

# Down in The Woods Pre-School Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY350656
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 September 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Christine Coram
<b>Setting Address</b>	The Annexe, Chichester Walk, Merley, Wimborne, Dorset, BH21 1ST
<b>Telephone number</b>	07787 954387
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Down in the Woods Pre School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day 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](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?

Down In The Woods Pre-School opened in 2003 under previous ownership, and was re-registered in 2007 under sole ownership. It operates from two rooms in a youth centre and is situated in Merley, Wimborne in Dorset. The pre-school is open from 09.00 to 15.30 Monday to Friday in school term-time only. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

The group is registered to care for a maximum of 20 children aged from two to five years. There are currently 53 children on roll. Of these, 21 children receive funding for early education. Children come from Merley and the surrounding areas of Wimborne and Bearwood. The pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs nine members of staff. Of these six, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children's hygiene is promoted effectively. Children are frequently encouraged to wash their hands and they spontaneously and independently do so at the basin in the playroom after messy play, for example. They are beginning to understand why they do this. When asked about their hands, a number of children said 'germs'.

Should a child have an accident or need medication staff effectively protect them. For example, all members of staff hold current first aid certificates and a member of staff keeps a check on the contents of the first aid box. There are very clear written procedures for children with specific medical needs and staff have easy access to this.

Children benefit from good opportunities for physical play and fresh air. They have opportunities to play outside each day and the time is used to practise a range of skills through physical and energetic play.

Children's nutritional health is carefully promoted through very healthy snacks and drinks. For example, items such as tomato, orange, grapes or bread sticks are provided for snack. Children choose their snack as they arrive, by putting their name in the container with a picture of their chosen snack. This encourages their independence and gives them a sense of control. Children have plenty of fluids as there is easy access to drinking water. Jugs of water and cups are provided on a child height table so that children can help themselves at any time. All children, including the two-year-olds confidently help themselves.

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

The provision is good.

Children are protected by the effective security of the premises. No one can enter without being admitted by staff. The security of the outside area is carefully monitored. The system to record visitors is carefully completed so that staff know who is in the building at all times.

Children are kept safe because risk assessments are completed for a variety of activities and areas. Daily safety checks are completed, and these include checks for the outside area. Children begin to learn about keeping themselves safe through projects such as 'Safety Week' and visits from a lifeguard. Children play safely with good quality equipment. It is stored effectively to maintain it in good condition. Effective procedures are in place to check the equipment and broken items are removed from use.

Staff's understanding of safety is good. They protect children from potential hazards. For example, they hang chimes over the fire door so that they would be alerted if a child pushed it open. Children are also protected because staff have a clear and comprehensive understanding of safeguarding issues and procedures.

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

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the wide range of activities and resources throughout the setting. These are changed frequently during the day. Children have access to a wide range of activities at all

times and their interest is stimulated as staff set them out attractively on the tables. Children are happy and well occupied, and they gain the most from activities through the excellent interaction and input from staff. Adults are involved with the children at all times. They ask questions, suggest further ways to make use of the resources and support the children in ways that are appropriate to their needs. Planning for younger children is incorporated in the planning for the Foundation Stage. However, some of the specific activities are not effective for the younger children, and there is no indication in the planning how these will be adapted for more or less able children.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, and their expectations of the children are wholly appropriate. They use imaginative teaching methods and retain children's attention well. Planning is effective and long term and medium term plans clearly show how the early learning goals will be promoted. Individual activities are planned and evaluated so that staff are clear about the aim of the activity. Key workers assess the children's progress and arrange activities to promote the next steps in their progress. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make very good progress because the coordinator is very clear about the needs of the children in her care and carefully liaises with parents and other agencies. Adaptations are made to all activities to include children with specific requirements.

Children are generally confident as they enter the setting, even at an early stage in the academic year. Many are confident to say 'good morning' in registration time. With support, they complete activities. For example, a three-year-old loses interest in a sewing activity but a member of staff encourages him to persist and he completes the item. Older children are very self assured in the environment. They play together well and generally choose to play in groups. They behave very well and negotiate when they want a toy, with varied amounts of adult support.

