

Windmill Under 5s

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY285935
Inspection date	15 February 2008
Inspector	Jenny Read
Setting Address	Lacey Green Sports and Social Club, Main Road, Lacey Green, Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire, HP27 0PL
Telephone number	07821 554343 9115pm
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Registered person	Windmill Under 5's
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?

Windmill Under 5s' Pre-school is a charity and run by a committee of parents and carers in the rural village of Lacey Green on the outskirts of Princes Risborough. The pre-school opened at the sports pavilion premises in 2004 but has been operating for 40 years. The pre-school has use of the main hall, kitchen and small inner lobby. There is an enclosed outdoor patio and bark play area. They have use of the playing field and local play park as additional play space.

A maximum of 24 children aged between two and five years may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 31 children on roll. Of these, 22 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.15 to 11.45 during school terms. A lunch club operates from 11.45 to 13.15. Children attend from the local community and surrounding areas. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre-school employs four staff, two of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a level 2 qualification. The pre-school receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a clean and well maintained environment because staff thoroughly clean the toilets, kitchen and play areas each day and regularly wipe the tables with anti-bacterial spray to minimise the spreading of germs. They learn to understand simple good health and hygiene practices, such as helping to clear up spillages on the table with paper towels. They easily access tissues to blow their noses and readily throw them in the bin to prevent the spreading of germs and infection. Children are gaining a thorough understanding of their personal care and describe knowingly how germs will make them poorly. They use a step to visit the adult-sized toilets and sinks to wash their hands independently and access the paper towels. However, hand washing routines are not regularly monitored or reinforced during free play and not all staff wash their hands after returning from the school run and before lunch to set a good example.

Most staff have an up-to-date first aid qualification. There are two fully stocked first aid boxes available in the play room and when playing outside for use in the event of any minor injuries. Accidents are recorded in a book and most are countersigned by parents to enable them to provide appropriate treatment for their child at home. Children receive appropriate care if they are ill and staff are awaiting training on the administration of an Epi-pen to ensure children's medical needs are met. Staff demonstrate good awareness of the accessible health and safety policy and ensure written consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for all children is in place. However, permission from parents to enable staff to administer the Epi-pen if required to particular children with an identified allergy is not in place.

Children enjoy a selection of healthy, nutritious snacks throughout the week, such as carrot sticks, raisins and rice cakes. These are mainly provided by parents with clear direction given about what to provide through notices displayed on the parent notice board. Children help themselves to a drink of water from the jug during free play indoors and out, and practise pouring their water or milk at snack time. This ensures children are well hydrated. The displaying of a child's photograph with a detailed description of their allergy or dietary requirement in the kitchen area and in the child's individual record, together with the staff's very good awareness ensures children receive appropriate care. Even though children do not take an active part in meal time routines, such as helping to prepare their food or lay the tables, staff sit with the children and encourage discussion about their day and events in their lives. A number of children attend the lunch club and place their lunch containers in the box in the entrance area. Occasional guidance is given to parents about providing appropriate cool bags to ensure their lunch is kept cool and fresh.

Children enjoy sufficient opportunities for daily fresh air and exercise, which contributes to their healthy well-being. Although the setting is conducive to free-flowing indoor and outdoor play because the door opens directly onto the enclosed patio and additional bark area, this is seldom available or planned. The children have fun exploring the local play park and cricket field where they build on fitness and develop their large muscle skills as they manoeuvre up the climbing net, use the swing and slide and join in organised sports day events. They gain awareness of a sense of space and learn to move their bodies in different ways as they join in 'Sticky Kids' and 'Funky Foot Prints' music and movement sessions and define their co-ordination and small motor skills as they use tools in the sand and water and learn to thread a range of objects.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children are not sufficiently protected from abuse and neglect because staff demonstrate basic awareness of the signs and indicators to look for and little awareness of the procedures to follow with any child protection concern. For example, staff are clear about their responsibility to report any concern to their line manager but are unclear about the content of the setting's child protection policy regarding current referral procedures. The child protection policy includes information about the types of abuse and steps to take. However, the policy does not include accurate details about the regulation to inform Ofsted if an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff. Consequently, staff and members of the committee do not know the procedure to follow to safeguard and protect the children's welfare.

Children have access to a welcoming environment that is very bright and airy. They have ample space to play in comfort and children move freely to defined spaces, such as reading, writing, role play and mathematical areas. Numerous posters are lent up against the windows to decorate the room and staff make the best of the restrictions about using the walls by displaying some of the children's pictures on the windows, to reinforce the welcoming atmosphere and celebrate the efforts of the children attending. The children benefit from a safe and very useful outdoor play area, which is divided into an enclosed patio and bark area with climbing apparatus.

There is a good range of generally well maintained play materials available. Although, a suitable chair for children to use the computer is not available meaning children are having to stand and kneel and strain their neck to view the computer screen. Children readily access the nicely presented activities and resources set out by staff each day. Books and writing implements are stored invitingly on low shelves and in an attractive train shaped book unit where children can help themselves and sit comfortably on the cushions. Although children are unable to select other resources for themselves, children that are more able are confident to ask staff for additional items to extend their play.

