

Verwood First Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY264409
Inspection date	08 October 2007
Inspector	Pamela Woodhouse
Setting Address	Verwood First School, Howe Lane, Verwood, Dorset, BH31 6JF
Telephone number	07890168152
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Registered person	The Trustees of Verwood First Pre-School
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 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?

Verwood First Pre-School registered in 1991 and is based within a self contained unit on the Verwood First School site. It operates from two linked play rooms, a kitchenette, children's toilets, an outdoor play area and use of the school grounds. The pre-school also have use of the school hall and surrounding outside play areas. The premises are situated in Verwood, Dorset and serves the local community.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 56 children on roll, this includes 43 children who are in receipt of nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is open Monday to Friday 08:45 to 11:45 and 12:35 to 15:05 term time.

The pre-school employs six staff, five of whom are qualified to level three. The manager is currently undertaking an early years level four qualification and one member of staff to level three. They are supported by the parent committee and an administrator. The team receives support and guidance from the Early Years Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted well because appropriate action is taken to reduce the spread of infection. For example, children do not attend when they are ill and they learn about good hygiene practices during their activities and usual day-to-day routines. Their understanding is consolidated through regular discussion about the reasons for maintaining good hygiene and from the positive responses staff make to the children's participation. For example, in the preparation of fresh fruit for their snack. Suitable systems are in place to ensure that children's health needs are met as appropriate. For example, their dietary needs are recorded and made known to all staff. Procedures for recording accidents and long term medication is secure and demonstrates a clear trail of any intervention.

Children are actively encouraged to develop healthy lifestyles. They are able to play freely between indoor and outside activities and planned physical activities such as moving to music ensure that they exercise regularly. They have access to a wide range of outdoor play equipment which offers them opportunities for climbing, balancing and controlling their movement. As a result, children's physical skills and muscle control are developing well. Snacks and activities which promote a healthy approach to eating are introduced to the children. They grow vegetables such as potatoes, sweet corn, tomatoes and also herbs in their garden, using the produce to make dishes such as vegetable soup. This helps them to understand where their food comes from and how it grows. There is good incidental discussion about why fruit and vegetables are healthy and the good effects they have on children's growth as they prepare fruit for snack.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is given high importance to ensure that their risk of accidental injury is reduced. Measures include staff being vigilant and supervising the children effectively without being intrusive. They ensure that the premises are secure and conduct thorough full risk assessments on a regular basis. In addition, a daily check of the premises is undertaken before the children arrive to ensure that the environment is safe for them to use. Children are learning to take responsibility for their own safety. For example, by taking turns each day to conduct a risk assessment of the outside play area, using visual prompts and accompanying a member of staff to check that this is safe. This hands on experience and the discussion generated raises children's awareness about the importance of being vigilant and spotting/resolving potential dangers. A comprehensive emergency evacuation procedure is practised with the children regularly so that they are familiar with the routine. Each member of staff has a specific role to ensure that the premises are thoroughly searched and everyone accounted for. Consequently children can be evacuated quickly and safely.

Children use a wide range of good quality play provision and equipment which support them in all areas of their learning and are clean and safe to use. Resources are purchased from reputable nursery and school suppliers and care is taken to ensure that they meet current safety standards. Play provision is well presented and stored to enable children to have independent access.

Children's welfare is suitably safeguarded because staff are very clear about their responsibility to them and there is a clear system in place to protect children from harm. All staff have attended

safeguarding children training and this is updated as appropriate to ensure that they keep up-to-date with any changes, incorporating these into their practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and confident in their surroundings and are making good friendships with their peers. They have a warm, friendly relationship with the well trained and experienced staff team, receiving good support and interaction which is one of encouragement not intrusion. Children are making good progress because activities and play provision stimulate and challenge them effectively. The younger children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted very well. They learn how to be independent, part of a group, to share and take turns, listen to what is being said and contribute to discussions. Consequently they are developing good life skills which will serve them well when they progress to the Foundation Stage and beyond.

