

# The Orchard Pre-school and Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106167
<b>Inspection date</b>	06 February 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Janet Butlin
<b>Setting Address</b>	Lustleigh Village Hall, Lustleigh, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ13 9TA
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<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees of The Orchard Pre-school and Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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 outstanding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Orchard Pre-School is a committee run group. It opened in 1984 and now operates from a large room within the newly built village hall. It is situated in Lustleigh, Dartmoor in Devon.

The playgroup is registered to provide care for up to 26 children aged from two to five years and there are currently 11 children enrolled, six of whom are in receipt of funding. The group supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who have English as an additional language. The setting is open on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays from 09.30 to 12.00 during term time only. There is a secure enclosed, outdoor play area and children frequently go on supervised walks to the adjacent orchard. Wednesday sessions operate in the smaller hall as a parent and toddler group uses the larger hall on this day. The pre-school employs five staff, four of whom have appropriate childcare qualifications. The setting receives the support of the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children become strong and healthy and develop their muscles effectively as they enjoy extremely well presented yoga sessions and dance to well guided 'sticky-kids' exercise tapes. They enjoy the benefits of fresh air as they run and explore in the adjacent orchard. They clamber over hummocks, negotiate rocks and balance carefully on stones and along the footpath. In the summer they are protected from the harmful effects of the sun as they wear sun cream and hats.

Children play in a clean setting, where good standards of hygiene are implemented. They are well protected from the risk of cross infection as they wash their hands using liquid soap and paper towels. They are reminded why they wash their hands and they confidently reply that it is to protect themselves from germs. They also learn about the importance of cleaning their teeth. These strategies help children to keep healthy. Children who become unwell or have an accident whilst in the setting receive good care as staff are qualified in first aid and have good systems in place to respond appropriately.

Children enjoy healthy snacks in plentiful quantities. They tuck into fresh fruit, rice cakes and flapjacks and have constant access to drinks of water. A jug and cups are set out throughout the session so they can help themselves when they are thirsty. This ensures they remain well hydrated. Food is prepared under hygienic conditions in the nearby kitchen.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in two spacious halls where they have ample room to run about and to set up their imaginative play. They access their toys and playthings from a very good selection which is set out ready for them when they arrive in the morning. They reach their toys easily and safely. They also have the sole use of secure, outside play space.

Children are protected from hazards as staff thoroughly risk assess the areas to be used by the children, including the outside spaces. However, children's safety is compromised as staff are unable to effectively monitor public access to the building and their ability to manage access to the halls used by the children is limited. Children are secure in the procedure to be followed in the event of having to evacuate the premises in an emergency and this helps to keep them safe.

Children's safety is further supported as staff have a sound understanding of the child protection procedure. However, the group's policy lacks guidance regarding specific procedures which limits the document's usefulness in the event of having a concern.

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

The provision is outstanding.

All children have a superb time in the setting. Young children play alongside their older playmates easily and comfortably and staff ensure that activities are adapted to make them accessible for the younger ones and more challenging for the older children. Excellent use is made of the Birth to three matters framework to inform planning and staff have an extremely good

understanding of it when they assess young children's progress. Young children who are making particularly rapid progress are provided with appropriate challenge within the terms of the correct framework for their age band. For example, children who recognise the letter of their name are provided with interesting, grooved letter shapes along which they can run their fingers and roll balls to help them become competent learners and support their enjoyment. Excellent extension of children's ability enables them to develop stimulating and lively conversation, incorporating some simple counting and helping them to become skilful communicators. Children are cared for most sensitively and their parents are welcomed to stay and settle them in until they become more confident. Children explore and investigate the toys and games, for example, exploring the various textures and objects in a treasure basket. There are many opportunities for children to use and explore their senses, for example, all children eagerly follow the sound of the flute as they process outside. They tip toe through the beautifully created pebble maze, exploring the textures of the stones and carefully completing the gap at the end. The joy and wonder in their faces is remarkable.

#### Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children have eager, enthusiastic and lively dispositions to learning and are making rapid progress towards the early learning goals in all areas. Regular observations are written up and show that targets are regularly set for each area of learning for each child. The assessments are rigorous, thorough, and are collated into a personal record for each child which clearly shows outstanding progress from their starting points. Extension activities are provided by staff who have an expert awareness of each individual child's stages of development. Staff have an excellent knowledge of the Foundation Stage, use varied and exciting teaching methods and have a full understanding of how young children learn and absorb experiences. Plans clearly show that an excellent range of activities are provided that cover all the areas of learning and the group is currently working on a new planning and assessment system to reflect forthcoming changes in early years care and education. Staff are extremely skilled in moving the session on at a satisfying pace and monitoring children's attention and interest levels. They use highly effective strategies, recapping at the end of the session what they have done and helping children to reinforce their learning. Teaching is consistently inspiring and challenging for all children.

