

# Whitecrest Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	255213
<b>Inspection date</b>	07 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Jackie Nation
<b>Setting Address</b>	Whitecrest, Great Barr, Birmingham, West Midlands, B43 6HQ
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<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees of Whitecrest Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Whitecrest Pre-School Playgroup has been registered since 1979 and operates from a classroom at Whitecrest Primary School in Great Barr. The group serves the local area. Children have access to the school hall, IT Suite, school grounds and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

There are currently 26 children on roll. Of these, 16 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language.

The group opens Monday to Friday 09:00 to 11:30 and Tuesday and Wednesday from 13:20 to 15:20 during school term times.

Four staff work with the children. Of these, three have appropriate qualifications. The group has achieved a Bronze Award from the 'Growing Together' quality assurance scheme.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because they are encouraged to learn about personal hygiene through daily routines. They confidently explain why it is important to protect themselves from germs as they conscientiously wash their hands before snack time. They play in a very clean and well-maintained setting where good standards of hygiene are implemented. Children's individual health needs are clearly recorded and discussed with parents. Procedures are in place to ensure children are cared for appropriately if they become ill or have an accident. Staff are qualified in first aid and there are systems in place to inform parents of any concerns or accidents. However, the setting is not familiar with procedures for notifiable and communicable diseases which may compromise children's health.

Children learn about healthy lifestyles and their dietary needs are met. They enjoy healthy snacks, for example, fresh fruit, toast and an occasional biscuit. Children are well hydrated throughout the session as they access drinks of water independently. All staff are aware of children with special dietary needs. Staff find out about children's needs by talking to parents and recording details of any specific requirements or allergies.

Children's physical development is promoted very well. They enjoy a varied range of activities and are able to, run, jump, skip and balance and can co-ordinate a number of physical movements with increasing ease and confidence. While using the school hall children have opportunities to participate in music and movement sessions, they learn that physical exercise can be fun as they enthusiastically move their bodies in a variety of ways for example, to the 'dingle dangle scarecrow' song as they shake their hands and legs. Some children confidently show the others their skill in using a 'hoola hoop'. They like playing outside, they run around confidently, ride scooters and pedal bikes. There are opportunities for children to walk around the school grounds, they like to collect leaves and explore the environment. Children are able to rest or be active according to their needs and enjoy sitting looking at books and reading stories with staff. This combination of enjoyable activities contributes to the children's well-being and confidence.

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

The provision is good.

Children play in a welcoming, bright, attractively presented setting. The attractive environment includes many displays of children's work and children's paintings. This helps to promote children's self-esteem by appreciating their work. All toys, games and activities are set out ready for the children to enjoy and access safely as soon as they arrive. Children play with a good variety of safe and well-maintained toys and resources that are regularly checked for safety and suitability. They have ample space to play active games in the large school hall, dedicated outdoor play area and school grounds.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. The premises are secure and visitors are required to sign in and show identification. Staff are deployed effectively and are vigilant about children's safety, they are very experienced and have a good understanding of health and safety procedures. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy and daily safety checks are carried out by staff and documentation completed. Children learn to keep themselves safe because they are gently reminded about safety rules within the playgroup. Children are developing an excellent understanding of safety through group discussions. For example, a

member of staff talks to children about fire safety, this links to Bonfire Night and a discussion about fireworks, fires and family pets. Parents are provided with a useful booklet regarding fire safety. Children also practise the fire evacuation procedure to support them in learning how to respond in an emergency.

Children's welfare is safeguarded effectively by staff who attend regular training. Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in protecting children and are vigilant regarding their welfare. The setting have a designated member of staff for child protection who follows through any issues of concern.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and enjoy their time at the setting. They settle quickly into the setting and participate in varied and interesting activities. Children focus well and become engrossed in things that interest them and play with enthusiasm with favourite toys. Children's well-being is enhanced by staff who help them feel a part of the setting and to promote their development and value their contribution. For example, all children are welcomed warmly and encouraged to listen and share their thoughts and ideas in all activities. They move freely between activities and display good levels of interest and motivation. Good staffing levels ensure that children receive individual attention.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is a strength of the setting. All children enjoy positive relationships with staff and their peers. This is enhanced by staff as children begin to join in activities within the school to ensure their smooth transition to reception class. For example, assembly, story sessions and outdoor play.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. This helps children to make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and plan topics which they use as a focus for promoting specific areas of learning. Teaching is planned to provide a balanced range of activities and experiences across the six areas of learning. Planning is based on regular observations and assessments. Children are able to build on their knowledge and skills as staff regularly assess their achievements and respond to their individual learning needs. Staff display high levels of motivation, commitment and genuine enjoyment of children's company. Interaction between the staff and children is excellent, adults encourage children's thinking, questioning and exploration. This is particularly evident during registration time and small group activities. Children listen carefully to questions and confidently share their experiences with the group.

