

Wesley Preschool (Benfleet)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	203614
Inspection date	04 December 2007
Inspector	Janette Elaina Lockwood
Setting Address	Hall Farm Road, Benfleet, Essex, SS7 5WS
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Registered person	Wesley Preschool
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of 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.

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?

Wesley Pre-school Benfleet is run by the Wesley Pre-school Committee. It has been open for over 35 years and operates from three rooms in a church building in Benfleet. A maximum of 40 may attend the nursery at any one time. The group is open each weekday from 09.15 to 12.00 during school term times.

There are currently 37 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 25 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a local catchment area.

The nursery employs 10 members of staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff follow their health procedures to ensure they take steps to keep children healthy in the setting. They encourage children to wash their hands regularly with antibacterial hand wash and to use individual paper towels to help prevent the spread of infection between children. In addition, children learn some ways in which they can help minimise the spread of germs as staff encourage them to cover their mouths when they sneeze or cough.

Several staff hold current first aid certificates and a list of these is displayed so all staff and parents are aware of who they are. Accident records are completely comprehensively, there is a medication policy and parents give prior written permission to seek emergency treatment for their children. As a result, children are cared for properly if they are ill or have an accident.

Staff encourage children to eat quite healthily in the setting, offering them a wide range of fresh fruit and vegetables to eat at snack time as well as a biscuit each. Parents contribute the fruit and vegetables to be shared amongst the children so they have a variety of different tastes each day and experience different flavours and textures helping them to try new foods.

Children have regular access to drinks and are reminded of the importance of drinking milk and water by staff. They talk about the plants needing water and provide fresh drinking water throughout the session so children can begin to respond to their own thirst and stay hydrated.

Children are provided with an interesting range of activities which help them develop their physical skills, for example, moving in a variety of different ways to music. Children enjoy copying the staff and each other and concentrate hard on moving their bodies differently, for example, like robots or reindeer, becoming aware of their own space and sharing the space of others carefully.

Indoor climbing apparatus is available such as a slide and climbing frame, with safety mats underneath. Staff supervise children closely as they learn to climb up the ladder, some using alternate feet, and then slide down the slide properly. Staff encourage children to practise new skills such as balancing on low beams or jumping up and down with their feet together to help them gain confidence and co-ordination.

Children sometimes use a small enclosed area outside where staff plan activities which include using a parachute or bikes and scooters to help children further with their co-ordination and to benefit from the fresh air.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The setting operates from up to three halls in a church building depending on how many children are attending. This allows children to be split into smaller groups to help them settle in and build their confidence and to benefit from many different activities. Although staff take steps to ensure most areas of the premises are safe, the radiators can sometimes be very hot and are not guarded. In addition, children may have access to carrier bags where spare clothes are stored near the toilets. These safety issues can potentially cause a risk to children and have not been identified on the daily risk assessments.

Staff provide a wide range of clean and suitable equipment for children to help them learn and become more independent in some of their activities. For example, there are steps in the toilet areas to help children reach the facilities. The setting is kept secure and staff take steps to ensure other users of the building do not have access to the pre-school.

Through discussion and simple rules, children are learning to help keep themselves safe, for example, they know they cannot use the climbing frame if it is covered over.