Children play in a safe, secure setting because staff are vigilant and implement safe procedures. For example, collection procedures are well known and understood and a member of staff welcomes all children and parents at the door. Padlocks are secure on outside gates, the main door is locked and the stair gate shut at all times. This prevents the children from leaving unsupervised and adults gaining entry to the setting without staff knowledge. Persons present at the setting are monitored generally well because most parents sign their children in and out each day, staff record their actual times of arrival and departure and all visitors are immediately requested to complete the visitors' book. Useful risk assessments and daily checklists ensure hazards to children are effectively minimised, although children do not contribute to the assessments to help raise their awareness of potential hazards.

Children display a generally good understanding of how to keep themselves safe because staff offer explanations for safe play some of the time and ask questions during discussion. For example, they recall how they do not run inside in case they fall. However, children show little awareness of how to keep themselves safe in an emergency because the fire drill only takes place once a term. Consequently, children attending on different days do not take part or learn safe action to take.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are happy and settle well because staff greet them warmly on arrival and supervise their play appropriately. Although some whole group times are not relevant for the younger children, they play co-operatively alongside their peers and are building good relationships. As a result they are beginning to show confidence in linking up with others. Children talk happily with staff while making Mother's Day cards and trinket boxes and excitedly join in singing familiar songs and pre-school rhymes.

Children readily make choices in their play, selecting when they wish to take part in the adult-led activities. They enjoy a range of messy play activities that encourage exploration of their senses. For example, they investigate a range of painting materials and explore their senses as they squeeze, prod, roll and manipulate the play dough, jelly and shaving foam. However, there is no focus for the younger children on the planning because staff have weak understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and how to implement it. As a result, assessments for the younger children are completed against the Foundation Stage, meaning the focus of activities and experiences are not directly linked to the younger children.

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. Planning is not effective because staff lack experience, training and understanding of how to meet children's individual needs. As a result, challenges for children are not sufficient and weekly planning and learning intentions are often repeated. Innovative ideas for children to learn about numbers, colour, shape and pencil control through play are lacking because staff focus significantly on formal work sheets.

Staff have no awareness of children's next steps in their learning because although observations inform their individual assessments, these do not link to the planning. As a result, differentiation on the planning is not specific or clear to inform staff. Although the planning covers most areas of learning generally well and short term plans focus on specific learning intentions, these have no bearing on the children attending. As a result, there are many gaps in the children's learning, including letters and sounds, thinking and communication, calculating and a sense of time. In addition, circle time and periods after meals are not utilised effectively, meaning children wander aimlessly with little direction.

Children are mostly interested and show an increasing level of independence in selecting and carrying out activities. They are developing good social skills as they ask their peers if they would like to sit next to them at lunch club and respond well to staff's frequent praise. As a result, most children are generally well behaved. Good use of props during story time engages the children, although this time is not consistently well planned. Children have several opportunities to recognise their name in print, such as on their coat peg and cubicle for their pictures and when staff hold up name cards to indicate who can go to wash their hands ready for snack time. Children make marks in the role play to make lists but are not consistently encouraged to write their names on their pictures to practise their emergent writing. The letter of the week is displayed, however, staff rarely refer to this, meaning children gain little awareness of letters and sounds.

Good enjoy counting with a purpose as they loosely count the number of children present each day or how many straws are in the dough. However, calculating numbers of boys and girls present each day and opportunities to recognise numerals in print are missed because staff name the numerals for the children. Children match colours and size using care bears. Less experienced staff know the purpose of activities and readily encourage the children when making butterfly prints with the paint. However, discussion and questioning about shapes, symmetry and use of additional mathematical language does not take place to extend children's learning. Children are beginning to problem solve during play, finding the appropriate curved pieces to make the train track link up.

Children enjoy a range of activities that actively raise their sensory experiences, including observing what happens to the ice as it melts. They design and make models using manufactured construction sets and household recyclable materials including wood, fabric and shiny materials. Children talk about different textures in the feely bag and think about what resources and materials to use to make tambourines. However, information and communication technology is not available everyday and equipment to enable the children to use the computer safely is not sufficient. Children operate the oversized child mouse with growing control as they manoeuvre through simple programmes.

Children show interest in a suitable range of creative activities that stimulate their interests. For example, the planning and photographs show children explore the properties of clay, noodles and paint indoors and outdoors. They use their imagination generally well in their role play, for example, taking on roles in the restaurant, toy shop, optician, office and dressing up shop.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and treated as individuals because staff work closely with parents to complete all paperwork and obtain detailed information about children's medical and dietary needs. Consequently, staff know the children and provide appropriate care. The children are happy, settled and readily join in the pre-school songs. Some children proudly wear their pre-school logo tee-shirts and sweat tops, which helps them feel a sense of belonging. The setting supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The special needs co-ordinator has attended relevant training and successfully identifies children's needs and is developing her confidence regarding implementing appropriate strategies to address areas of concern.

