

# Westgate Whirlybirds and Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	251714
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 October 2007
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional care, Out of School 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 satisfactory. 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?

Westgate Whirlybirds and Pheonix pre-school is committee run. It opened in 1999 and operates from a large demountable classroom within the grounds of the Westgate County Primary School. It is situated in Bury St Edmunds. A maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time. The breakfast club is open from 08:00 - 09:00, the pre-school is open from 09:00 - 11:30 and the after school club is open from 15:00 - 18:00 five days per week during term-time. A holiday scheme operates from 08:00 to 18:00 during school holidays. All children share an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 33 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. Of these, 21 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and surrounding areas. The pre-school currently supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is maintained at this pre-school as staff follow the group's written policies and procedures. They encourage children to develop an understanding about keeping healthy by promoting good hand washing practices and wiping hard surfaces clean in between uses. Children independently use the integral toilets and young children have their personal needs effectively met by sensitive and caring staff.

Children's medical needs are suitably met, for example, children who have accidents within the setting are comforted and have their injuries dealt with by one of the qualified first aid trained staff. Parents are kept fully informed about any accidents or incident to their children through the written log which is recorded in the accident book.

Children are provided with a mid session snack which usually comprises of a variety of spreads on bread or toast. Children have few opportunities to enjoy fresh fruit and vegetables at this time and are not being encouraged to develop a good understanding about healthy eating and nutrition. Children have very limited opportunities to develop independence at snack time as staff take control of all tasks including pouring drinks and buttering the bread. Children have some access to fresh drinking water, but are not able to freely access this as the water dispenser is placed out of children's reach.

Children enjoy fresh air when they play in the pre-school garden. Use of the garden has been limited since the beginning of this academic year as the toy shed is in need of repair. This will now be used on a more regular basis to enable children to experience fresh air and to expel excess energy.

Children have opportunities to develop their fine manipulative skills when they freely access a good range of tools and resources such as dough cutters and rollers, pens, scissors and puzzles. They proficiently move jelly from one container to another using small spoons. When playing outdoors children negotiate space well, moving carefully around each other when running and walking. They run up and down to grass slope in the garden and enjoy learning how to throw and catch with a range of different balls and beanbags.

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

The provision is good.

Children play in a very well-organised and attractively presented building. They enter through a door which leads into an entrance hall. The entrance hall contains low-level coat pegs and a good amount of written information for parents. Two large demountable classrooms are used, one specifically for the pre-school and the other mostly for the out of school facilities. Both settings can make use of both areas. The rooms are bright and welcoming as staff display colourful posters and examples of the children's creative work on the walls. A door from the pre-school room leads to the fully enclosed outdoor area.

Children safely self-select toys and play equipment from the exciting range presented in low-level storage containers at the children's height. Resources are labelled for easy identification. Children play with clean and well-maintained toys and resources as staff follow a clear cleaning routine. They check the toys at the beginning of each term and replace any which are damaged or worn.

Children's safety is considered by staff as they carry out daily risk assessments. A more thorough health and safety check is carried out every six months and an action plan is drawn up to address any concerns. Children are encouraged to consider their own safety when they run around outdoors as staff remind them to be careful. Two issues potentially compromise children's safety, there is a large gap underneath the demountable classroom which a child could crawl under and the temperature of the hot water used for hand washing is too high.

Children are protected from potential harm as staff demonstrate a clear awareness of their responsibilities with regards to child protection. They have an effective system for monitoring visitors to the premises and always supervise the children in their care. A robust procedure for the arrival and collection of children ensures that children are always returned to the correct adult.

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

The provision is good.

Children attending the breakfast and after school club have fun at the setting. They are provided with an interesting range of toys and activities to stimulate and occupy them. They enjoy playing board games together and participating in creative play opportunities. They help themselves to the toys, books and resources and are well supported by the attentive staff.

Pre-school children are provided with a wide range of toys and activities. They make free choices over their play for the first half of the morning session. They access an exciting range of resources which are attractively presented for them on low-level tables or help themselves to additional toys which are stored in low-level storage containers.

