

Oak Farm Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109928
Inspection date	26 March 2008
Inspector	Mandy Gannon
Setting Address	Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 8SS
Telephone number	07958 178119
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Registered person	Oak Farm Community 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 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?

Oak Farm Community Pre-school is run by a parents committee. It operates in a community classroom at Oak Farm School in Farnborough. There are toilets nearby suitable for the children's use and there are limited kitchen facilities. The children have access to an enclosed outside play area that is used in better weather.

The pre-school is registered to provide sessional care for 26 children aged two - five years old. Children who attend mainly come from the local housing estate.

The opening times are Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 09:15 to 12:15, Tuesday and Thursday 09:15 to 13:15.

There are currently 29 children on roll and of these 19 are in receipt of nursery education funding. The group support children with special needs and disabilities and those that have English as an additional language.

The pre-school is run by a team of five full time staff, there are currently two members of staff who hold a recognised qualification to NVQ level 3 and two who have NVQ level 2.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a varied, healthy nutritious diet as they have fruit, cereal or savoury snacks. Their independence continues to be encouraged as they access the café style snack bar, which has recently been introduced. Some children pour their own water from a covered jug and others independently pierce their individual carton of milk. A healthy eating policy is in place and promoted through snacks and the packed lunches children bring from home. Children develop an understanding about food that is good for them. For example, they have a variety of fruit for their snacks including apple, banana, orange and raisins and one child expresses their dislike for some fruit and discusses with a member of staff that they like kiwi and what other fruits they enjoy. Children are developing their self care skills; they wash their hands in bowls of water in the room, take their shoes and socks off and on when using the school gym and wipe their own noses. The group do not have access to water in the room although bowls of water are regularly refreshed and paper towels are provided to minimise the spread of infection. Children are supervised to the toilets in this shared building.

Children's health is maintained because staff have a clear understanding of their individual needs and have relevant first aid training. Policies and procedures to promote health and hygiene have been recently updated and are waiting to be adopted by the committee at the next meeting. The required documentation is in place, although the accident record does not always contain sufficient information and detail.

Children have opportunities to access their own enclosed garden which is away from the room although on the school site and physical development is included as part of the daily session plan. Children enjoy riding on scooters and bikes, they balance on stilts, and they throw, catch and kick balls and dig in the soil with small tools provided. They have a weekly opportunity to use the school gym where children excitedly use the parachute. This all contributes in developing children's understanding and attitude to exercise contributing to a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children move safely around the environment where staff are vigilant, they place themselves strategically and show attention to minimising risk and promoting children's safety. Space is well organised into designated areas, for example they can access books from low level shelving in the book area where they can sit comfortably or they can play in the water tray which is placed away from major thoroughfares. Children are reminded of how to remain safe and are given explanations by most staff, for example not to run inside or to stand on the garage as they might hurt themselves.

Children have a range of play materials which are safe and age appropriate. Children's independence to access toys and resources continues to be developed. Toys and resources are clean and risk assessments are completed with a designated health and safety officer in place.

Children are kept safe at pre school as the staff identify and remove most risks with a daily check completed and risk assessments carried out by the health and safety officer. Although, checks of the outside area are not always completed prior to children using the area and potential hazards such as broken planters are not removed. Staff are not always vigilant to who is on the

other side of the pre school room door when opening, which opens directly into the room. Procedures to record visitors to the group are available but not always consistently maintained. Children and staff take part in fire drills every term developing their awareness of fire safety, records are maintained and evaluated by the manager, although steps to improve have not been effectively implemented and recording is not in sufficient detail.

Children's welfare is promoted in the pre school as staff have completed training on child protection and have sufficient knowledge and understanding of how to implement local procedures. The manager has particular responsibility for child protection issues. Information and contact details of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board are available and a policy is shared with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled and involve themselves in activities on arrival. They make their own choices from the activities laid out and selected by staff, although children's independent learning is being developed as they make choices in some areas. For example, they select resources in the craft area when being creative and access resources in the mark making area as they make envelopes or sharpen pencils using the pencil sharpener.

