

# Woodpeckers Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	127785
<b>Inspection date</b>	27 March 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Tracy Larnach
<b>Setting Address</b>	Conyngham Lane, Bridge, Canterbury, Kent, CT4 5JX
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<b>Registered person</b>	Woodpeckers Nursery 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 satisfactory. 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?

Woodpeckers Nursery School opened in 1996. It operates from a mobile unit in the grounds of Bridge and Patricbourne C. P. School, near Canterbury, Kent. The nursery has access to two rooms, an office, toilets, a kitchen and an outside area. The nursery serves the local area and the surrounding towns.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery at any one time. It opens Monday to Thursday from 08.45 to 14.45 and on Friday from 08.45 to 11.45, term time only. There are currently 46 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 38 children receive funding for nursery education.

The nursery supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities.

The nursery employs eight staff, of these, four of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are two staff working towards a qualification.

The nursery receives support from the Local Authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children are protected from cross infection as they are encouraged to wash their hands throughout the day. In addition, they are provided with liquid soap and paper towels so they do not have to share. Appropriate action is taken if children are ill to prevent the spread of infection. Staff use good practice to promote hygiene; for example, they use antibacterial spray on the tables and a procedure is in place to ensure the nursery and equipment is clean and hygienic for the children's play. There are four staff with current first aid certificates so someone is always on duty to respond to any accidents. Parental permission for emergency medical advice and treatment means that staff are aware of parents' wishes to enable them to respond quickly if a child has a serious accident or becomes ill.

Lunch is provided by the parents and snacks are provided by the nursery. Children and their parents enjoy annual visits from the dentist and hygienist who provide information about healthy options for children's lunch boxes. Healthy snacks such as cheese, crackers and fresh fruit are provided for the children so they learn about making healthy choices. Children with allergies are protected as staff are alerted to the signs and symptoms to enable them to act quickly should a child have a reaction. Water is available throughout the session to ensure children remain hydrated; however, it is difficult for the children to reach independently so they have to ask when they are thirsty.

Children enjoy regular physical play and are able to freely access the outside area for the majority of the session. There is an awning so children are protected from the rain and sun. They move confidently and safely both inside and out. Children are able to access a variety of equipment for their large muscle development; for example, a climbing frame, cars, scooters and bikes which they use with developing control. Overall, there are enough opportunities for children to participate in rigorous physical play for their physical well-being.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are safe in the building as there is an effective system for risk assessing. The nursery is secure so that unwanted visitors do not have access to the children and a visitors book ensures all visitors to the premises are recorded. There is an effective arrival and collection procedure to ensure children are safe and staff deploy appropriately for the children's safety. The staff have parental permissions on file; for example, for emergency medical advice and treatment and for applying sun screen. There is a policy on outings and staff request written parental permissions before they leave the premises. Children learn about safety through the daily routine; for example, when asked why there are orange cones outside they confidently explain that they are there to stop bikes going into the path of the slide.

Staff have enough knowledge of child protection to be alerted to any signs and symptoms in order to safeguard children; however, not all staff are secure in their knowledge and make assumptions based on common sense when asked about safeguarding issues. The child abuse policy and procedure does not include what would happen if an allegation is made against staff and existing injuries are noted very informally so staff may not be alerted if a pattern is forming in order to protect children. Fire drills are documented in the register to ensure all children have a turn so they become comfortable with the procedure. Lost and uncollected policies are

in place but the uncollected policy does not detail what would happen if a child is left at the nursery, although when spoken to, staff were aware of what action to take.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a range of activities throughout the day and can go from inside to outside when they are choosing what they wish to play with. Children are able to independently select from the toys and activities available in the room although at times they select from the toys staff placed on the tables by the staff. Activities such as play dough, sand, water, painting and gluing gives them the opportunity to use their senses as they experiment, explore and create. The Birth to three matters framework is used to assess the development of children under three. The younger children are included on the planning to ensure staff are aware and differentiate the activities appropriately. The environment is organised so that all children can access the activities provided.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children enjoy the planned activities and show interest in them; for example, crafts, measuring activities, games and role play. Most of the staff use good questioning techniques to make the children think. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and planning ensures the six areas of learning are given equal consideration. Staff assess the children's starting points by beginning the year with a project 'all about me' and a form has been developed to find out about what children enjoy at home and in the nursery; however, this has not been extended to include parent input. A complex planning system ensures staff observe the children's development and are aware of their needs and can plan for them. Observations are recorded but do not clearly inform the written planning. However, staff speak confidently about the children and their abilities.

Children speak clearly and use language competently. They are learning about sounds as they sing rhymes and jingles and are aware of the sound their names begin with. They recognise their names as they see them frequently during the session. There is print in the environment which teaches children that print carries meaning. Children learn how a book works as books are used as a resource and they enjoy stories in small groups and at the end of the session; however, the book area is not appealing, as a result, independent selection of books is limited. Children write for a purpose as they make lists on pieces of paper; however, there were no writing implements in the role play area during inspection to encourage this further. Children see numbers used as labels around the room and outside, for example, they match the numbered wheeled toys with the numbered spaces on the wall. They say and use numbers in play; for example, when they play games matching the numbers on the dice with the number of spaces moved using simple addition and subtraction as they move their pieces up or down. They learn about measure as they use tape measures and rulers and they measure their own heights against a row of numbered hands. Children problem solve as they competently complete puzzles and put train tracks together. They find out about capacity as they fill and empty containers during sand and the water play.