Children enjoy being creative. They paint with a selection of different paintbrushes, using large scale paper on an appropriate sized easel. Children who wish to explore the paint with their hands are encouraged to and given the opportunity to squeeze the paint through their fingers experiencing the feel and texture.

Children become actively engrossed in role play. They enjoy caring for the babies and using the wide range of kitchen utensils to make pretend meals for each other. Their play is initially purposeful and a good learning experience, however, as children begin to tire of free play and become restless their learning experiences are reduced. Adult interaction and guidance at this time would enhance the children's interests.

Younger children's needs are met as staff demonstrate an understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and guidance. Some of the large group activities however, are not always appropriate for younger children. For example, younger children lose interest easily in the large group story time.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

The quality of teaching and learning allows children to make progress in all six areas of development. Staff demonstrate some knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. They are currently receiving support from the local Early Years Support Teacher to enhance their knowledge of the Foundation Stage and to improve their planning methods to incorporate appropriate activities for all children.

Clear planning is in place which covers long, medium and short term planning. Adult-led activity sheets are followed by staff providing at least one adult-led and focussed activity per session. Staff display their planning effectively on the playroom wall for parents and visitors to see.

Children's progress and achievements are observed by key-worker staff. Their observations are plotted on the children's individual stepping stones documents. Some staff demonstrate a clear understanding about how they use this information to determine the children's next steps.

The organisation of the session provides children with a good amount of free play time. Staff plan to organise a focussed activity after the snack time each session. This can mean that the activity is rushed as it has to be fitted in between snack and the end of the session.

Children do not always play and learn in a calm and relaxed environment. Behaviour is poorly managed at times, creating a hectic and disorganised environment in which children easily become distracted and lose concentration. Activities planned do not always take into account individual children's needs and offer differentiation for the more and less able children.

Children confidently access the range of toys and play materials on offer to them. They enter the pre-school with ease and develop lively relationships with the staff and other children. Some children concentrate for prolonged periods of time, however, others are very easily distracted and are still developing these concentration skills. Children are beginning to learn the consequences of their actions as staff encourage them to say sorry for hurting each other or not playing nicely.

Children communicate effectively with each other and with the adults caring for them. They are developing their language skills as some staff encourage them to articulate their feelings and talk about what they are doing. They have opportunities to make marks and to practise hand writing at the writing table and in various other areas of the room. A good selection of pens, paper, crayons, stencils and stamps are readily available for children to help themselves to. Children have access to a good range of books in the book corner and enjoy listening to stories when these are delivered enthusiastically and with the use of appropriate props.

Children have opportunities to develop an understanding about numbers as they are presented with colourful numbers in various areas of the room. Their actual recognition of numerals, however, is poor, children only recognise numbers one to five when presented with them as a group activity. Children have some opportunities to count when they sit together at circle time, however, activities which encouraged simple calculation are limited.

Children are developing their understanding of the natural world as they explore nature whilst playing in the pre-school garden. They have fun rummaging through the dried leaves which have fallen from the Horse Chestnut tree in the garden to find the shiny brown conkers underneath. Children construct with a range of different construction toys and building blocks. A group of children build a house with the freely accessible large plastic bricks. They explore a range of materials, for example, jelly or cold mash potatoes and peas. They have some access to a computer and participate in some planting activities at various times during the year.

Children have fun expressing themselves through role play. They enjoy dressing up and forming new characters. They have access to musical instruments and enjoy singing favourite songs. Children make exciting collages using an interesting range of different materials. They stick feathers, buttons and various textured paper onto their pictures.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enter the pre-school confidently and become engaged in free play. They excitedly access the range of toys and play activities on offer to them. Staff are made aware of the children's needs, likes and dislikes through the written and verbal information parents share with them. Ongoing verbal communication between the parents and staff ensures that they are kept up-to-date with any changes to the children's details.

Children play in an environment rich in resources which reflect diversity and equality of opportunity. They access a selection of books, dolls and small world figures which promote positive images of other people. Children have some opportunities to celebrate festivals and special occasions. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported and provision is made to ensure that they play a fully inclusive role in the group. Staff work alongside appropriate outside professionals to ensure that children's needs are identified and met.

