

Great Tew Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 133490 |
| Inspection date | 12 December 2007 |
| Inspector | Jenny Read |
| Setting Address | Great Tew Primary School, Great Tew, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, OX7 4DB |
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| Registered person | Great Tew 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Great Tew Pre-school has been established for over 23 years and is a voluntary group managed by a committee of parents and carers. It operates from a purpose built building within the grounds of Great Tew Primary School and has use of one room. There is an enclosed outdoor play area with covered area for all weather play. The pre-school shares the new grassed area and sand pit with the reception class and has use of the school adventure play ground for additional outdoor play. The children attend from the village of Great Tew and surrounding rural communities.

A maximum of 12 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 13 children on roll between the ages of two and five years. Of these, eight children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school is open each week day during school terms from 09.00 to 12.00 with a lunch club operating from 12.00 to 13.00. The pre-school supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The pre-school employs three members of staff. All staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of good health and hygiene practices and are beginning to develop greater independence in many areas of their personal care. For example, they know hand washing routines well and readily ask to wash their hands following messy play activities. Useful topics about how to promote their healthy well-being, and good example and regular reminders from staff are helping to reinforce children's awareness about germs and how they can prevent the spreading of infection. However, tissues are not readily available and staff wipe the children's noses for them preventing them from learning to do it for themselves. The premises are monitored successfully by staff to ensure the environment is of a good standard of cleanliness to promote children's health care needs.

Children's health is promoted because staff maintain cleanliness of the new building well and show a good understanding about the treatment for minor injuries, the administration of medication, specific allergies and any dietary needs. Systems for recording accidents are currently being changed to ensure parents are well informed about any accidents. All staff are qualified in first aid and although the written health and hygiene policies have not been reviewed and up-dated for a number of years to reflect current practice, staff demonstrate sound awareness of appropriate action to take. For example, resting children comfortably in the quiet area away from the other children when they are unwell minimises the spreading of infection while waiting for parents to collect.

Children are adequately nourished, enjoying a range of healthy fruit each day brought in by the parents. They devour the different fruit laid out on two plates in the middle of the table and most eat the food in their lunch box in the correct order. However, although children talk with each other creating a social occasion, mealtimes are chaotic and provide little learning experience for the children because they get up and down from the table, climb and go off to play mid-way through eating. The water fountain in the play room enables the children to help themselves to a drink when they are thirsty. However, boxes on the floor and organisation of the immediate area makes this difficult for the children to access.

Children benefit from daily fresh air and a number of challenges that help build on their co-ordination and physical development. They enjoy robust play in the new outdoor play area developing their pedalling and large muscle control as they negotiate obstacles along the path and gain control as they climb up the graduated steps alongside the sand pit with support from staff. However, planning for the outdoor environment is weak because it does not reflect the learning that occurs inside to enable children to make choices and does not focus on children's next steps to help them build on current skills. Occasional access to the school's playground and adventure play area provides some additional rigorous activity that allows the children to learn to move in different ways and build on their fitness. Children that are more able are beginning to recognise changes to their body following exercise through feeling their heart and discussion with staff.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

The children are not well protected from abuse or neglect. Staff have not attended or updated their child protection training, the policy does not reflect current legislation or outline procedures

if an allegation is made against a member of staff and the designated person for child protection no longer works at the setting. As a result, staff have insufficient knowledge of the types of abuse, signs and indicators and procedures to follow with any concerns to safeguard the children.

The small number of children present each day and additional parent helpers ensure children are well supervised during play indoors and out. For example, staff check the garden gates are closed, ensure children are appropriately dressed for the weather and are observant while allowing them to play outside independently. This enables the children to take risks safely. Staff are aware of the main security risks to the children and know their roles and responsibilities well in the event of a fire. However, risk assessments of the new building and outdoor area have not been completed and policies and procedures have not been updated to outline the new procedures to follow.

