

Wildground Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY248375
Inspection date	27 November 2007
Inspector	Clare Moore
Setting Address	Wildground County Infant School, Crete Road, Southampton, Hampshire, SO45 4JX
Telephone number	07799 588117
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Registered person	The Trustees of Wildground 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 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?

Wildground Pre-school was registered in 2002. It is managed by a voluntary parent committee. It operates from a classroom with adjoining kitchen, toilets and storage facilities in part of Wildground Infant School in the village of Dibden Purlieu. A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The setting opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are on Monday to Friday from 09:00 until 11:30 and 12:40 until 15:10 except on Friday afternoons.

There are currently 37 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 27 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and also welcomes children who speak English as an additional language.

There are nine staff who work with the children; of these six of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's awareness of how to promote their health is raised through discussions about different foods, exploring what changes take place in their bodies during exercise and finding out about how to look after their teeth. They show curiosity and interest as they taste a variety of different foods using additional senses to consider texture and smell. They find out how to care for their teeth and they notice the change in their bodies when they run around, get hot and increase their heart rate. At snack time they enjoy a selection of fresh fruits such as pineapple and papaya, plain biscuits and also dried papaya. They are well hydrated as they have a choice of water or milk to drink at snack times and water is available for them, on request, at any time.

Children are protected from the risk of infection as the setting has clear routines to cover cleaning of equipment, resources and the tables during sessions. They wash their hands as they come in after enjoying some time outside which helps them to develop their personal hygiene skills. The sickness policy is shared with parents, and children who may carry the risk of passing on an illness are excluded. Children can be treated in the event of an emergency as all the staff hold current first aid qualifications and permission to seek emergency medical treatment or advice have been requested.

Children benefit from frequent opportunities to enjoy the outdoors and take exercise. They use the extensive equipment in the school playground where they can climb, balance and scramble which helps to keep them fit; for example they enjoy using wheeled toys such as scooters and tricycles which help them to co-ordinate steering and pedalling, and also play with balls, hoops and foam javelins to practise throwing and catching.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The setting is secure as the doors are locked at all times. Colourful displays of children's work, the letter and colour of the week board and easily accessible storage and activities make the environment inviting for the children.

Children find out about keeping themselves safe as practitioners are constantly alert to danger and explain risk clearly to the children. For example children find out that chairs need to have all four legs on the ground or else they could tip over and cause an injury. In addition they understand that they must walk indoors and also sometimes outside when the paths are slippery because of the rain. Children learn about road safety when a police officer visits and talks to them about crossing roads, looking and listening for traffic. This is extended by the staff who involve the children in setting up a role-play making up a roadway and a crossing. They find out about fire safety, what to do if there is a fire and how to leave the building by the nearest safe exit in a calm and efficient way. They are briefed informally before a planned evacuation is initiated which helps them to understand the process and also to be more confident.

Children are protected in the setting as there are daily written risk assessments on the premises and the resources both inside and out. On occasion staff take the children out locally to, for example collect leaves and fir cones. This is risk assessed in advance and there are always staff or volunteers in the classroom as back-up at these times.

Children are safeguarded as staff are well trained and confident about the procedures. New staff are inducted in this area as a priority. Parent notice boards have charts displaying information about protecting children from abuse and reference materials are stored at the setting. Practitioners are clear about what to record and also how to keep confidential records.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled and enjoy their time at the pre-school. They are warmly welcomed on an individual basis as they arrive. Younger children do well because staff are knowledgeable about the 'Birth to three matters' framework and use this to track progress and also for ideas. For example they take part in a food tasting activity exploring all the senses and use a 'feely bag' as a further sensory experience. During the first term children are helped to settle in as both they and the staff get to know each other. This is enabled through a topic where children use photos and tree diagrams to explore their families, pets and make this a starting point to talk about interests, likes and dislikes. This helps to lay the foundations for the setting to provide activities that will engage the children right from the start. All children are entranced as the staff blow bubbles in the playground and they gaze in wonder, chase after them and pop them with their hands.

Nursery Education

The quality of the teaching and learning is good. Practitioners work together to plan the curriculum and evaluate the activities on a continuous basis. They use the observations and assessments they make during sessions to set the next steps and ensure there are challenges at the right level for all the children. They encourage the children through praise and recognition for their efforts. They demonstrate their knowledge of the Foundation Stage of learning through linking the six areas of learning to the plans, asking considered questions and provided an exciting and varied programme.

Children separate from their parents with confidence and are eagerly engaged and enthusiastic in learning as they explore ice, how it melts and is transformed into water. They make friends and help each other, for example setting out chairs with the coats on to make it easier for them to be independent and manage to put on their outdoor clothes themselves.

They develop their language and expand their vocabulary using new words such as 'combine harvester' which they play with in the farm set and hear about when they share a story. They use descriptive words when they talk about how the ice cubes feel as they melt and compare it to the warm water. They enjoy stories in large and small groups becoming involved as the storyteller draws them in asking questions about the pictures and what happens next. They develop writing skills using paint brushes, pencils and other tools as they apply paint, make marks and explore stencils. They find out about reading their names when they select their name card supported with a picture as they arrive, and about linking letters to sounds as they play a computer game.

Children start to consider number in rhymes and as they count up the number of plates they need for snack time. They explore size as they make sausages from play-dough and compare large with small and different lengths as they are measured and marked up on the height chart. They consider space as they talk about making a circle for the cars to go around. They think about how two dimensional shapes link up as they match them up and make new ones when they position geometrical pieces together.