Children talk animatedly about their play. They discuss the pancakes they had yesterday and have in depth discussions in their role-play. They learn about the sounds of letters, and the sounds within words, as staff use highly effective strategies such as helping the children to listen carefully, to find words that begin with the same letter, to explore rhyme and also to feel the shapes of letters in many different contexts. Children even take the opportunity to find, and run their fingers along, the letters of their names carved into the May Queen memorial in the orchard. Children make marks and write and some can write their names very confidently. Children develop their mathematical understanding as they count the children present, count their fingers and toes, and reinforce their learning by matching the quantity to the numeral on the number line. They hear meaningful descriptions of quantity, size and even fractions as staff support them in their play and their responses indicate they have really thought about their discoveries. Children listen enthralled to extremely well presented stories, all of which are carefully chosen to reinforce and support their learning. For example, they count the items eaten by the caterpillar and recognise and predict the rhyme in the story about the cool pool. These stories also link to the exploration and investigation they are doing with natural materials such as stones, feathers and mosses. They operate simple technology with confidence and use the musical keyboard and the tape recorder with great skill. Children develop their small muscles as they manipulate dough, master intricate threading and tie knots. They describe the feel and

texture of the materials they are working with and watch with fascination as they add colour to the fine sand. They dance and show an excellent sense of rhythm as they explore the group's collection of musical instruments. They are also tuneful singers.

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

The provision is good.

Children arrive happily and settle immediately to play. They are extremely confident and concentrate for substantial amounts of time as, for example, they select the natural objects they are going to thread on their mobile. They are purposefully engaged throughout the session. They show care and concern for one another, showing sympathy toward a younger playmate who is new and a little uncertain. They follow agreed codes, for example proceeding along the outdoor maze without 'cheating' and taking a shortcut. They learn about various cultures by, for example exploring festivals such as Chinese New Year. They also learn a little about the wider world in meaningful ways as they link their use of musical instruments to various music and dance styles around the world. They also have a well developed respect for their own community and talk knowledgeably about their immediate neighbours, the dairy, the vehicle repair shop and the church, the bells of which they frequently stop to listen to. Children are polite and respond to staff and each other with respect. Children who have English as an additional language benefit from the group's enthusiasm for valuing their home languages. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children who have specific needs receive good care as the group is experienced in working closely with local supporting agencies and parents. Children are helped to understand and care for children who have differences of ability and this effectively strengthens their understanding of diversity.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They say please and thank you at appropriate moments and all help to tidy away the toys before snack time. They respond to staff's effective strategies, such as encouraging them to get 'all the wriggles out of them' so they can concentrate on the story. They also respond to the calm manner of the staff and the constant attention they receive.

Children are cared for in accordance with their parents' wishes. Parents hold the setting in very high regard and are keen to communicate their satisfaction. There are good systems in place to keep parents informed about regulatory procedures. With regard to the nursery education the partnership with parents is outstanding. There are excellent opportunities for them to be involved in their child's learning and staff value and encourage parents to share areas of expertise or interest. For example, presenting yoga sessions, art activities and playing music. Children benefit from the warm welcome that is extended to their parents and the daily discussions that take place regarding their progress. The comprehensive assessment file provides helpful information for parents regarding their children's progress and the next steps in their learning.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children play in a well organised setting and are cared for by highly skilled, caring and consistent staff. They benefit from staff's enthusiasm and commitment to undertaking additional training to enhance the experiences of the children in their care. They plan and provide an excellent range of worthwhile activities that help children to develop in all areas. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. All regulatory documentation is in place

and is securely stored, however, some policies require additional detail, particularly the child protection policy.

The leadership and management of the nursery education provision is outstanding. Staff present as a highly efficient team who have excellent systems of communication. This frequent, ongoing communication ensures that they all have an accurate picture of children's progress and how to support them towards the next steps in their learning. Managers ensure that staff are able to access helpful training and take an active part in monitoring the quality of the provision. The group regularly evaluates practice and identifies areas to improve, for example, developing their understanding of forthcoming changes to early years care and education. Continual and rigorous monitoring enables practitioners to maintain the high standards of teaching, for example they have a conscientious awareness of how to adapt planning when numbers in the group increase. The setting enjoys the support of the local authority.

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

At the last inspection the group were required to ensure that the child protection policy includes the procedure to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer. The group have updated some policies, but have misunderstood this recommendation and this clause remains to be added to the child protection policy in order to support children's safety.

At the last nursery inspection the group were required to review plans, the use of time, resources and the indoor and outdoor environment to ensure children have good access to a wide range of resources that promote their progress and development. They were also required to provide challenges for older and more able children to help them use and extend their new skills in everyday routines. All recommendations have been fully addressed and this has had an extremely positive impact on children's learning and enjoyment.

### **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.

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### **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):

- improve ways of monitoring and managing access to the setting
- ensure the child protection policy contains the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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)