Staff are aware of their responsibilities regarding children's welfare and safety and two staff have attended child protection training. There are policies for lost and uncollected children, all visitors sign a visitor's book and the setting has an intruder policy. However, although the child protection policy has been updated since the last inspection, it has not been recently updated to take account of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. As a result, staff may not be aware of the correct procedures to follow in order to fully safeguard the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The setting generally takes children from two and a half years old and uses the time before they reach three years to settle them into the pre-school and become confident in the routines. The children are allocated a key worker who builds up a bond with them and carries out some observations to find out what they can do. Some of the activities provided are suitable for the developmental needs of two to three-year-olds and they have opportunities to make their own choices to help them become confident learners. The younger children take part in all parts of the session with the older children and are they are split into smaller groups for some activities, although this is not according to their development. Staff are aware of the needs of younger children but the activities and written observations on the children do not relate to the 'Birth to three matters' framework. As a result, staff may not be able to monitor younger children's individual stages of progress and identify what they need to do next to support them fully according in their development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Most staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn and the supervisor and deputy plan using the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. The planning helps most children make progress towards the early learning goals and is intended to include all children. The plans detail the activity, resources and grouping of children. However although differentiation is identified to show how activities can be adapted to suit children not all staff are clearly aware of the learning intentions in the planning. For example, when children play in the workshop role play area, there is little staff support and there are missed opportunities to extend children's learning in space, shape and measure and in encouraging new language. As a result, not all activities are challenging enough for some more able children. Furthermore, there are less challenges for them in the day-to-day routines. For example, children are not expected to pour their own drinks or help make preparations for snack time and the more able children are given few real and appropriate responsibilities in which they can learn valuable skills and learn to be more independent.

Staff use different methods to help children learn both in small and larger groups, through discussion, stories and sometimes through some practical and immediate experiences helping some children remain interested and motivated and generally staff make satisfactory use of

time and resources. However, even the ablest children are often mixed in circle time with the younger children and consequently they do not always have stories and group activities to sustain their interest as they have to be aimed at a general level for all the children including those aged under three years.

Children show a degree of enthusiasm and some desire to take part in activities and staff help them build their confidence by ensuring routines are followed and that explanations are given about any changes. This helps children develop a sense of trust and begin to know to expect next in the session. Children chat easily to staff who talk to them about letters and sounds during their conversations although this is not always extended further for the more able children. There are free play opportunities for children to practise their pre-writing skills in role play areas and to see writing as purposeful when making Christmas cards. Children use language for thinking whilst they narrate their play and enjoy looking at books in the cosy corner.

Children are becoming more confident in their mathematical development and their understanding of their immediate environment beginning to use numbers in their role play areas, for example, by incorporating tape measures and money signs. Staff sometimes ask children relevant questions to help them think and work out answers to simple calculations in the role play shop where they act out some of the experiences they have when out shopping with their families. There are opportunities for children to count through play and in different parts of the routines such as snack time and conversations about their homes and families help them to begin to find out some of the similarities and differences between themselves and others. Staff talk to children about the people that help us and plan visits by nurses and fire fighters, for example, to help them understand the different roles people play in society. The children look at technology in our everyday lives and in contrast learn about animals and nature so they begin to know how some things work. The activities and related conversations that take place help children make some sense of the world around them.

Children are developing their manipulative skills through using malleable materials such as playdough, using their hands to pummel and flatten it out ready to use tools to change its shape and size. They use their hand-eye co-ordination to draw pictures on the computer screen using a mouse and design their own patterns in paint or glitter and collage. Children thoroughly enjoy dancing to music and use their own musical instruments to accompany the piano whilst they sing familiar songs. They learn to play fast and slow and loudly and softly, developing their understanding of rhythm and helping them show preferences for forms of expression.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. They readily talk about their homes and families and find out about their own and other's beliefs through looking at interesting aspects of different festivals such as Diwali celebrations and the Nativity. Staff encourage children to appreciate important events in the calendar such as Remembrance Day, where they learn some of the reasons for wearing poppies. Staff ensure the play environment reflects the multicultural society with positive images of people from all over the world, with different languages displayed and interesting toys and books that reflect diversity. As a result, children are beginning to appreciate people's similarities and differences and value one another's beliefs.

The setting understands that some children may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) and welcomes all children. They have good systems in place to ensure children with LDD

are able to settle well and have their needs met by working very closely with parents and specialists. The coordinator for children with LDD uses her experience and training to help parents by assisting with form filling, referrals and transitions into school. She finds out information about different needs and in addition, creates specialist resources for the setting to use with children with LDD both on their own and as part of a group to help with inclusion. Consequently, children with LDD are fully integrated into the setting and are able to progress to the best of their ability.

