

Westgate Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 309474 |
| Inspection date | 07 November 2007 |
| Inspector | Lesley Sharples |
| Setting Address | Braddon Close, Morecambe, Lancashire, LA4 4UZ |
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| Registered person | Wendy Nunn |
| 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 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?

Westgate Pre-School is situated in Morecambe. The registered provider is the individual owner. It opened in 2001 and operates from within St Martins church hall and an adjacent meeting room. There is an outdoor area to the rear of the building.

The setting is registered for a maximum total of 30 children age two to five years. It is open each weekday apart from Thursday from 09.30 to 15.30 for 44 weeks of the year.

There are currently 60 children on roll attending for a variety of sessions throughout the week, of these 31 children in receipt of nursery education funding. The setting supports children with learning disabilities and difficulties and works closely with a number of travelling children.

There is a staff team of seven of whom five hold appropriate early years qualifications and training certificates. Advice, support and training is gained from the local authority and the setting has been awarded Designated Lead Practitioner status by Lancashire Early Years Teacher Team.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning effectively about being healthy through their daily routine because they understand the importance of regular hand washing during significant times of the day. They use wet wipes before their snack, tissues to wipe their noses and dispose of them all appropriately. The setting's procedures also minimise the risk of infection to children as the sick child policy is shared with parents and reflects current guidance. Staff are diligent in maintaining a hygienic environment and wear protective clothing when dealing with food or when changing children.

Children's health is promoted because a number of staff hold first aid and basic food hygiene certificates in line with current guidance. This means that they can prepare food hygienically and offer advice and support in case of accidents or illness. Meticulous systems and documentation are in place to protect children regarding the administration of medication and accident recording. These include all minor incidents and records for pre-existing injuries. Care plans are in place to ensure individual children's needs are fully known and adhered to and medication held is safely stored.

Children have their health and dietary needs competently met because staff use information from parents effectively. This means children's dietary requirements and preferences are adhered to at all times. Information is made known to all staff and they are vigilant in checking with parents about allergies. For example, using pumpkin seeds which may be a problem for those children with nut allergies. Children are also encouraged not to share contents of their lunch boxes. Following evaluation, snack time is ongoing during the session which is working extremely well. Children understand the importance of healthy eating and good nutrition as they independently select from healthy options available. They pour their own milk, spread their own toppings on wholemeal toast and have plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables. The designated member of staff talks about different foods, such as how carrots are grown and provides fresh produce to illustrate this.

Children benefit from regular opportunities to play energetically and with equipment which promotes their physical development. They enthusiastically use balancing equipment, slide and climb. Outdoor play is presently unavailable due to improvements so staff compensate by providing assault courses and taking children on walks. They go on sound trails and take baskets to collect items of interest, such as leaves. This particularly supports those children attending full days.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and secure environment. There are daily effective risk assessments undertaken alongside well implemented policies and procedures to maintain children's safety and well being. The setting is warm, well ventilated and welcoming to children. Art work is displayed at low level alongside posters and accessible resources. Children are able to move freely around as space is organised extremely well and this allows good movement between designated areas of activities. Children independently select activities that are safely stored on low level shelves or in trays which are clearly labelled to promote good understanding of where resources belong. They are learning to keep themselves and their environment safe

by actively helping to put toys away and eagerly assist in mopping water spilled from the activity in the water tray. Staff regularly remind the children about how to keep themselves safe, for example, not to run up the slide and explain the consequences.

Children's safety is assured as staff exercise vigilance to reduce accidental injury, such as undertaking regular emergency evacuation procedures, supervising children at all times, and implementing strong procedures on outings. Premises are kept secure and access is only gained by bell entry. Visitors sign in and everyone is accounted for on the premises at all times. Especially notable are the regular head counts and staff informing each other of their whereabouts and those of children at all times. This conscientious practice ensures children are kept safe. The collection of children is fully monitored only allowing children to leave with those persons known to staff and authorised by parents. Staff are sensitive during this time to the feelings of those children staying for lunch by separating them from those who are collected by parents.

Children are learning how to keep themselves safe when outside the setting. They are well informed by staff who are competent in and practice proper procedures for crossing the road. Children are consulted in the safe procedures when crossing roads and reminded to look both ways and hold hands. Hazards such as broken glass on the pavements are highlighted and children are reminded to take care by moving away. There is a high staff to child ratio on outings which means outdoor experiences enhance learning opportunities safely.