The use of a keypad and buzzer entry system on the main door monitors the entrance successfully. Installation of a buzzer alarm on the play room door notifies the staff and enables them to observe the arrival and departure of adults and children from the room carefully. Staff and parents work well together to safeguard the children's welfare recording clearly if collection arrangements are different and using individual security codes for each family. However, the collection procedures for four-year-old children from the reception class having their lunch in the pre-school are not secure, meaning children go home with adults unfamiliar to the staff. The attendance record does not show an accurate record of the times of arrival and departure of staff, parent helpers and visitors to the setting to show clearly who is present at any one time in the event of a fire or child protection concern.

The children show generally good awareness of the boundaries for safe play recalling with clarity each day that they do not run inside in case they fall over and hurt themselves. They are learning to keep themselves safe because clear explanations are given at all times, for instance, reminding children not to rock on their chair in case they fall back and hurt their head on the floor. Although four-year-olds in the reception class show a growing knowledge that they must make their way to the main playground, line up and listen for their name when there is a fire drill, the pre-children demonstrate no awareness of the action to take to keep themselves safe in the event of an emergency because the escape plan is not discussed or practised regularly enough.

Children play in a bright, colourful and cheerful setting where staff are giving great emphasis to making sure the new purpose built building is welcoming for the children and provides them with adequate space to move freely to activities of their choice. Defining areas, such as a quiet/book area, role play area and construction and computer area, by using coloured screens and various furniture is being trialled to utilise the compact space. However, the condensed space inside and a lack of innovation and creativity for the covered outdoor area is meaning some areas, such as graphics and mathematics and an area for children to explore and investigate natural and recyclable media, are having to double up making it difficult for the children to access different learning and play experiences when they wish.

The children select toys and play materials for themselves from a range of low-level storage units and open book shelves. This is encouraging their independence and enabling them to extend their play. Additional storage is available within the building, which allows staff to rotate the broad range of resources and play equipment on a regular basis and share play materials with the reception class.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The children enjoy experiences that offer opportunities for them to play alone, alongside their peers or to join in adult-led activities. Although, some of the younger children isolate themselves, singing and playing for most of the session by themselves. The children enjoy a satisfactory range of interesting activities and experiences that encourage their exploration of different textures, which stimulate their senses, imagination and creativity. For example, they explore the texture and smell of shaving foam and porridge oats as they squelch, squeeze and rub the mixture on their hands and pretend it is snow for the polar bears to wander through.

The younger children are gaining in confidence to become independent learners as they begin to select toys for themselves. The children are progressing at their own rate because there is a strong focus on encouraging the children to make choices in their play. However, planning using the Birth to three matters framework is basic, and observing and assessing young children's play and development is not routine, making it difficult to know where the children need to move on to plan effectively.

The staff are caring towards the children and know their individual routines and characters generally well. Staff interact and engage in the children's play appropriately, for instance, sharing books together in the quiet area. The younger children enjoy play with the construction, fuzzy felt characters and cause and effect toys, which help to stimulate their interests.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is inadequate. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is hindered by a number of significant weaknesses in teaching. Although staff have a generally good awareness of the purpose of activities, children are not sufficiently challenged because understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children move through the stepping stones is weak. As a result, planning does not radiate from the children's interests or the next steps in their learning. Consequently, a number of children lack focus and do not engage sufficiently in purposeful activity. This in turn has an impact on their behaviour and is disrupting routines and group activities. For example, staff sit with the children during circle and story time, but frequent interruptions do not help the children's concentration. Inconsistent and ineffective strategies to manage the disruptive behaviour and no involvement in being able to contribute to the planning of topics and weekly activities means the children continue to be disengaged.

Observations of children's play are not dated or routinely completed to show how achievements are made. Subsequently, assessments do not reflect an accurate record of attainment. For example, some assessments place children on the grey stepping stones, without any evidence of the children ever achieving this, whilst other assessments do not record everything that a child can do to intelligently inform and guide planning.

The children are developing some basic social skills as they separate from their parents, join in with singing and participate in the whole school Christmas celebrations. During free play the children make their own choices and show an increasing level of independence during many activities and routines, such as learning to use scissors or washing their hands. They demonstrate clear awareness of the pre-school rules and recall them readily with minimal prompts from staff. Children show pride in their achievements and respond generally well to staff involvement in their play.

