

Lavington Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	145918
Inspection date	02 October 2007
Inspector	Nikki Whinton
Setting Address	Lavington Pre-School, Dauntsey Aided Primary School, Sandfields, West Lavington, DEVIZES, Wiltshire, SN10 4HJ
Telephone number	07730285998
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Registered person	Lavington 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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?

Lavington Pre-School opened in its present location in 2004. It operates from a mobile classroom in the grounds of Dauntsey Aided Primary School, West Lavington in Wiltshire. A maximum of 24 children aged between two and under five years may attend the pre-school at any one time. Sessions are from 09.00 until 12.00 and from 12.40 until 15.15 Monday to Friday, during school term times. There is a daily lunch club. The pre-school uses the grounds of the school for outside play. Children attend from the surrounding rural area.

There are currently 38 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 26 children receive funding for early education.

The setting employs six staff. Of these, three staff hold appropriate early years qualifications, three are working towards a qualification and two are currently working towards a further qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

A range of measures are in place to support children's health. For example, all staff have a current first aid qualification, children are reminded to put their hands in front of their mouths when they cough, written parental permission is obtained for seeking emergency treatment and hygienic hand washing arrangements are followed prior to eating, cooking or after toileting. However, whilst written parental consent is obtained to give medication, no records are kept of medicines administered to children. As a result, children's health is at risk.

Children gain an understanding of healthy food options through the good range of nutritious snacks that they enjoy whilst in the provision. Allergies or any dietary issues are discussed with parents as part of the registration process. These discussions are recorded and any needs accommodated. Lunch boxes provided by parents are carefully stored in the refrigerator. Alternatively, children can enjoy an appetising hot meal cooked in the on site primary school kitchen. Children are able to help themselves to drinking water from a 'water station' that is placed at the children's height for easy access. As a result, they are able to consume fluids in sufficient quantities to meet their differing needs.

Children have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise whilst playing within the extensive, fully enclosed school grounds. They move freely, safely and with pleasure. Children use a suitable range of age appropriate equipment and take part in a planned programme of weekly 'ball skills' activities to help support their large muscle development. Children improve their fine motor control and coordination through purposeful opportunities such as using knives to spread butter on their snack time bread, carefully grating cheese whilst cooking or experimenting with glue sticks whilst involved in craft.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are clean, well maintained and of an appropriate temperature. Colourful wall displays, children's labelled artwork and informative parents' notice boards create a welcoming environment for parents. There is a good range of measures to support children's safety and help avoid accidents. For example, the premises are secure, emergency exits are kept clear and staff are effectively deployed. Through practical activities such as taking part in emergency evacuation drills or helping to tidy away toys before snack time, children are starting to gain an appreciation of how to keep themselves safe.

Children are able to help themselves to a wide range of clean, well-maintained resources that are placed at children's height to encourage their exploration. They benefit from the staff's understanding of safety issues concerning the purchase and ongoing maintenance of equipment. As a result, children play with age appropriate toys that are safe and suitable.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by staff that have a good understanding of child protection issues, confidentiality and the correct procedures to follow if they have a concern about a child. The prospectus provides parents with information about the group's child protection policy, which is a good way of making them aware of the provider's responsibilities, prior to a child commencing in the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident, enthusiastic and eager to explore the stimulating, age appropriate resources within the welcoming environment. Any child who is initially a little hesitant to join in, is given very good individual staff support. Children make decisions for themselves concerning the activities and resources they wish to explore. For example, some children decide to build with construction materials, some experiment with paint, whilst others choose to practise their early writing skills. Children have a very positive relationship with the warm, caring staff and are building friendships with their peer group. Children are gaining valuable self-care skills such as using the toilet independently or putting on their coats and boots for outside play. They are able to sit quietly and listen for short periods such as during registration or a whole group story.

The youngest children in the group that have not started on the Foundation Stage curriculum attend separate sessions that run in parallel to those for their older peers. Staff complete separate planning for these children, which is linked to the Birth to three matters framework. Activities include age appropriate opportunities including hand printing, imaginative play and exploring small world resources. They undertake written observation and assessments to chart children's development, often with photographs as a source of additional evidence. All children have the chance to participate and succeed.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and early learning goals. They plan a wide range of practical activities to cover all aspects of the early years curriculum. Staff undertake regular observations and assessments of the children using the Wiltshire Building Blocks scheme. Information from assessment is then used in planning focused activities that are suitably challenging, in order to promote their future progress. Staff are well deployed within the provision to support children's learning. They use indirect questions skilfully in order to make children think, reinforce and extend their learning.

Children use mathematics confidently such as when counting their peers at registration or the number of pizzas they have made during a cooking activity. They are learning to recognise numbers as labels through practical opportunities including placing their name cards on a number line or showing a 'hospital patient' a number card indicating how long they need to stay in bed. Children increase their awareness of shape, space and measure through activities such as weighing margarine on a set of scales, building with construction or completing puzzles. They have meaningful opportunities to calculate and to use number. For example, children estimate the number of pieces of fruit that are required at their snack table to match the children present and are able to recall the numbering sequence of coloured lollipops in a song. Children have a good range of vocabulary, which they use confidently when talking to peers and adults. For example, one child informs a visitor, 'I've got a baby in my tummy', whilst another proudly shows an adult the model he has made, whilst commenting, 'this is a flying train do you know'. Children are developing their understanding of how to link letter sounds and learn to recognise familiar words in print through opportunities such as placing their coats on named pegs. They have the chance to practise their early writing skills on a daily basis, for example, when labelling their artwork or writing a pizza recipe at the free writing table. Children thoroughly enjoy sharing books with their friends, 'I'll show you these ones' and listen attentively during both spontaneous and regularly planned story times.