Children find out about technology as they operate the computers with staff support. Practitioners work closely with them showing them how to operate the mouse and talking them through choosing the game they would like and through letter and sound activities. Children show an interest in the outside as they experience the seasons looking at the changing colours of the autumn leaves, noticing how some trees shed leaves for the winter. They show an interest in living things through finding and observing mini-beasts; for example they use a magnifier to examine worms and a snail. They thoroughly enjoy a visit from the 'zoo lab' when they see and feel a snake, a tortoise and guinea-pigs.

They have frequent opportunities to explore and investigate showing delight in squeezing and manipulating the black play-dough, using icing bags fitted with nozzles to squeeze out icing, exploring sand, sawdust, water and ice. They also experiment with artificial snow in the water tray and in the builders tray with resources that represent the marine environment such as whales, dolphins a lighthouse and ships.

Children develop the control they need to execute fine muscle movements through a range of activities, for example threading and lacing pictures, using a hole punch, cutting out with scissors, sowing seeds and positioning the figures on the world map. In addition they draw around templates, do a rubbing across the recessed letters to produce a copy and use knives to chop vegetables to make a wholesome soup. They use glue spreaders as they drizzle glue on transparent plastic, then glitter shakers to scatter the glitter on to the pattern they have made.

Children explore colour as they match cubes to bears and mix paints to do marbled pictures using marbles and different sized balls. They use their imagination when they help to make an igloo for the role play set. However although children have opportunities to develop role play in a variety of ways this does not feature strongly at the current time. Children experiment with paint and pattern as they use cut vegetables to make a selection of prints. They respond to their experiences fascinated as they feel the foil wrapped ice cube parcel and discover that it is soft as a result of having melted. They explore rhyme and rhythm with gusto as they take part in choosing and using a variety of musical percussion instruments and produce sounds that reflect calm and stormy weather. They enjoy favourite songs and action rhymes making requests to take on the roles they like best.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children begin to develop a positive attitude to difference as they start the term with a topic about themselves and their families which highlights differences and similarities. They explore where and how other people across the world live, for example in an igloo or in hot countries. Individual children's needs are met as practitioners talk to parents about their children and through planning make sure the curriculum is adapted to help children achieve their maximum potential. They also use observations and discussion with the children to find out about interests.

Children's behaviour is very good. They are mostly co-operative because practitioners know them well and anticipate times when those who struggle could become restless and agitated. Children are supported and diverted skilfully as practitioners are calm, speak clearly, listen to children's concerns and use carefully considered behaviour management strategies. Children willingly help to tidy up when they hear the music being played which signals that it is time to put the toys away. They are encouraged to help each other, for example with outdoor clothes. They find out about taking turns and use the giant sand timer to help support this during

popular activities such as using the computer. They sing a song of thanks as they sit down for their snack. Staff act as good role models thanking children for being kind and when they help to tidy up. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children with special needs are supported very well. Each child has an individual practitioner allocated to them who works together with the team, parents and outside agencies such as Portage for further expertise. Together they draw up an individual plan with small steps to help children to build on achievements and move forward. They keep each other informed about progress which helps children to gain confidence, build self esteem and to achieve targets.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are invited in to an evening of introduction to find out how the pre-school is run and what their children do. Further information is available through the prospectus, parent welcome pack, termly newsletters, the notice board and invitations at the end of the year to discuss progress reports. Parents are involved through the parent committee and also the parent rota. They are also engaged in their children's learning as they work together with the key workers on various aspects, for example holding a pencil and practicing stencilling at home, reading at home using books from the pre-school lending scheme and discussing topics such as road safety and wearing seat belts. The poster inviting comments or complaints is clearly displayed and parents have a very good relationship with the staff finding them approachable and professional.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide. Changes in staff and also committee members are clearly notified in writing. However there are gaps between when existing committee members resign and the applications for the new committee are received by Ofsted to initiate the checks.

The leadership and management are good. The staff team work well together meeting each week to share their knowledge, evaluate and plan. They also communicate before, after and sometimes during sessions on an informal basis. New staff go through a thorough induction process and volunteer parents and work placement students receive guidance on their roles and responsibilities. The staff are all very committed, hard working and enthusiastic. They are keen to attend the necessary training courses to continue to update and build on their knowledge and skills. In addition all staff and committee members have job descriptions with ongoing support and annual appraisals. The practitioners work together with other settings, the school and outside agencies for advice and further expertise. The pre-school uses a key-worker system and the key-workers put together the observations, samples of work and photographs to keep children's individual files up to date. They then transfer this information to the children's record of achievement.

The space is organised well so that children can access all the activities. Staff spend the majority of their time interacting with and supporting the children which helps them to feel confident, secure and encourages learning and development.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment and to review policies and procedures. The

permissions are now in place and the policies are reviewed and updated on a rolling basis. This helps to promote children's welfare.

At the last education inspection they were asked to increase opportunities for children to make marks and write and to develop the use of music. They now make pens or pencils available more often and children enjoy music and movement. This helps children to develop their imagination and literacy skills.

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 the committee making up the registered person and nominated person are checked at all times and are fully notified to Ofsted to ensure continuity of responsibility for the provision.

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 role play area to enhance children's opportunities to use their imagination.

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