

# Lawn Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109046
<b>Inspection date</b>	30 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Nikki Whinton
<b>Setting Address</b>	Lawn Primary School, Brecon Close, Cleeve Lawn, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN3 1JT
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<b>Registered person</b>	Lawn Pre-School
<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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Lawn Pre-School opened in 1976. The group is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents at the pre-school and members of the local community. It operates from two classrooms within the grounds of Lawn Primary School, Swindon. The group also has use of the school hall. The provision serves the local community. A maximum of 52 children may attend the setting at any one time. The group opens five days a week during term time. Sessions are from 09.00 until 11.30 Monday to Wednesday, 09.00 until 12.30 on Thursday and Friday. On Monday and Tuesday afternoons there is a session from 12.40 until 15.10 for two and three-year-olds.

There are currently 56 children on roll aged from two to under five years. Of these, 38 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 12 members of staff. Of these, 10 hold appropriate early years qualifications and one member of staff is working towards a qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children lead a very healthy lifestyle whilst in the provision. They have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise whilst playing outside or when using the undercover area during inclement weather. They have planned usage of the school hall for a weekly physical education session, as well as the chance to explore the school playgrounds and outdoor climbing apparatus. Such opportunities help children to feel more self-assured within the school setting, whilst providing them with further chances to increase their large muscle skills. Children improve their fine motor control and coordination through the safe handling of tools and equipment including the computer mouse, scissors, pencils and glue sticks.

Children increase their appreciation of healthy eating through the good variety of healthy snacks that they enjoy whilst in the provision. Children broaden their appreciation of food tastes through topic-based activities, such as eating prawn crackers with chopsticks during Chinese New Year celebrations. Allergies or dietary issues are discussed with parents at registration. These discussions are recorded and any needs accommodated. Children are able to help themselves to water from the drink flasks that they bring to the sessions and pour their own drinks at snack time. This helps to ensure children have access to sufficient fluids to meet their needs.

Children learn about good hygiene practices as part of the daily routine. For example, children know they must wash their hands before preparing the snack time fruit. They benefit from the staff's good role modelling, their knowledge of first aid and their understanding of the correct administrative procedures to follow if accidents occur or children require medication. There is a range of measures to promote children's good health. For example, children are encouraged to blow their noses before hygienically disposing of the tissue, written parental permission has been obtained to seek emergency treatment and the group's sick child policy is included within the parents' prospectus.

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

The provision is good.

The premises are clean, well maintained and of an appropriate temperature. Children are able to use the toilets independently and thus develop their self-care skills. There is a range of measures in place to promote safety and help avoid accidents. For example, the premises are secure, socket covers are placed in exposed electric points, staff are effectively deployed and the kitchen is inaccessible to unsupervised children. Children learn to share some responsibility for their own safety through purposeful activities such as tidying away toys before snack time or by taking part in emergency evacuation drills. However, staff sometimes handle hot drinks in the close vicinity of the children. As a result, children's safety may be put at risk.

Children help themselves to a good range of resources both indoors and within the fully enclosed outside play area. They benefit from the staff's appreciation of safety issues concerning the purchase and ongoing checking and maintenance of equipment. As a result, children play with age appropriate toys that are safe and suitable.

Children's well-being is safeguarded by staff that have all undertaken targeted training and have a secure understanding of child protection procedures. There are highly effective systems

for making sure parents fully understand the group's responsibilities, prior to a child commencing in the setting. Children's welfare is actively supported.

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

The provision is good.

Children enter the provision willingly and quickly settle into the setting's daily routine. They independently make choices regarding the activities they wish to explore either indoors or outside. In addition, the designated 'special helpers' look through a scrapbook of resources to help them decide what extra toys should be made available for their friends to explore on the carpeted area. Children have a very positive relationship with the warm, friendly staff and approach them spontaneously for hugs and cuddles. Children are consistently well occupied. They benefit from the staff being effectively deployed to support and enhance their play, such as in the role-play area. Children develop their self care skills, through practical activities, including putting on their coats and boots for outside play or clearing away their crockery at the end of snack time. They are able to sit quietly for short periods and listen to others, such as when children decide to sing songs to each other at music time.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and the areas of development covered by planned and free choice activities. They plan and provide a varied programme of interesting practical activities to support children's learning. They act as positive role models, listen carefully to the children and give them the chance to speak at their own pace. Staff regularly undertake written observations of the children, which they use to complete assessments, using the Swindon Record Keeping System. However, there are some gaps in children's assessments and their current attainment levels are not easily available for staff reference during focused activities. As a result, some children are not always sufficiently challenged.

Children have a good range of vocabulary and spontaneously express their thoughts, 'I'm happy today'. They use language with increasing confidence, for example when discussing the instruments played by a visiting musician or what they had seen during a walk in the woods, 'I saw a giraffe on a truck'. Children learn to recognise familiar words in print through meaningful activities, including self-registering or finding their name card at snack time. They explore books spontaneously and thoroughly enjoy taking part in group story time. Children are able to practise their early writing skills throughout the sessions, although staff have a tendency to label the children's artwork. Children count accurately by rote, such as when counting the children present or the number of sides on a rectangle. They use number confidently, for example, when adding or subtracting during action songs. Through practical activities such as measuring their heights, completing puzzles of differing complexity, investigating sand or making patterns with magnetic shapes, children are gaining an awareness of shape, space and measure.