Children are confident communicators, animatedly talking about their family and asking questions, for instance, 'What is a wish?' Although there is currently little print displayed in the environment to help raise children's awareness, their name cards, the days of the week and the letter of the week are clearly displayed in the quiet area. However, the children are not able to recognise the first letters of their name because their name cards are seldom used and letter sounds are introduced occasionally. They are not making sufficient progress in elements of writing because writing materials are not easily accessible. There is no specific area for children to explore making marks, to use a range of tools and practise their emergent writing in their own initiated play and staff do not challenge them to write their names on their pictures.

Children are learning to count for a purpose as they take it in turns to count the numbers of boys, girls and adults present each day, and are gaining in confidence as they count one, two, three in different languages before starting to sing. However, planned activities and daily routines for the children to compare, predict and problem solve are not consistent. Therefore children demonstrate little awareness of mathematical language, such as most, more than, least, less than. Children that are more able are beginning to recognise some numerals during number games, although some games are too advanced and children are unable to transfer their knowledge of number and find, for instance, the dog with three spots. As a result, some children lose interest and walk away.

Children enjoy planting sunflower seeds and gain good awareness of how to care for living things. They are developing good awareness of the process of change as they observe potatoes and other vegetables growing at the local farm. They dig them up, cut them up and help to make vegetable soup. Children investigate the properties of ice and water and enjoy occasional opportunities to design and make using recyclable household waste and construction materials. The children eagerly sing the day of the week song and request it in other languages, such as German but seldom talk about the date, month or season to introduce language, such as yesterday or tomorrow to help increase their practical awareness of a sense of time. Children have few opportunities to use a range of everyday technology and grapple new skills because the computer is not complete, the staff have not been trained on how to operate the interactive white board and programmable toys are very limited, rarely accessed or supported by staff.

Children have fun exploring different types of painting activities, such as paint doobers, paint pens and bubble painting during planned activities, showing interest and naming the basic colours they are using. They enjoy being creative and expressing themselves as they mould, squeeze and prod the play dough. However, because the space outside has not been planned for to date and there is limited free space inside, opportunity for the children to explore a wide range of materials each day is restricted. Children show little interest in the Santa's workshop role play area because there is little adult direction or extension of resources to develop their play and imagination. Children enjoy singing familiar songs and readily practise their Christmas songs in readiness for the whole school Christmas production.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual care needs are generally well met because staff liaise sufficiently with parents and identify specific dietary or medical requirements. Staff support children with learning difficulties and adapt activities, resources and questioning appropriately to promote inclusion. Children receive a warm welcome each day because staff greet them individually and help them to settle down to play. Children have their named pegs to help them feel a sense of belonging and readily join in the pre-school prayer and goodbye song. They are learning how

to be part of a community through forging closer links with the reception class, joining in whole school celebrations and taking part in village activities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are developing awareness of the wider world and join in celebrations throughout the year that include festivals different to their own. They play with resources that introduce them to diversity in a positive way and look at types of buildings, houses, villages and cities using maps and other resources to investigate further. Most children behave well, show some awareness of the simple house rules, for instance, no shouting, and assist staff by using the tambourine to announce tidy up time. Staff frequently praise the children's achievements and good behaviour and offer clear explanations for unacceptable behaviour. However, adults are not consistent or implement the boundaries effectively, meaning children's understanding of expected behaviour is becoming confused.

The children benefit from a relaxed, friendly approach and informal contact between their parents and staff. All parents value the staff's enthusiasm and commitment to the children and feel the new play leader has made positive improvements within the pre-school. They receive useful information about the setting through the parent prospectus, a 'take away' copy of the policies and procedures and half termly newsletters about events and pre-school news. Although the policies and procedures do not contain up-to-date and accurate information to inform parents. Staff engage in conversations with parents and share general information on request. Termly parent helper duty enables parents to observe their children at play and provides additional support for staff.