Children have interesting opportunities to explore their local environment. They visit Robert's Playground, perform their Nativity play in the village church and walk to the nearby shop to buy provisions. Children welcome meaningful visitors to the group. For example, a father who is a dentist explains about the importance of teeth cleaning as part of a topic on cooking. In addition, a peripatetic teacher attends on a weekly basis to provide a drama workshop and a former parent introduces the children to French through activities that are closely linked to the current pre-school topic. Children observe patterns and change in nature through events including planting and tending seeds. They enjoy designing and building with a range of construction materials and have opportunities to use information and communication technology as part of their play. However, children have extremely few planned chances to gain an awareness of a range of cultures and festivals. Children take part in a wide range of child centred creative activities such as making pizzas. They love using their imagination whilst involved in role-play and benefit from the staff's involvement to enhance and extend their learning experience. Children enjoy freely exploring a range of media and materials such as paint, chalks, glue, play dough and sand. They sing a growing repertoire of songs from memory and patiently wait their turn to sing solo in front of their friends.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff know the children very well, appreciate their varying needs and their differing home circumstances. Every child is treated as a respected individual. They are able to access a good range of age appropriate resources such as dolls, books, puzzles and small world figures to help them gain an awareness of diversity.

Children behave well, as appropriate for their age and stage of development. Their behaviour is supported by staff that are consistent in their approach and act as good role models. They have a good understanding of the benefits of praise and positive reinforcement in encouraging children's appropriate behaviour. They reward children, for example, by giving them stickers to recognise their personal achievements during the sessions.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are confident and demonstrate good self-esteem. They are developing their social skills, learning to share resources successfully and to take turns. Children show genuine consideration for others. For example, one child holds the hand of a friend who is feeling a little shy and guides her gently to a chair at the snack table.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are made to feel very welcome in the provision. They are given a detailed prospectus prior to their child commencing in the setting, which includes the pre-school's routine and a précis of the group's policies and procedures. They are kept up-to-date through the children's daily diaries, regular newsletters, the parents' notice boards and informal discussion with staff at the beginning or end of the sessions. Parents are invited to become involved in their child's learning. They are asked to share their skills, help their child to bring in articles from home for 'share and tell' time or to take home storybooks to share with their child. Parents have the opportunity to review their child's Foundation Stage assessments on a regular basis and are asked to add their own written comments. In addition, there are twice yearly planned parents' meetings, where staff and parents have the chance to discuss children's progress. However, currently parents are not asked to contribute to initial educational assessments.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Children's care, learning and development is promoted by an enthusiastic, hard working team that works well together and has a positive attitude towards training and professional development. Careful records are maintained of the attendance of children, staff and visitors. Children's emergency contact details are easily accessible to support their care and securely stored. However, parents do not always sign the record book to acknowledge when accidents have occurred and the complaints procedure does not fully explain the role of Ofsted or how to contact the regulator. In addition, records are not maintained detailing medicines given to children by the staff. This is a breach of regulation.

The leadership and management are good. The current temporary play-leader is a very capable, well-motivated early years practitioner. The staff meet on a regular basis to evaluate and plan the educational provision. Staff attend committee meetings, which helps to build the partnership between them. The group welcomes Wiltshire early years advisors to the setting and use their written reports in conjunction with their own self-generated action plans to help support improvement. The setting has formed links with the on site primary school. The head teacher is part of the group's management committee, the reception teacher visits the pre-school during the summer term and children from her class attend the setting's Nativity play. These strategies help to support children's smooth transition into statutory education.

Overall, the setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

As a result of the last care and education inspections the group were given recommendations and key issues to help develop the quality of the provision. The care report requested the group to ensure storage boxes do not pose a hazard to children, devise a lost child policy and to take positive measures to prevent the spread of infection when hand washing. The education report asked the group to use children's assessments to develop planning and thus ensure all children are helped to move onto the next steps in their learning. The group was also requested to provide parents with more opportunities to share what they know about their child's learning with the setting.

Storage boxes no longer pose a hazard to children, hygienic hand washing procedures are in place and a lost child policy has been devised. Staff use assessments to inform future planning and to help children move onto the next stage in their learning. Parents have planned opportunities, through parents' meetings and commenting on children's assessment records, to share what they know about their child's learning. These improvements have had a positive impact on the quality of care and education offered to the children. However, they are not invited to contribute to initial Foundation Stage assessments.

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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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- keep a written record, signed by parents, of medicines given to children

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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):

- develop opportunities for parents to share with staff what they know about their child to aid initial Foundation Stage assessments
- increase opportunities for children to develop their awareness of a range of cultures and festivals.

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