Children are very excitable, which makes the effective management of their behaviour difficult. Some staff lack confidence with regards to behaviour management which results in children becoming loud, boisterous and disengaged. The effect of a chaotic, inappropriately managed sessions has an impact on all aspects of the children's play and learning. Improvements are required in the organisation of the size of the group, the use of the outdoor area and the appropriateness of activities to alleviate children's difficult behaviour.

Children's well-being is promoted through the working partnership the staff have developed with parents. Parents are provided with a good amount of information about the setting and the structure of the organisation.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory.

Parents are invited to attend a parent's evening to discuss their children's progress and achievements. They are provided with verbal information about the activities the children have participated in on a daily basis. Parents are provided with information about the Foundation Stage when their children begin attending the group. Staff explain how their children will learn and progress from the activities on offer to them.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are developing relationships with each other as they participate in free play activities. They are gaining an understanding of each other's feelings through the staff's guidance. Children's self-esteem is promoted as staff use positive language when speaking to them and offer praise and encouragement.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by a team of staff, some of whom have worked at the setting for a number of years and some of whom have joined the team over the past year. The team consists of three staff who are qualified to Level 3 and two staff who are qualified to Level 2. One member of staff is currently working towards a qualification. Clear recruitment and vetting procedures are in place to ensure that children are cared for by suitable adults.

The setting operates to a good adult to child ratio with at least three members of staff present each session. Additional help is available through the committee members who attend the group to assist staff. Children are generally grouped together for most activities including story time, this is not always the most effective way to deliver this part of the session.

Appropriate records and documentation is in place to enable staff to share information with parents, obtain a clear record of the children's details and needs and to support staff in their working practices. All records are securely stored and made available for inspection when required. The operational plan is available for parents and visitors at all times.

The leadership and management is satisfactory.

The setting is actively supported by a management committee which meets on a regular basis to discuss the overall operation of the setting. The staff and committee members work effectively together and good ongoing communication ensures that both parties are kept up to date with any changes or issues within the group.

Staff are actively encouraged to pursue training and to extend their knowledge of child care and education. The staff qualifications and list of training is available for parents to see Staff are keen to access training for the new Early Years Foundation Stage and to begin implementing the new structure through their planning and observations.

The setting is working closely with representatives from the Early Years Partnership to identify the group's strengths and weakness. Between them they have identified some room for improvement, such as to develop more free flow outdoor play and to implement some healthy eating practices.

Overall, children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the time of the last inspection, the setting was required to ensure all documentation is up to date and regularly reviewed, ensure health and safety practices are improved and to ensure that children have access to an appropriate range of resources that promote equality of opportunity. Children's well-being is improved as the staff and committee regularly review and update all records and documentation. They ensure that regular health and safety checks are carried out, for example PAT testing and fire procedures. Children are now provided with a wide range of toys and resources which reflect diversity.

At the time of the last inspection, the setting was also required to improve channels of communication with parents to share children's records and progress, to improve the staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and to improve the programme for communication, language and literacy to include more opportunities for children to ascribe meaning to their marks. The setting has implemented open evenings to enable parents to come into the group and discuss their children's progress. The staff have received support and guidance from the Early Years Support teacher assigned to the group. She has delivered advice and guidelines to extend the staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage. The programme for communication, language and literacy has been improved with regards to further opportunities for children to make marks in all areas of the pre-school.

## 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 satisfactory. 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 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):

- review procedures for dealing with children's behaviour to maintain a calm play and learning environment
- ensure children learn about and are provided with a healthy and nutritious diet which includes fresh fruit and vegetables, encourage children's independence at snack times
- ensure children's safety when playing in the enclosed outdoor area, this is with regards to the open access to the underneath of the pre-school building and ensure that the hot water in the children's wash hand basins is set to an appropriate temperature
- ensure children are grouped appropriately to enable them to fully benefit from the activities.

### 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):

- continue to develop opportunities enable children to explore mathematics in every day activities.

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)