

Westlea Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109098
Inspection date	28 November 2007
Inspector	Karen Louise Prager
Setting Address	Langstone Way, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN5 7BT
Telephone number	07876 485 516
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Registered person	The Trustees of Westlea After School Club
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?

Westlea Pre-School opened in 1982. It operates from a community room in the grounds of Westlea Primary School, West Swindon in Wiltshire. The pre-school serves mainly the local large private housing estates.

The pre-school is registered to care for 26 children aged two to four years. There are currently 40 children aged from three to four years on roll. This includes children 36 children who are receiving funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9.05 until 11.45 in the morning, and from 12.30 until 15.00 each afternoon.

There are two full time and three part-time staff who work with the children; two of whom have early years NVQ Level 3 qualifications and a further two have other relevant childcare qualifications. One other member of staff is currently working towards an NVQ qualification.

The setting is a registered charity and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. They receive support from the local Sure Start Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in warm, clean premises. Practitioners are aware of the routines to follow to promote good hygiene within the setting. The premises are cleaned daily by the school cleaners and toys are cleaned by the pre-school practitioners regularly. This ensures that children can play in a clean environment. Regular hand washing practices are established with children. However, current procedures do not follow recommended guidelines; as a result children are at risk from cross infection. Accident and medication procedures are recorded appropriately. All practitioners are trained in first aid and response to accidents is appropriate for the children's needs.

Children's health and well-being is well supported by the knowledge gained by the setting about individual children's needs. Practitioners gain information from parents regarding children's dietary needs and allergies. This information is recorded, and shared with practitioners to ensure children are not exposed to foods they are allergic to. Children's snacks are healthy with a variety of nutritious foods being offered. On some days children sit together in a whole group for snack time. During other sessions children have a more flexible snack time when they sit in small groups. Both of these type of snack times offer good opportunity for children to learn about healthy eating and develop appropriate social skills. They have access to water at all times as they are able to help themselves from the water container within the play room. They are also offered water and milk at snack time. Children, therefore, have sufficient fluids throughout the day.

Children have daily access to fresh air, throughout most of the session, when they are able to play in the adjacent enclosed outdoor area. Opportunities are also planned for indoor activities which encourage large motor movement, such as dancing with scarves to music, or acting out the song about the 'Gruffalo', which is clearly a favourite of the children. Children show a developing awareness of space, themselves and others, and move around the space with confidence and control. They change direction, negotiate pathways and are able to stop. Currently the play area is small which restricts children's regular access to activities which allow for vigorous physical activity.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in welcoming premises. Information for parents is regularly updated on the notice board in the play room and on the windows around the building. Named pegs for the children to hang their belongings on ensures that children are made to feel welcome when they enter. Within the play rooms displays of children's art and photos are available for all to view.

Premises are safe with few risks as practitioners identify potential hazards daily, and effectively minimise these. For example, sockets are covered and entry to the premises is controlled, and resources are checked daily for breakages. Children, therefore, play in safety. Fire precautions are in place and the evacuation plan is practised regularly. Children's safety is well promoted on outings as practitioners ensure children are well supervised and possible risks are identified.

Children's welfare is protected by practitioners who have a sound knowledge of child protection issues and the current local procedures to follow in the event of concerns. This actively promotes the children's well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are seen to enjoy the time they spend at the pre-school. They enter the group with confidence and quickly settle, after a short play, to a group time. They confidently speak in a small familiar group when showing their personal items they have brought from home. Children display high levels of involvement as they engage in free-play activities, for example, when exploring water as they pour from one container to another, or when they develop role play scenarios. They develop high levels of independence with regard to their self-help skills, for example, assisting with tidying and sweeping and putting on and fastening their coats. Children develop a sense of belonging in the group as they develop familiarity with the routines and storage of resources, some of which they are able to access themselves.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Practitioners have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and a clear understanding of how young children learn and progress. Assessment is thorough and the information is used effectively to guide planning. Activities and experiences are broad and effective and meet the individual needs of the children. Teaching provides a realistic challenge for children. Practitioners understand children's needs and provide a good range of activities to move them on. They provide an interesting and welcoming environment which reflects most children's background and the wider community. Practitioners make good use of time and resources to support children's learning. Monitoring procedures are well established to evaluate and improve teaching.

Children play together well, co-operating in the building and mending role play activities in the outdoor area. As children become more familiar with the session they are able to operate increasingly independently, selecting toys from around the room and being aware of where the tissues are to blow their nose. Children become aware of their own needs and start to recognise the need to put on coats and hats when playing outside on a cold day.