Children are occupied throughout the session, fully involving themselves in the activities available to them. They are able to make independent choices about what they do and are encouraged to interpret planned activities to suit themselves. For example, some younger children are keen to experiment with the paint, squashing it through their fingers and enjoying how this feels whilst older children carefully control the marble as it rolls around the bowl to make a pattern. Activities are well balanced and support children's development well.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are confident and show a keen interest in what they do. They demonstrate an enthusiasm for learning, concentrating well on their chosen activities such as, making a map which shows their journey between home and pre-school. They discuss how they arrive, for example, by car, foot or bicycle, what they pass and see on the way. This encourages children to be observant, to communicate and engage in discussion. Staff use good teaching techniques to promote children's learning. They question effectively to encourage children to think for themselves and encourage them to contribute their own ideas, for example, two children put on an impromptu music performance with the drums.

The wide range of interesting and stimulating activities are effectively planned in accordance with the Foundation Stage curriculum and to ensure that all areas of learning are included. Consequently children receive a balanced programme which offers them a well rounded education and promotes their progress. However, staff do not actively plan their next steps to encourage children to develop to their full potential. Staff encourage and praise children which promotes their confidence and belief in themselves and as a result, they demonstrate good self-esteem.

Children are developing good independence skills because staff ensure that they can access their play provision from low shelves and encourage them to make their own decisions. They take turns to prepare their snack, cutting up the fruit and serving this to their peers and help themselves to water when they are thirsty. They are able to put on their coats and some can fasten them up without adult help. Staff extend children's vocabulary and use of language, introducing new words and concepts. For example, route, distance, direction when discussing their travel and transport theme. They are beginning to understand that print has meaning and many children can recognise their full name as they find their name card. Toy storage is labelled in print with a supporting picture so that children start to link the picture with what the word says. Some can point out letters from the labels which are present in their name.

Children's understanding of mathematical concepts is developing. There are many opportunities to count and they learn to recognise numerals which they match to groups of objects. They can recognise different shapes and through their current theme are beginning to learn about distance, length and time. Children's awareness of diversity is promoted well through activities to which they can relate, for example, making kites to celebrate the Chinese kite festival and celebrating children's day as it is celebrated in Japan. Children confidently operate simple technology and competently use the computer. They encourage each other to complete the programme taking great delight in changing detail, for example, giving the figure a green face, red legs and yellow arms to much hilarity from their peers. Activities which introduce children to caring for their environment are introduced through the development of the garden. They plant vegetables and herbs using the resultant produce to make, for example, vegetable soup which they then have at snack time, composting garden waste to feed the area ready for the next planting season. They are also helping to develop a wild garden area to encourage insects and butterflies and enjoy walks in the school grounds to identify trees and plants.

Children have good opportunities to help them develop their coordination and muscle control. They use a range of tools to develop their fine motor skills such as scissors, rollers, cutters and writing materials. Some children are very adept at using scissors and can cut around intricate outlines such as the picture of a bicycle without adult input. Other children are not so competent and receive appropriate adult support to use tools safely. Children's creativity is fostered well. They explore and use a range of materials such as play dough, glue and different painting techniques. They use their imaginations well, for example, acting out familiar scenarios such as filling the car with petrol and visiting the shop with their shopping list, linking into the transport and travel theme. They play spontaneous music using the musical instruments and enjoy musical movement activities where they can freely express themselves as they interpret the music.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are given equal chances and are treated fairly. They have equal access to all activities and facilities and there are effective systems in place to ensure that they are all included. For example, the key worker system ensures that all children have a dedicated adult to make sure that they are making good progress and liaise with their parents about their children's care. There are currently no children attending with learning difficulties or disabilities but there are suitable systems in place to ensure that should this be the case they receive any specialist support needed. For example, liaising with other professionals such as Portage and speech therapists.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are very well behaved and relate well to the staff and with their peers, playing cooperatively with each other, taking turns and sharing. Children understand the simple boundaries and the staffs' quiet, but consistent approach means that these are respected. Staff are good role models and set them a good example about how to behave. They praise the children regularly for small achievements and completing tasks such as preparing snack.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning, continuing activities at home to support the current theme. For example, parents were asked to discuss with their children how much they have grown from babyhood, to compare characteristics such as eye and hair colour and compare photographs and size of clothes then and now. This supported the 'All About Me' theme and introduced parents and