Most children speak with confidence in full sentences that are easily understood. They use talk to communicate with their peers in play and are able to take a message to adults in another room. They enjoy books and stories. A three-year-old chooses to look at a book and is absorbed in the pictures, turning the pages with care. They excitedly listen to stories, joining in and suggesting what could happen next. Children who attended last term are beginning to link letters and sounds. Children use numbers for labels and counting. For example, a number of them call out 'I'm three' when that number was mentioned. They count confidently to at least 10. They are developing an understanding of calculation and problem solving. For example, there are six hooks and only four bands to hang on them. A three-year-old spontaneously states 'there's two left'.

Children greatly enjoy exploring and investigating. They enthusiastically explore a range of materials with their senses, such as smelling different pieces of potpourri. They giggle delightedly as they look through prisms. They build confidently and competently with construction toys and show a great interest in information and communication technology. For example, they help staff to print photographs taken in the session and concentrate well at computer games with support. They relate incidents from home life. Children enjoy investigating different textures. They are comfortable and happy to feel the texture of cooked pasta, for example, and are absorbed by sticking activities of their choice. They enjoy and develop skills in making sounds, such as with the rain-maker and sing a range of songs with actions. Their imagination and role play is developed well. For example, a three-year-old places figures in the house, talking to herself about the home and the people who live there.

Children enjoy moving in many different ways, such as running whilst waving scarves, standing on one leg and skipping. They develop health and bodily awareness and know about germs on their hands. They confidently use equipment, such as sit-and-ride toys and tricycles, and steer them with accuracy. They very effectively use the soap dispenser and cope well with sewing with a large needle. They use glue sticks and pencils with emerging skill.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a thoroughly welcoming environment, with many pictures and examples of children's work displayed. Children clearly have a sense of belonging. Resources positively reflect diversity with many varied images and resources, such as room dividers with cut-outs of people from different ethnic groups. Staff clearly know the individual personalities, preferences and needs of all the children. Their specific requirements are effectively met. Staff have an excellent understanding of the specific needs of the children and have extremely appropriate expectations. All children are fully involved in the whole session and the ethos of inclusion is very clear. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave very well. They are learning the new routine and to share, and they respond very well to staff. They benefit from the excellent role models given by staff, who are very polite and friendly towards the children and each other at all times. Any minor incidents are managed firmly and quickly but with gentle understanding of the needs of the children. The children's levels of understanding and maturity are taken into account and the expectations of the staff are particularly appropriate. The ethos is entirely positive and staff are very encouraging. Children imitate this with each other saying 'good boy' to each other, for example.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents report that they are given comprehensive information about the curriculum. This includes details about the stepping stones and the setting's expectations of children's progress. They are extremely happy with the level of information given about their own child's progress. They are impressed with the opportunity to talk to their child's key worker at the regular meeting, and report that they frequently hear about their progress in conversations with staff. They state that they are confident to contribute to this process and add their comments. The setting offers suggestions about how they can continue to the learning at home and all parents interviewed volunteered this information and were pleased to be able to follow this through. Parent's questionnaires are completed on a regular basis to gain the views of parents about the service and future planning of the setting.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide. Suitable adults care for children because the systems to recruit and check new staff are sufficiently robust. New adults in the setting have the information they need from the first day through clear staff induction procedures. The knowledge and practice of staff is developed well because they are encouraged to continue their training and attend workshops. They regularly observe and review each other's practice.

The rooms are organised to meet children's needs effectively and allow sufficient space to play. Staff are carefully deployment and are clear about their roles. As a result, the session runs extremely smoothly. Staff remain at different activities so that children are always very well

supported. However, some activities are not sufficiently adapted to engage all the children. Adults communicate very effectively and work well as a team. Children are grouped in a way that allows for freedom of choice for the children, but also for staff to select specific children when this is appropriate. All the required documentation is in place. Policies and procedures are comprehensive and detailed.

The leadership and management are good. There a clear vision for nursery education. The Registered Person influences staff through sharing duties so that all staff take varied responsibilities, excellent communication and through developing individual abilities. She is able to identify some of the strengths and areas for development of the education programme. However, in monitoring and evaluating the programme, the various elements are not assessed as a whole. Parents are involved in the process through regular questionnaires. The setting's commitment to improvement is very evident. They constantly look for ways to develop the effectiveness of the education they offer and the focus on training is an example of how this is achieved.

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

Not Applicable

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the registration 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**

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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):

- make sure that planned activities are always accessible to the youngest and less able children and that these are adapted to meet the needs of the full range of children

#### **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 the system for monitoring and evaluating the Nursery Education provision

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)