All children have equal opportunities for learning and staff ensure that all children are able to access the full range of activities and topic work. The play and learning environment and resources available reflects the wider society. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported effectively and strategies are in place to support children and families who speak English as an additional language. This ensures all children are included in all aspects of the setting and make good progress.

Children play well together, they learn to share and have respect for each others feelings. Staff manage children's behaviour well as they explain and maintain clear and consistent limits.

Children's behaviour is very good, they are actively and consistently praised by staff for the achievements. This promotes their self-esteem and confidence.

All children participate in interesting, stimulating and challenging play experiences which provide a balance of adult-led and child-initiated play. Children enjoy being creative and playing imaginatively. They have regular opportunities to explore music, paint, dough, sand and water. A well-resourced role play area encourages children to introduce different characters into their play and develop their own ideas.

Children are encouraged to show an interest in numbers and counting. These skills are developed through a wide variety of enjoyable, practical activities, including songs, games, puzzles, pattern making and solving problems. Children count within the daily routine, for example, how many children are present at registration time. Staff encourage children to think about simple calculation, such as the number of boys or girls, they join in number rhymes and songs counting up and back.

Children are confident communicators. This is because good emphasis is placed on developing children's communication, language and literacy skills. For example, by encouraging listening skills and extending their vocabulary. Children enjoy sharing their news, answering questions and sharing knowledge with others. Older children readily engage their peers, staff and visitors in conversation and play. Children make good use of books to develop their enjoyment of stories and select books freely for themselves as well as joining in at group times. Staff have very good skills in storytelling, children listen intently and join in predicting what happens next. Children are recognising their names through a self-registration system. Some children are aware of sounds in words and shapes of letters, which they are able to link to those in their name.

Children explore the natural environment within the school grounds. They plant sunflower seeds and bulbs and observe their growth. They observe changes in the weather and talk about the type of clothes 'teddy' would wear to keep warm. They develop a sense of place as they explore and recognise features of their local environment and community and talk about people who help us, for example, the emergency services. Children know about the uses of everyday technology and all children learn how to operate computer equipment. This is supported well as children access the school equipment and a good range of suitable programmes.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs are known and respected. Children with specific needs receive excellent support. Staff are experienced in working closely with parents and other professionals. They are also experienced in creating individual plans to support children's progress. Children are beginning to learn about diversity through activities that look at different festivals including; Diwali, Chinese New Year, Remembrance Day and Harvest Festival. The environment includes; posters, displays and resources that reflect the wider community. Adults are invited into the setting to talk to children about their culture and beliefs. This helps to foster children's understanding of valuing individuality and people's similarities and differences. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children play very well together and have a good understanding of the behaviour expected of them, staff act as excellent role models, they treat children with respect and speak to them in a friendly and courteous manner. Children respond well to the familiar routine and can explain

what is going to happen next in the session. As a result, children are happy and show high levels of self-esteem.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. The setting maintains excellent relationships with parents and feedback from parents is very positive. Parents feel the setting makes an essential contribution to their children's care, learning and play. Parents receive excellent information about the provision. They are provided with monthly plans, policy information, information about the nursery education provision, and the early learning goals. Staff welcome parents into the setting and are establishing trusting, meaningful relationships with parents. They regularly seek parents views about the provision by sending out questionnaires for parents to complete. Settling-in arrangements for children are very flexible and staff are extremely sensitive to children's home circumstances, there are arrangements in place to ensure all parents have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress and attainment on a regular basis. Staff make themselves available at the beginning and end of the session to talk to parents informally.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children enjoy attending this welcoming setting and their care is enhanced by the effective organisation. Staff are deployed well and staff ratios particularly support children's care, learning and play. Staff are knowledgeable, experienced, caring and patient. They are very committed and work well together as a team. This results in children being cared for in a stimulating environment where their individual needs are effectively supported. This ensures children's enjoyment and achievement.

Policies and procedures are in place, regularly updated and shared with parents. Recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are protected and cared for by staff with the relevant skills, knowledge and understanding of child development. However, procedures have yet to be finalised to check 'ongoing suitability' of staff, which potentially compromises children's welfare.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. This contributes to children making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff are encouraged to develop their professional skills, and training opportunities are frequent and ongoing. They are committed to raising the quality and standards of care and nursery education for all children. However, the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the provision for nursery education are not fully developed.

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 setting were asked to: ensure fresh drinking water is available to children at all times and further develop planning to include the evaluation of activities to ensure their effectiveness.

The setting has successfully met the recommendations from the previous inspection. Children are well hydrated throughout the session as they access drinks of water independently. Planning is based on regular observations and assessments. The evaluation completed by staff identifies if the learning objective is achieved and this helps future planning to support children's individual

learning needs. Consequently, outcomes for children's well-being and achievement are further supported.

### **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 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):

- update recruitment and selection procedures for checking 'ongoing suitability' of staff
- update knowledge of notifiable diseases identified as such in the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984.

#### **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):

- consolidate the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the provision for nursery education.

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)