's progress through the Foundation Stage curriculum; develop parent's opportunities to be involved in their child's assessment records so that they can regularly feed information in, receive updates on their child's progress and gain ideas on how they can support their child's learning. Topics and themes help children to gain an understanding of keeping healthy. Children discuss the effects exercise has on their bodies and feel their hearts pounding after energetic physical play. Children's assessments are completed by their key worker in consultation with children's parents. They highlight the stepping stones that children achieve in making progress towards the early learning goals. Parents are regularly given suggestions for activities to do at home with their child and complete an observation sheet which is shared with staff. Parents receive a written

report of their child's progress and are welcome to discuss any aspect of this with their child's key worker.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 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.

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 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 opportunities for children to play and learn independently, explore freely and initiate their own activities (also applies to nursery education)
- increase further the range of resources, displays and activities which reflect non-stereotypical roles. racial, cultural and religious diversity and disability (also applies to nursery education).

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):

- further develop activities to show how these are adapted for different children
- increase opportunities for children to design, investigate and look at how things happen and how they work.

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