Staff are consistent in their behaviour management of children through receiving in-house training. They encourage good behaviour by talking to children about following simple rules for working in harmony with one another. Children are spoken to with respect and in a composed manner so the atmosphere is calm and children are treated with dignity. There are good procedures for managing unwanted behaviour which sometimes include the use of an individual plan for children. This is worked on between the parents and the children for consistency between the home and setting.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents of children receiving nursery education funding are given clearly written information about the early learning goals and have it explained to them at the open evenings so they have a chance to disseminate the information and ask questions. There is information about what children are learning and parents are often asked to talk about or carry out simple learning with their children at home, either in preparation for the forthcoming theme or to reiterate what they have learnt. As a result, parents can be more involved in their children's learning.

Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress towards the early learning goals as they are invited to attend open evenings twice a year and are given a written progress report. Staff take time to speak to the parents on a regular basis to keep parents updated on what their child is achieving during the sessions.

Parents are given clear information about the policies and procedures and in particular are informed about the well-written complaint's procedure which is consistent with the National Standards. Staff ensure parents are aware that they can access the full policies and procedures if they wish at any time. Parents are able to settle their children into the session in the way that is best for the child and staff support their decisions and exchange regular information with them relating to their child's development.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and Management is satisfactory. The supervisor and deputy are motivated, take responsibility for planning the early learning goals for children and understand the aims and objectives of the activities they plan. Staff have an understanding of the early learning goals, however, some of the staff do not fully understand what the children are expected to learn from the activities. This is because the learning intentions on the plans have been reduced to an abbreviation. As a result, staff not always steer the children's learning in the identified direction and children learn best when staff know what the children are intended to learn.

There is occasional monitoring of how staff are keeping children's records but this may not identify any gaps in the how well staff are recording children's progress so there may be inconsistencies in how different staff address children's next steps in learning.

There are unwritten recruitment procedures, the staffing policy states that the setting will recruit in line with all legislation and the supervisor understands the importance of robust vetting procedures. As a result, all staff have undergone relevant checks to ensure they are suitable to work with children. New committee members are currently initiating their checks and the supervisor is guiding them through this process.

Regular appraisals are carried out on staff and they are encouraged to undertake training which is often in house. The supervisor sometimes attends cluster meetings to help her keep abreast of local initiatives. The organisation of the accommodation, time and resources ensure children are provided with a suitable environment in which to play and learn. Overall children's needs are met.

There is an operational plan which reflects some of the setting's practices and records, policies and procedures meet the requirements of the National Standards to help the setting run smoothly.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to; improve the partnership with parents by ensuring that relevant policies and procedures were accessible to them, included necessary information and to ensure that parental consents for seeking emergency advice or treatment were signed.

The setting has ensured the policies and procedures are detailed in the prospectus for parents and that they are aware that they can access the full policies and procedures if they wish. The majority of policies have been updated including the child protection policy, however, there have been further changes which have not been included in the policy. Parents are now required to sign the emergency treatment authorisation. As a result, children are cared for properly according to the policies which are consistent with the National Standards.

At the last Nursery Education inspection the setting was asked to create more opportunities for children to practise mark making in activities and to reinforce children's understanding of linking sounds and letters within the daily routines.

The setting encourages children to practise their mark making in a variety of activities throughout the session including all role play areas. This helps the children to see the importance of writing in their everyday lives. Staff also readily encourage children to think about linking sounds and letters through conversation and play.

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):

- assess the risks to children in relation to the temperature of the radiators and the plastic carrier bags in the foyer near the toilets and take action to minimise these
- ensure that the child protection procedure complies with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
- develop planning and record keeping helping staff monitor younger children's individual stages of progress and support them in linking activities to children's learning and development.

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):

- introduce additional challenges for more able children relating to real and appropriate responsibilities
- monitor and evaluate the delivery of the Foundation Stage to ensure staff have an in-depth understanding of learning intentions and of keeping progress records.

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