children to the Foundation Stage curriculum. Parents receive information each time a new topic is introduced which gives them tips about how they can help their children with this. Parents are given the opportunity to try for themselves some of the activities the children do at the annual open day event. They are actively encouraged to paint and glue and experiment with the resources available. This is a fun event and gives parents a real insight into the enjoyment their children derive from participating in these and also demonstrating to parents how their children learn in a fun and relaxed way. Parents also meet with their children's key worker to discuss their children's progress and there is an informal daily exchange of information about day-to-day issues. However, they are not asked to share what their children can already do as a starting point to their education. The setting's policies are displayed for parents to access, however, a system to share the complaints log has not been finalised. As a result, this is not yet available to parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provider meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children are cared for in a welcoming, stimulating environment where the emphasis is on learning is fun. The staff and management teams work very well together, sharing responsibilities to ensure that the setting runs smoothly and safely for the children. There are robust procedures in place to ensure that anyone who has direct contact with the children is suitably vetted and visitors are not left unattended. This ensures that children's welfare is safeguarded. The staff team are qualified and experienced, regularly attending training to up date their knowledge and skills.

The pre-school is organised well. Space is used effectively to ensure that children can move around freely and safely and that they can access the play provision independently. A separate creative play room means that children can access different creative activities and the outside play area is used as an extension to the indoor activities. This gives children a greater choice about where they play. Activities run throughout the session which means that children have plenty of time to do what they want to do without fear of the activity being removed to be replaced with another.

The comprehensive range of policies and procedures are generally put into practice and are reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain relevant. However, the complaints policy is not fully developed and requires attention. All documentation in respect of the children's safety and welfare is in place which means that, with parents' permission, staff can act in their best interests. For example, seeking medical assistance in an emergency. Records such as the attendance register are accurately maintained which means that there is a clear record about who is on the premises at any given time.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is good and there are effective systems in place to monitor the quality of the provision. The management committee meet regularly to ensure that the setting operates according to its' constitution and there are regular staff meetings to plan the nursery education programme. A comprehensive evaluation of all the setting's activities is undertaken regularly to ensure it continues to offer best practice. Staff receive annual appraisals to monitor the quality of their work and their ongoing developmental needs. All staff contribute to the planning of the nursery education, taking responsibility for the preparation, presentation and execution of specific activities. As a result, these are organised well and ready for the children to enjoy as they arrive each day.

The setting works very closely with the adjacent first school and maintains good links, sharing some of their facilities, such as the hall and field. Children are familiar with the layout of the school and some of the routines and as a result, have a smooth transition into school.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last childcare inspection the provider agreed to: review and update policy documentation with regard to the procedures to be followed in the event of an uncollected child, and review the child protection policy with regard to the action that will be taken in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff or volunteer. The provider has addressed both of these issues by reviewing and updating both policies to ensure that suitable procedures are in place should a child be lost or uncollected. There is now a clear course of action to investigate any allegations of abuse made against a member of staff or volunteer. As result children's welfare is suitably safeguarded.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider agreed to improve the systems for monitoring and evaluating the provision for nursery education. This has been addressed by the introduction of a regular and comprehensive evaluation of all activities and the nursery education programme. As a result children receive a well balanced curriculum which supports them in all areas of learning.

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 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 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):

- further develop the complaints procedure to ensure that it is fully compliant and shared with parents

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):

- consider developing the 'All about Me' profile sheets further so that the children's starting point for their nursery education is shared between parents and staff
- consider how the observations and assessments of children's progress can be used more effectively to plan for the next steps in their individual 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