Younger children under three benefit because staff make effective use of the Birth to three matters framework and include in their planning to provide suitable activities. Although, observations and monitoring is not effectively used to plan the next steps in their learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a clear knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones and the Foundation Stage. Evaluations are carried on planned activities and areas for improvement identified, although evaluations of teaching are limited. The staff offer children a planned curriculum which covers all the areas of learning. Although, observations and assessments are not used to effectively plan the next steps in their learning, which impacts on the progress they make. Children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals.

Children are aware of the routine, follow instructions and behave well. They line up to go outside, or walk to the gym and are aware of procedures such as taking off their shoes and socks and remind others of the routine. Children build positive relationships and greet their friends warmly and are developing a social environment at the snack café. Children have limited opportunities to explore the local environment and to develop their understanding of their local community and their place in society.

Children's speaking and listening skills are developing well and they confidently make contributions to group discussions. For example, they listen as a member of staff reads the diary of Oke the pre school bear and what he did during his visit to a child's house over the weekend and others contribute by discussing what they did. Children have many opportunities to mark make in the designated area and when in the role play area. Some children are able to write their name, although some staff do not always give children opportunities to write their name and write it for them. Children are beginning to recognise their name and some children identify the first letter of their name but have limited opportunities to link sound to letters and develop knowledge of phonic sounds. Children enjoy looking at books for pleasure and

independently access fiction and non-fiction books and sit comfortably and share with their peers or a member of staff. Children have regular opportunities to take books home to share with their parents and carers.

Children identify shapes and use tape measures and rulers to measure. Some children can count confidently up to five and beyond. Although, the use of counting and number in everyday situations is limited. Staff miss opportunities when completing the weather chart and other activities and often do not fully involve the children in problem solving, early calculation and the introduction of positional language.

Children use a wide range of materials in the creativity area which they independently access. They freely explore creative materials as they paint, stick and glue developing their designing and making skills. Children take turns and share as they work together on the computer and competently use the mouse to navigate around the programme. Children enthusiastically participate in imaginative play as they make sandwiches and serve tea in the home corner. Some staff skilfully extend and develop children's imagination as they sail in the cardboard box ship they have made in the garden and have to swim for safety when it starts to sink and the crocodiles are approaching.

Children participate in a variety of regular physical activities. They have access to an enclosed garden which they use for a period of time each day weather permitting. They competently use a variety of toys and resources as they throw and catch balls, ride bikes, balance on stilts and use small tools to dig in the soil. Children enjoy music and enthusiastically dance with confidence. They actively participate in their weekly session in the school gym where they have space to use equipment such as the parachute.

Staff are adapting and changing their planning to find a system that suits them and developing children's opportunities for more self-chosen activities. However, children's learning is not enhanced or extended as some staff miss learning opportunities. Insufficient challenges are provided for more able children, particularly in relation to the recognition of sounds and letters, the use of number and positional language in everyday activities and the introduction of early calculation.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are encouraged to be kind to one another, take turns and share. They play well together and co-operate with one another as they pass items to one another at the creative table and understand about sharing resources, such as the bikes and computer. Staff build a positive relationship and rapport with the children in their care and take an interest in activities they have been involved in at home. Staff reinforce good behaviour with most staff giving clear explanations and guidelines. For example, by saying 'well done that was very kind of you' or 'please do not do that, you might hurt yourself'. A behaviour management policy is in place that reinforces values and how situations will be managed. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children's individuality is valued and staff have regular discussions with parents and carers to ensure they are meeting children's needs. Records are maintained to meet individual needs, for example, any specific dietary requirements. Children's special days are valued as they discuss how a child celebrated their birthday at the weekend and present a card from their friends at pre school for another child's birthday. An equal opportunity policy is in place. There are

currently two children within the setting who have English as an additional language and the pre-school has taken some steps to support them. The pre school supports and welcomes children with learning difficulties and /or disabilities although none are currently attending. Children have some opportunities to learn about the wider world through toys and resources although this is an area that is barely sufficient and is currently being developed.