Children are confident speakers, sharing their thoughts about a story or their chosen object in a group setting. They enjoy and are able to participate in familiar stories, such as 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' and 'The Gruffalo'. A large cardboard picture of the monster engages children as they retell the story. Changing topics provide children with the opportunity to listen to new stories. Children are able to freely select books from the book stand and some settle to read to themselves confidently, looking at the engaging pictures. Children gain an awareness of print from the labels around the room. They learn to recognise their name as they self register at the start of the session and identify where to hang their coat. They explore marks when using crayons and paint and engage in a large number of activities requiring finger control. Children enjoy singing as a group and can be heard singing favourite songs and creating their own as they play around the setting. Children have opportunities to listen to the sounds that different instruments make and use instruments to make loud and soft noises in response to instruction.

Practical activities are available to children to discover shape and number. Children can count the number of objects, for example caterpillars in the mini beast tray, during their play with

increasingly security. They become familiar with larger numbers as they count together the number of children present each day and check that the number of name cards is the same. Children learn about shape as they build and construct. They are able to increasingly talk about the properties of different shapes. Some children are able to say, for example, that a triangle has three sides.

Children's interest is stimulated through their exploration of the natural world. They examine plastic insects with the use of a magnifying glass and discover shadows when they play outside. Children show engagement and curiosity when exploring soapy water as they pour it from one container to another. Through planned activities children start to gain an awareness of the beliefs and cultures of others and children were able to enjoy potato pakora and coconut sweets at snack time in connection with Diwali.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's self-esteem is well supported by practitioners who know the children in their care well, and respect their individual needs fully. All children have their development well supported and are fully included in the activities and routines of the group. Children have access to a selection of resources that promote positive images of diversity in their play.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children have practical experiences to gain awareness of other cultures through activities that help them learn about the lives of others. For example, they participate in activities relating to the festival of Diwali. Children occasionally enjoy outings in their locality, for example, when they visit the local shopping centre or park. Children have opportunities to explore the wonder of nature, for example, when caring for plants or chasing shadows. Children benefit from visits to the school which is on the same site. This serves to familiarise them with a school setting and eases the transfer to school when the time comes.

Children's behaviour is very good. Practitioners are excellent role models to the children, being respectful to them and calm in their manner. They use sensitive and age appropriate methods for managing unwanted behaviour, including regular praise for their acts of kindness. Children develop skills in sharing and learn to negotiate during their play.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents of children new to the setting receive a full copy of the policies and procedures of the setting and existing parents receive any updates to these policies. Parents are kept informed about the time their children spend in the session through newsletters, notices and discussion with practitioners. The newsletters provide information on the current learning themes and also offer suggestions for parents to support children's development at home through activities carried out together. There are also information sheets available to parents that offer additional information on the care and education of their child. Parents have access to activity plans; hence they know the activities available to their child. They share information with practitioners prior to their child entering the group and are encouraged to view assessment records and discuss their child's progress on a regular basis. They are also encouraged to contribute to the assessment process, detailing their child's achievements outside of the group. Practitioners welcome parental involvement during the session and this valuable opportunity is regularly taken by parents. Children also benefit from the liaison between home and pre-school when they are able to invite a tiger to visit their home and then share the experiences of the visit with their friends.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by suitable and appropriately qualified practitioners. Recruitment procedures ensure adults working with the children are suitable to do so. The management is aware of the need to ensure all committee members receive suitable clearance, however, procedures for this are not sufficiently robust. Practitioners regularly attend additional training to support their professional development, for example, employment issues, language development and developing maths through stories. This benefits the children as practitioners gain knowledge and incorporate new ideas in their daily practice. Practitioners maintain a high level of adult to child ratios. Children, therefore, receive good quality adult support as practitioners spend periods engaged in play with the children, interacting with them and supporting their development well.

Required paperwork is stored securely and well organised. The group's policies and procedures are implemented consistently by practitioners in a way that promotes the children's welfare, care and learning. All necessary consents are gained from parents for routines and activities ensuring children's well-being is promoted.

Leadership and management is good. Practitioners work well as a team and share responsibilities within the group, including planning. They are very well supported by the manager, who supports their professional development and encourages them to access appropriate training and development opportunities. Practitioners regularly meet to discuss planning and individual children's development. A formal appraisal system enables practitioners to reflect on their practice and identify areas of strength, as well as areas for future training and development. The group regularly evaluates the educational provision and makes improvements to delivery of the curriculum. For example, children are benefiting from the re-organisation of the show and tell activity.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection a number of recommendations and key issues for improvement were identified.

The organisation of the setting has improved to allow parents planned opportunities to share what they know about their children and ensure that planning shows what children should learn and how activities can be extended for the older and more able children.

Provision for children has further improved as children have regular access to the computer and other programmable resources, have access to a comfortable area to use when reading books, and the outside area is now used daily for the majority of the session. Children also now have increased opportunities to select their own resources and activities.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the previous 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):

- ensure hand washing practices carried out by children follow recommended good practice guidance
- ensure clearance procedures for the committee are swiftly implemented when required.

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):

- increase opportunities for robust physical play.

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