The partnership with parents and carers is inadequate. They receive useful information about the six areas of learning in the prospectus and details about the number, shape and colour of the week through the newsletter. This enables the parents to talk with their child about some aspects of their learning. However, several parents speak of their lack of knowledge about the education programme and their children's progress. The recent introduction of a parents' evening to share information about children's learning has been greatly received by parents, but staff's current weakness in their knowledge about their key children's next steps and inaccurate information in children's assessments, means parents do not receive an accurate picture of their children's on-going progress and development.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The operational plan is not complete and most policies and procedures have not been reviewed or updated since 2005. Subsequently, many do not provide sufficient information about steps the pre-school will take to safeguard children's health, safety and welfare and most do not reflect current legislation to adequately inform the staff, parents and committee. As a result, staff have little awareness about child protection, and rigorous recruitment and robust vetting and induction procedures are not in place to protect the children and ensure they are cared for by suitable adults who are healthy and have relevant experience, skills and knowledge. The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The implementation of new appraisal records to monitor staff's development and a clear agenda for staff meetings provides staff with an opportunity to contribute to the planning and to share information about their key children. However, the education programme does not link closely to the children to help them build on what they already know and can do. Staff are generally well qualified in childcare and are eager to attend additional training to improve their knowledge,

with particular regard to the Foundation Stage training to improve their knowledge of how children move through the stepping stones at the appropriate time.

The new staff team work well together and have a strong focus on providing a happy atmosphere throughout. Deployment of staff throughout the session ensures that appropriate numbers of adults care for the children. The staff store confidential information appropriately and most regulatory documentation is in place. However, not all information about the children, their parents and written permissions is in place for all children in line with the requirements of registration.

The leadership and management of the setting is inadequate. The scant operational plan and the committee's lack of knowledge of the National Standards and education provision means support for the pre-school is ineffective. As a result, previous areas for development have not been addressed, consequently, there has been minimal progress since the last inspection. There are currently no systems in place to monitor and observe the care and education of the children. Subsequently, there are gaps in the children's learning. For example, the use of indoor and outdoor space to enhance children's experiences and careful grouping of the children to meet their individual needs is weak. The new play leader is a positive role model, motivated and very enthusiastic in her approach to address the areas for improvement and develop greater links with the committee and reception class.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection recommended the provider carried out risk assessments of the outdoor area and entrance area and devised a written procedure in the event a child was lost. The setting has made little progress in completing and updating risk assessments to ensure the premises are secure and play areas safe for the children. The lost child policy is detailed and clearly outlines procedures to follow to safeguard the children.

At the last nursery education inspection, the provider was asked to: extend the planning and ensure information gained was used to plan the next steps in children's learning; develop more opportunities for children to progress with their writing and become familiar with letter shapes and sounds; explore ways for parents to become involved in their child's learning; and to establish methods to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the setting. The pre-school has made little progress in all areas to monitor the education provision and enhance children's learning and development.

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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- regularly review the operational plan to ensure it covers all aspects of care and so that policies and procedures reflect current practice and legislation to safeguard children's health, safety and welfare
- ensure that all records relating to the day care, children and parents are in place and monitored regularly in line with the requirements of registration
- improve knowledge of child protection and ensure that the child protection procedure complies with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
- assess all the risks to children and ensure these are regularly monitored and reviewed and take positive action to ensure the safe collection of all children

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- improve the observation and assessment systems to ensure they link closely to inform planning and children's next steps so that they may build on prior knowledge at the appropriate time
- develop staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage and stepping stones and ensure topics and activities radiate from the children's interests to enable them to engage in purposeful play
- develop systems for monitoring the quality of the education provision and evaluating its impact so that management of behaviour and organisation of routines and group times are utilised effectively so that children may reach their full potential
- develop the information to parents about the Foundation Stage curriculum so that they may understand more fully how their children progress through the stepping stones and ensure details about on-going progress is accurate and up-to-date so that parents can contribute to their children's learning.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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