Children's care and learning is supported by a positive partnership with parents. Parents are supportive of the setting. They discuss how well staff show support to individual children, for example, if they have difficulty settling. A notice board is outside the room sharing information; parents receive newsletters and are invited to join the committee. Staff have a secure understanding of the procedure to be followed in the event of a parent wishing to make a complaint, a clear policy is in place which is shared with the parents and includes the details of the regulator.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. There is an open door policy where parents can view their child's developmental records at any time or discuss issues with the key worker. Parents are encouraged to discuss their child's needs with the staff informally, although these are not formally recorded. Parents are involved in their child's learning through information about topics and children taking home books to share. However, they have limited information about the next steps in their child's learning. Parents are invited to an information meeting to discuss their child's progress and a new format has been introduced to record this meeting which is to be held in the next week.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide. The organisation of the pre school, ratios and deployment of staff ensure children are happily engaged in activities and secure in their surroundings. Staff understand their role and through recent changes of some staff in the group continue to develop their responsibilities, such as involvement in planning and talking to parents in meetings about their child's progress.

The effective implementation and recent updating of policies and procedures helps to promote children's welfare, care and learning. Required documentation is in place although some details, refinement and maintenance are required.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Children benefit because staff are suitably qualified and enhance their knowledge and skills through regular training opportunities. Staff plan the curriculum together and evaluate how activities went. However, systems are not robust enough to notice where learning opportunities are missed. When recording children's achievements staff do not sufficiently plan the next steps in their learning and use this information to inform planning. As a result, some aspects of children's development are not fully promoted and insufficient challenges are provided to some children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Children Act inspection the group were recommended to ensure that the registration system shows when children, staff and visitors are present. The group maintain a register where the time of arrival and departure is clearly recorded for staff and children. However, the record of visitors is not always efficiently maintained.

At the last Nursery Education inspection the group were recommended to; improve the system for planning to include learning intentions, improve the use of children's assessments to inform planning, increase the opportunities for children to develop early mathematical skills in measurement and weight, increase opportunities to use apparatus and equipment to promote the development of large muscles to ensure that all the children take part regularly in active physical play to develop skills such as balancing, travelling around, improve the system to monitor and evaluate teaching, planning and the impact this has on children's development, develop opportunities to keep parents informed of their child's progress and achievements and to provide opportunities for children to record their findings when making observations. The manager and some staff are new to the group or to their position since the last inspection. The group are currently reviewing their planning and clearly identify learning intentions from planned activities. However, children's assessments and observations are not used effectively to inform planning and continues to be a recommendation at this inspection. The group have provided resources to develop children's early understanding of mathematical skills as they measure using tape measures and rulers. Although, mathematical development continues to be an area where improvement is required at this inspection. Children have regular opportunities to participate in physical play as they have regular sessions in the school gym and daily access to the enclosed outside area where they travel around on scooters and bikes, balance on stilts and have opportunities to dig and plant. The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching, planning and the impact on children's learning has been initiated and continues to be developed. The group have an open door policy where the parents can discuss their child's progress and the staff have initiated consultation sessions to be led by the child's key worker to inform parents of their child's progress and achievements. Opportunities have been provided for children to record their own findings and children access pens and paper recording their observations.

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):

- ensure that sufficient detail is recorded in the accident record

- ensure that an effective fire drill is practised and recorded
- ensure that all areas are effectively safety checked before children use them and that an effective safety procedure is in place when opening the pre school room door

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):

- improve the systems to monitor and record children's achievements and use this information to plan their next steps in their learning, ensuring sufficient challenges are provided to all children
- promote the recognition and use of phonic sounds when identifying letters
- develop and increase opportunities to identify number and provide opportunities to develop children's understanding of early calculation

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