Children use a range of information and communication technology to support their play and enjoy designing and building with a variety of construction materials. Children welcome meaningful visitors to the setting. For example, a parent demonstrates how to wear a sari, a grandparent leads regular music and movement sessions and parents who work as a physiotherapist or a paramedic tell children about their roles. Children take part in interesting local outings, such as nature walks, bus trips into the centre of Swindon, visits to the library or to the Old Town Museum. Such stimulating experiences enable children to gain a greater

awareness of the wider world and their local community. Children sing a growing repertoire of songs from memory and have regular chances to investigate musical instruments. They enjoy using their imagination whilst engaged in role-play, for example, when the home corner is transformed into a Chinese restaurant. Children have regular free play opportunities to explore a good range of media and materials, such as when making play dough. However, some planned, large group art and craft activities are adult directed, with very little opportunity for children to initiate or develop their own creative ideas.

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

The provision is good.

Children are respected and acknowledged as valued individuals. They benefit from the staff knowing them well, appreciating their differing needs and understanding their home circumstances. Children are able to access a good range of resources including books, dressing up clothes, computer programmes, dolls and puzzles to help them gain a greater awareness of diversity.

Children behave well as appropriate for their age and stage of development. They are able to sit quietly and listen to others, such as during whole group story or when a visiting musician comes to talk to the children. Their behaviour is supported by staff that act as good role models and talk to the children appropriately. Children are learning to distinguish between right and wrong when in the setting.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are gaining social skills as they learn to share resources and take turns. Through meaningful activities such as placing their name card on a feelings chart or describing what they enjoyed doing most during the morning, children are learning to express their thoughts and feelings. Children gain an awareness of a range of cultures and festivals through practical activities. For example, they learn Irish dancing as part of St. Patrick's Day celebrations, decorate candleholders during Diwali and make chapattis to mark the birthday of Gura Gobind Singh.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents have a positive relationship with the staff. They are given useful written information about the pre-school, its policies and procedures prior to a child commencing in the setting. They are kept up to date through well-arranged notice boards, regular newsletters and information flyers detailing forthcoming activities. Parents are encouraged to become involved in their child's learning, for example, by sharing their skills, helping their child to bring in articles from home linked to the topic or by joining the parent rota. They are encouraged to complete evaluative questionnaires about the setting, which staff then use to support the development of the group. Parents have the chance to attend an annual assessment review meeting, receive termly reports on their child's progress and are invited to feedback with their own written observations of their child's achievements. However, they are not invited to contribute to initial Foundation Stage assessments.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's care, welfare and learning are supported by an experienced, established and well-qualified staffing team that works together very well. High staffing ratios help to ensure children receive good quality support and attention. All staff regularly attend targeted early years courses to support the development of their professional knowledge.

All legally required documentation is in place, confidentially stored and easily accessible. For example, children's personal information is always available to support their care and careful records are maintained detailing the attendance of children and staff. However, the attendance records for some visitors do not include sufficient detail.

The leadership and management are good. The whole staffing team meet together on a regular basis to plan and evaluate the effectiveness of the educational provision. They have a very positive attitude towards developing the quality of the provision. Currently, the leadership does not always effectively monitor the assessment system. There are good channels of communication between the staff and the voluntary committee. The group regularly welcome Swindon's advisory teachers to the setting to help them in the development of the provision. There are very strong links with the on-site primary school. For example, pre-school children attend school events including story time, assemblies and the dress rehearsal for the reception class Nativity play. In addition, the head teacher and reception class teacher spend time in the setting, talking to the children and reading them stories. Such opportunities greatly benefit children in their transition into statutory education.

Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

As a result of the last combined inspection, the group was given recommendation and key issues for action in order to support the development of the provision. The care report asked that staff ensure significant behavioural incidents are recorded and that resources are accessible so that all children are able to select toys and resources, make choices and initiate their own play. The education report requested the group review the planning system to ensure there are clear and different learning outcomes for more able children, to include adult in-put, resources to be used and the groupings of children, to ensure consistency of teaching methods and to ensure more able children are suitably challenged in all areas of learning. The staff were asked to develop the evaluation system to ensure it determines whether children achieve the learning outcomes of activities, link this to assessments of children's progress and use to inform future planning. The group was also requested to increase opportunities for children to express themselves and communicate their ideas freely through collage.

Significant behavioural incidents are now recorded and children are now able to select resources, make choices and initiate their own play. Children have opportunities to express themselves and communicate their ideas whilst involved in free choice collage activities. The staff plan as a team to ensure consistency between the classrooms, which includes adult in-put and resources. They undertake written observations to ascertain if children achieve the planned learning outcomes of activities. These improvements have had a positive impact on the quality of care and education offered to the children.

However, the differing abilities of the children are not always clearly defined within the focused daily planning. As a result, some more able children are not consistently suitably challenged. Children do not always have the chance to express themselves whilst involved in planned large group collage activities.

### **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):

- ensure that attendance records detailing the names of adult visitors to the setting are retained
- ensure that hot drinks do not pose a risk to 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):

- develop the planning and monitoring of the educational provision to ensure assessments are regularly completed across all aspects of the curriculum, which are then used in planning suitably challenging activities to promote individual children's future progress
- increase opportunities for children to use their own imaginative ideas whilst engaged in planned creative activities involving art and craft.

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)