Children explore and investigate as they look closely for insects using magnifying glasses. They find 'fossils' in the sand and carefully 'clean' them with brushes, revisiting their project on dinosaurs. They have toys to help them learn about information and communication technology such as remote control cars, pretend phones and tills; however, a computer is not available in

the nursery. Children build with a range of bricks and construction sets developing their design and making skills. They develop a sense of time as they discuss the routine of the day and what happens next. Children begin to know about their own and other cultures as they acknowledge differences; for example, parents are invited into the nursery to talk about their families and visitors such as a policeman and a vet help them learn about the world around them. Children enjoy exploring media and materials such as wet and dry sand, paint and play dough which they play creatively with. Musical instruments are available and they have regular visits from a music teacher who brings in instruments and they clap patterns and rhythms to music and sing and dance. Children use their imagination as they pretend in the role play expressing and communicating their ideas. However, at times adult suggestions during art and craft activities can stifle children's creativity. Children's small muscles develop as they play with peg boards, play dough and use scissors with developing control.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are settled in the nursery and parents may stay for as long as they wish to help them settle well. Children are interested in the planned activities and often become excited as they play; for example, they were praised as they built interesting structures with octagons, then experimented as they tried to blow them down. Children have helped to make to rules so they understand them and staff use positive methods of behaviour management. As a result, they behave very well. Children are praised for their achievements which develops their self esteem. Positive images are reflected in the environment; for example, through pictures, toys, books and dolls. Children's photographs are displayed in the room so that they can revisit their experiences. They learn about the wider world as holidays and traditions from their own and other cultures are acknowledged through activities and displays. This means they learn that people have different ways of celebrating. Participation in activities such as 'red nose day' and 'children in need' teaches children about others less fortunate than themselves. Staff are good role models showing acceptance of all. A special educational needs coordinator works with outside agencies to support the nursery and help with individual educational plans as appropriate. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are greeted warmly. They are generally very happy with the care and feel that they can readily approach the staff and manager in the nursery. Parents receive a welcome pack and prospectus; however, information about the Foundation Stage is shared informally in conjunction with the Foundation Stage profile when their child turns three. Newsletters inform parents what their children are learning about and a notice board details that days activities. Parent questionnaires show that parents are aware of their children's developmental records but they do not contribute to them; however, parents receive a written progress report at the end of each year which they comment on. Information is sought from the parents when their child first begins nursery but it is not yet used in conjunction with the staff observations to help assess children's starting points. Parents are encouraged to become involved in the committee; for example, they get parents together with events such as a 'pamper evening' so they can get to know and support each other. The complaints procedure reflects some of the current guidance, but it is not clear that a parents may see the log on request or who the investigating authority is should they wish to make a complaint.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The routine is organised to include group time, free choice, adult initiated activities, snack and lunch time. The nursery operates at a high staff child ratio so children are well supported in their play. The staff deploy well; however, the pace and routine limits some opportunities for the children; for example, play is interrupted with a snack for the whole group and although opportunities are available for children to develop their independence; for example, they put on their own coats to go outside there are some missed opportunities in regard to accessing water and when staff put the toys out for them. Staff have checks to show they are suitable to be around children; however, the recruiting procedures are currently informal and have not been updated to ensure they are rigorous and robust. The induction is also informal which means staff may miss essential information; for example, child protection. All the required documentation for the safe and effective management of the setting and for the welfare and care of children are maintained and stored securely; however, some of the policies are not fully up to date.

Leadership and management is good. Staff meet together regularly to review the nursery education programme. All staff are encouraged to contribute to the planning and evaluation of activities to improve outcomes for children. There is a staff deployment routine and staff work well as a team, complimenting each other. They currently have appraisals which help to identify any training issues. Self assessments and new appraisals have been developed for future use to formalise this process. Staff participate in the nursery self- evaluation and use feedback from the parent questionnaires to improve practice. The work closely with the neighbouring school and have visited the reception class to see what they were doing to help improve their own practice in the nursery.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

After the last education inspection there were three key issues identified to improve practice. These were to develop a formal staff monitoring system and ensure children's language for thinking and vocabulary is consistently extended; monitor adult-led sessions to ensure children's individual and developmental needs are fully met through appropriate teaching methods and to fully develop children's ideas and imagination during craft activities. After the last care inspection there were two recommendations made to improve outcomes for children. These were to consider further developing the children's independence with more opportunities for independent self-selection and to ensure that policies and procedures contain the required information.

Since their last inspection the staff have attended courses about language development and extending children ideas through imagination and crafts. This has enabled to them to extend children's language and creative development. They also support the children in the activities they choose through good staff deployment. Children have opportunities to develop their own ideas as the staff no longer use work sheets and children can help themselves to craft materials to extend their creativity. Children have access to a range of toys and equipment for their independent self-selection. However, this continues to evolve as units have recently been purchased to develop this further. Some policies and procedures were updated after the last inspection; however, some updates are still required for the welfare and care of the children, some because of changes in legislation, recommendations have been made in relation to these.

## 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 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 the child protection policy details the required information and all staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues
- update the complaints procedure to reflect current legislation and ensure it is available to the parents
- continue to review the room arrangement and routine of the session to ensure children independence is promoted fully and waiting is minimised (this applies to education too)
- develop rigorous and robust recruiting procedures to ensure only the most suitable staff are employed to work with the 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):

- make the book area inviting to further encourage children to access books and increase their opportunities to write for a purpose; for example, during role play
- improve partnership with parents by reviewing procedures to ensure that they have regular opportunities to contribute to their children's developmental records.

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)