Children gain good awareness of the wider world, benefiting from a broad range of planned activities and resources that help them value diversity. They celebrate Chinese New Year by making lanterns and rat masks relating to the Chinese New Year symbol and set up a Chinese restaurant in the role play area. However, staff do not utilise the cultural backgrounds of the children attending the setting to help them feel special, for example, sharing experiences about different food, clothing and learning new languages. Children begin to learn about their local community through visits to the village hall, school and local church during Harvest festival and enjoy visitors to the setting during specific topic work. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children are confident and know the routines well. They discuss the agreed rules of acceptable behaviour at the beginning of each academic year but rarely refer to them to help reinforce ground rules. Children are beginning to learn about right and wrong because staff are calm, positive and implement effective strategies to manage children's behaviour. Children understand and respond positively to the use of timers to support turn taking, for example on the computer

or ride on vehicles in the garden. As a result, most children are co-operative, helpful and assist with tidying away the resources when they hear the music.

Children benefit from the strong community feel within the setting and the friendly and informal contact between their parents and the staff. Parents praise the dedication of the staff and feel they are able to be actively involved in the group through social evenings, the 'DIY day' and parent helper duty. They value the pre-school website and email system to keep them well informed of relevant matters. The parent prospectus, termly newsletters and notice boards in the entrance area provide useful information about the setting.

The partnership with parents and carers is inadequate. Although a photograph display of the six areas of learning is displayed along with the termly topic sheet and weekly plans, explanations about what these mean for their child are not shared or well known. For example, parents ask, "What does creative development mean?" Parents value the information displayed at the setting and sent to them via email about the topics and letter and colour of the week. This enables parents and carers to talk with their child and be involved in their development both at the setting and at home. Although parents understand they can look at their child's profile at any time, they receive no information about the stepping stones and how their children progress through the different stages. Staff are not fully aware about where children are at on the stepping stones or their next steps to provide useful information to parents about their children's on-going progress so that they may effectively support their children's learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The leadership and management of the setting is inadequate. Since the previous supervisor left the setting in July 2007 the deputy agreed to take on the role on a temporary basis to prevent the setting from closing down until a suitable leader was appointed. However, a lack of management experience and training means knowledge of how to make improvements with the education provision are not known. As a result, the planning does not sufficiently challenge or enhance children's interests and individual learning needs. There is clearly no vision for the education provision and the committee recognise they have been going through an interim phase waiting for a new supervisor to commence. Consequently, the setting lacks effective leadership and systems to monitor the planning, activities and assessments are inadequate leaving many gaps in children's learning.

Staff are very committed to the children and the pre-school and work generally well as a team to provide a relaxed, friendly environment. The committee fund on-going training for the staff and recognise the shortfall in training for the acting supervisor. Training tracking sheets help to plan and highlight required training, however, termly reviews and staff appraisals have not been completed during this interim period to monitor staff's on-going suitability. In addition, training completed on the Birth to three matters framework has not been well understood or implemented to enhance children's experiences. The staff feel supported by the committee and value the regular visits to the setting to help support them through this difficult period. The close links forged with the local school promote successful transition for the older children. A number of reception class children who attend the school on a part-time basis access the lunch club, happily integrating with the younger children.

Children benefit from careful organisation of play areas and some resources to encourage independent learning because staff arrive early to the setting to set out the room and ensure it is inviting and ready to receive children. Although the setting is beginning to monitor their

practice through yearly questionnaires, this does not reflect on the education provision. The operational plan is not complete meaning a number of procedures and regulatory policies are not in place or contain sufficient detail to support their work. Although there are no formal recruitment and induction procedures in place, the committee express a strong commitment to recruiting suitable staff with relevant experience and skills for the advertised post. Vetting procedures are satisfactory for staff, although procedures to ensure staff are medically suitable are not in place.

The regulator has not been informed of relevant changes and matters regarding the supervisor and new committee members. In addition knowledge of many of the regulations is weak to promote children's safety and welfare. Regulatory records and information are in place, although some are not consistently shared with parents. Children's and staff's records are stored securely and confidentially because they have an individual named folder in a lockable filing cabinet. The provider does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection recommended the provider increased the range and availability of resources that promote diversity and extended the child protection policy to include if an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff. Children play with an extensive range of resources that reflect positive images of other cultures. The child protection policy includes a statement about the procedures to follow if an allegation is made, however, it does not include sufficient detail and staff and the committee demonstrate no awareness of the regulation to report any allegations to Ofsted.

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, which parents may see on request. The 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:

- extend the child protection policy and ensure the procedures to follow if an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff are well known and understood

- improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations and set in place a procedure to notify Ofsted of relevant matters
- develop the operational plan to ensure policies and procedures relating to all aspects of the setting are in place and well known and ensure that all records relating to day care are shared and signed by parents.

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 staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage
- plan a stimulating curriculum that covers all areas of development with clear learning outcomes relevant to the children and provide opportunities for children to contribute to the planning to ensure they are appropriately challenged and engaged
- improve systems for monitoring the quality of the nursery education provision and evaluating its impact, especially in relation to the progress of more able and less able children
- develop methods to inform parents of the Foundation Stage, stepping stones and their children's on-going progress.

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