Children's safety and welfare is further assured as staff clearly understand the procedures for recording and reporting any concerns relating to child protection. The designated person has undertaken recent training and demonstrates knowledge and awareness of a range of types of abuse and neglect. The child protection statement includes relevant telephone numbers, procedures if an allegation is made against a member of staff and up to date information regarding Local Safeguarding Children Boards. Staff are also aware of the government guidance 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused-Summary'

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into the setting at the beginning of each session and have independent access to a wide range of good quality toys and activities, including, role play, large apparatus, creative activities and a quiet reading area. This helps them to feel settled and increase their self-esteem. They are regularly praised for a job well done which enhances motivation levels. Children are confident in the setting and are given many opportunities to make decisions, such as when to eat their snack and what to have. They explore the setting freely but know where to get help should it be required, for example when dressing up. Children relate well to others and enjoy times when they are in age related groups during story and singing times. They benefit from adults who are interested in what they do and say which ensures their individual needs are met.

Children under three become skilful communicators through joining in with songs and rhymes both as spontaneous or planned activities and through leading the play experiences. They become competent learners, being given the freedom to explore the wide range of activities on offer. They are fascinated with play dough, cooked spaghetti, mark making in shaving foam and painting on their hands and arms. Children's work is celebrated within the setting by being displayed and then taken home for parents to enjoy. This develops essential skills and gives them the motivation to learn.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children fully benefit from a staff team who are knowledgeable about the current curriculum guidance documents and how to help children progress through the stepping stones. Children learn through the enhancement activities which are available throughout the session and planned adult led activities. Planning links to ongoing observation and assessment which ensures next steps for learning are included. Some enhancement activities, however, lack focus and therefore opportunities for challenging questions are not taken. Children show interest and persist in activities of their choosing, for example a child easily counts to ten with a member of staff whilst playing with pumps and funnels in the water tray. Children develop wonderful independence through activities, which are well organised to allow ease of access to each of the different play stations. Resources are refreshed regularly to maintain motivation but teaching methods are not changed sufficiently in order to maintain focus and the pace of the session. This sometimes leads to children becoming undirected and off task.

There are high expectations from staff regarding children's behaviour and they in turn role model kindness and good manners. Children are encouraged to respect people and property, through gentle reminders. Children are beginning to regard the feelings of others through staff explaining why certain actions are inappropriate and are good at taking turns and sharing, for example sharing one large lump of play dough with others on the table. Children with additional needs are well supported through careful monitoring by their key worker and other members of staff. The Special Needs Coordinator has a secure knowledge of her role and the Code of Practice and how this is used to the benefit of children. Children's needs are well understood and supported by staff who carry out ongoing observations and assessments which are used to inform planning. Individual records clearly show the children's progression through the stepping stones and parents are invited to comment. This maintains links with home and promotes working together.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the setting. They are confident, ask questions, use their initiative and take responsibility for their own actions through the continuous provision of snacks and activities and are competent in managing their time. Children have a high sense of self and the key worker system is very effective. Children's self care skills are very good, including fastening poppers and buttons in some cases. Children are confident speakers and listen carefully to stories. They handle books carefully and thoroughly enjoy having a quiet story with a member of staff. This develops their language skills. There are many opportunities for mark making in many forms, such as on low level wipe boards but the mark making table area and resources does not attract children. Children are able to count and use number in play and can recognise and name shapes, sizes and quantities, for example recognising a circle cucumber during snack time. Children learn about the world around them through posters and activities. There is limited access to ICT equipment which prevents them acquiring knowledge in this area. Children enjoy exploring a range of media and materials and regularly participate in musical activities, such as, singing, playing instruments they have made and listen to a wide range of music from the CD player. This promotes listening skills and self confidence.

Children are making good progress in relation to the stepping stones towards the early learning goals in the six areas of learning. For example, they are extremely confident and happy to approach other adults and create their own learning opportunities from a well planned learning environment. The provider knows about children's attainment on entry, by using information from parents about their child's personal, social and emotional development, physical development and communication skills, through discussion and an 'All About Me' completed

by parents. Information gained from well written observations is used to help move children to the next stage in their learning. This ensures they make good progress through the stepping stones and gives a clear picture of what children are doing and how well they are learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

There are good procedures in place which help children to gain a sense of belonging and as a result they settle in well. This is especially notable at the beginning of the school year when parents stay as long as they wish to help with settling in their children, ably supported by their child's key person. The setting is helping to provide equality of opportunity for all children and their families. Children are encouraged to participate in all activities. Staff are encouraged to keep up to date in their training of equality and inclusion. The setting is currently involved in the Targeted Project from Lancashire County Council, which relates to evaluating the provision for promoting equality. Children gain a positive view and understanding of diversity as staff provide a selection of meaningful activities and resources. For example, they have access to appropriate role play items, books and plenty of varied musical instruments. Specialist equipment has been gained such as constructing a mosque and ethnic puppets.

Children behave very well. Positive interactions from staff promote children's self esteem. They receive ongoing praise and encouragement for their efforts both verbally and using a 'jewel jar' whereby children are rewarded with a jewel that they place in a special jar. This effective strategy promotes positive behaviour and as a result, children learn right from wrong and play cooperatively. Children have plenty of interest in the activities most of the time and experiences provided which means that experiences are well enough matched to children's needs to provide a suitable level of challenge and engage their interest. The policy is informative and indicates good practice. However, procedures relating to incident recording regarding physical restraint are not included.

Partnership with parents is good. All parents are informed what their children do on a daily basis, such as a bulletin board and discussions with staff. Monthly newsletters keep parents up to date, latterly about recent staff changes. Children are able to take home the holiday bear and keep a diary which helps to link home and the setting. Information is provided in the prospectus and available handouts which informs parents of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, what the six areas of learning are and how children work through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Parents receive good quality information about their child's progress and achievements on a regular basis, both verbally and in writing. For example, parent consultation records are always available and time is spent with their child's key person each term. An open day is also held at the end of summer term to discuss transitional profiles. This ensures parents are fully informed about what their children do and learn in the setting and what it has to offer. Parents are encouraged to extend their children's learning at home by continuing the activities, songs and using story sacks. This positively recognises parents as educators.

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

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are looked after by staff who are suitable to do so. Recruitment and vetting procedures are rigorous and the whole staff team are involved in decision making, following observations

as part of the recruitment process. This ensures children are well protected and cared for by staff who have the knowledge and understanding to promote children's development in all areas. The adult-child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play. Space is extremely well organised to maximise opportunities for all round development. Staff are deployed effectively and children grouped to promote their health, safety, enjoyment and ability to take an active part in the setting.

Established and revised policies and procedures work effectively in practice to promote the safe and efficient management of the setting and promote the welfare, care and learning of children. These are made available for parents and are regularly reviewed. The required documentation is well organised, maintained up to date and stored to ensure confidentiality. For example, children's records hold all relevant information so that staff can meet individual needs. This contributes to the efficient operation of the setting and meets regulatory requirements.

The leadership and management within the setting is good. The new manager is giving priority to improving the environment and supporting the fairly new team, to ensure children's needs continue to be met. The provision is managed and monitored effectively because the manager is undertaking evaluation of the provision and the Foundation Stage curriculum leading to improvements in the organisation of nursery education and the outcomes for children. An action plan is developing to encompass her vision and priorities with a strong focus on the personal development and achievement of all children and their mathematical development. This is being achieved through discussions each day in order to plan for enhancements for children identified through observations and changing the assessment format. As a result, children's learning is suitably promoted and this contributes to their progress along the stepping stones.

The setting is working towards the Lancashire Quality Kitemark which includes peer observations to help identify their strengths and weaknesses. Staff meetings ensure clear communication and discussions about children. The manager acts as a good role model because of her own commitment to her professional development and attendance on courses. This means that staff share a common understanding of good practice which benefits all the children receiving early education. Staff are appropriately trained and supported in developing their own knowledge and skills, which also significantly contributes to the children's progress.

Practitioners are committed to promoting an inclusive environment in which every child matters and this works effectively in practice. Training has assisted in developing improvements such as providing wonderful resources to ensure children have plenty of opportunities to learn about others as well as welcoming all children in the community including travelling children. Children, therefore, feel valued and supported in their individual learning.

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 it was agreed to update the child protection policy, obtain prior parental consents for emergency medical advice and treatment and for any medication. Additionally, a statement about the management of bullying and the strategies to be used by staff was required.

All recommendations have been implemented which means that documentation complies with the National Standards which ensures children's welfare and safety are fully met.

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

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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):

- include procedures relating to incident recording within the behaviour management policy.

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 planning to identify the focus of the intended learning outcome within the enhancement activities so that children are questioned and challenged more
- improve the mark making area so that children are continually attracted to develop writing for a purpose
- ensure ICT resources are available to perform simple functions and complete simple programmes on the computer
- vary teaching methods in order to maintain focus and pace of the session so there is appropriate intervention to extend children's learning.

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