

Walney Central Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	317622
Inspection date	03 December 2007
Inspector	Sandra Elizabeth Williams
Setting Address	The Old Police House, Central Drive, Walney Island, BARROW-IN-FURNESS, Cumbria, LA14 3HY
Telephone number	01229 470 051
E-mail	
Registered person	Walney Central Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

Walney Central Pre-School opened in May 1972. It operates from a detached bungalow on Walney Island adjacent to the town of Barrow-in-Furness in Cumbria. The pre-school consists of a playroom, a computer room and a reading room. It also has toilets and a kitchen. There is access to two fully enclosed outside play areas. The pre-school is close to local amenities such as shops, library, parks, playgrounds and schools. The facility serves the local communities of Walney Island, Barrow-in-Furness and surrounding areas.

The childcare facility is registered for 24 children. There are currently 29 children from two to five years on roll, which includes 16 funded children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The facility supports children with learning difficulties. There are no children currently on roll who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school opens five days a week during school term-times. Sessions are from 09.15 to 15.15. A play scheme usually runs for two afternoons for four weeks in the summer holidays.

There are seven staff who work with the children all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children demonstrate a good understanding of simple health and hygiene practices and are learning to take responsibility for their own self-care routines. For example, they use the toilet independently and wash their own hands using the easily accessible soap and paper towels or hand dryer provided. Children are very well protected from infection because the sick child policy is widely available and well adhered to. All of the staff hold current first aid certificates which further supports children's health and safety. There are three first aid kits available, however, some of the contents are out of date and have not as yet been replaced.

Children are very well nourished and enjoy healthy snacks such as bananas, apples and raisins. They learn about healthy eating by helping to grow their own vegetables from seed in the garden. They really enjoy planting the seeds and watering the plants, watching them grow into vegetables, such as runner beans, onions, potatoes and leeks. When the vegetables are ready the children relish the opportunity to dig them out of the soil and taste them raw and then cooked. They make stew and soup and also make their own bread to enjoy at snack time. The children also enjoy growing tomatoes in hanging baskets which are attractively displayed in the playground. The staff are very vigilant about ensuring that children with allergies or intolerances to certain foods are protected.

Children take part in regular physical activity both indoors and outdoors. There is a great emphasis upon the importance of children receiving plenty of fresh air and exercise. They have access to the outdoor play area whatever the weather because they have wellies and rain coats available to wear if it is raining or even snowing. They move with confidence and coordination as they take part in action songs and aerobics. The children show a good awareness of personal space as they make space for themselves to stretch up high whilst pretending to be a Jack-in-a-box. Their fine motor skills are developing well as they carefully use scissors and glue sticks to make Christmas decorations.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment that is extremely welcoming and safe, vibrant and exciting. The facility is exceptionally attractive and homely due to the hard work and effort of the staff. The walls are covered with children's attractive art work and the Christmas tree is superbly decorated with the children's home made decorations. This positively supports the children's sense of belonging in this home from home environment. Clearly identified areas of play are arranged, such as the role-play corner, the computer room and the reading corner. Activities and resources are very invitingly presented at floor and low-level which ensures children are interested and motivated to become involved.

Safety is given very high priority. For example, staff ensure that they supervise children's arrival and departure extremely carefully and ensure that the door and gates are always securely closed. The staff work very well together to ensure that regular risk assessments are carried out to address all areas of potential concern that may impact on children's continued safety and well-being. Children learn about keeping themselves safe by following their own rules displayed on the wall, such as no running, no pushing and no snatching. They also learn about road safety and stranger danger whilst on outings and through discussions with staff and visits

from the local police officers. Fire safety is also taught, through regular emergency evacuation practices. Children are very well protected because staff fully understand their important role in protecting them from abuse and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice if needed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very excited and enthusiastic when they arrive at pre school. They enjoy very positive relationships with staff, who greet them warmly. Children are very confident and show great interest in all they do. For example, they spend lots of time creating wonderful Christmas decorations and party hats using colourful paints and glitter. Children frequently use their initiatives. The free play sessions encourage them to continually make many choices in their play. They freely link up with friends and move from one activity to another. The children love dressing up in beautiful dresses and pretend to be princesses. Staff are implementing the 'Birth to three matters' framework to support them in their planning and assessment of the younger children under three years. They are clearly and successfully linking this to the Foundation Stage to show natural progression in children's development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress as the staff are clearly very familiar with the Foundation Stage. This is very evident in their written planning, that links very well to the stepping stones over time. Focused activities are evaluated and observations are made about the progress of all children. This information is used effectively to aid future planning for individual children, and ensures that appropriate challenges are set so that all children make progress. Staff use questioning appropriately, which extends the children's learning. Children are fully able to engage themselves in activities of their own choosing for extended periods of time. This is particularly evident in the creative area and in the computer area. They frequently initiate positive interactions with others. For example, they approach staff and confidently ask them questions or provide information about what they are doing.

Children are able to concentrate, actively listen to others and develop their language for thinking during a discussion with staff about one boy's trip to a local park to hunt for Father Christmas. Children develop their self confidence as they stand up in front of their friends and sing songs and count children. They regularly have opportunities to use writing as a means of recording as they access a full range of mark-making resources, such as paper, pencils and their own individual white boards. Some children proudly and enthusiastically demonstrate to the inspector how they can write their names on their white boards. Children regularly access the quiet reading area, where they sit comfortably on the cushions and enjoy looking at their favourite books. The children are developing skills in linking sounds to letters, however, this is not currently being practised on a very regular basis.

Children have many opportunities for counting and problem solving. They count how many boys and girls there are at registration and they are able to decide whether there are more boys than girls. They are also able to recognise shapes and they enjoy completing jigsaws. There are numbers as labels in their environment as well as number games, which mean that they have lots of opportunities to learn to recognise numerals. Children can reliably count up to 14.

A real strength of this setting is the staff's enthusiasm to encourage children to explore their environment and natural and living things. The children learn about wild life as they feed the birds and grow plants and vegetables. They also explore and experiment with different malleable substances. They marvel at the pretend snow that they make from special powder. They describe how it feels and what changes happen when water is added. They learn about their local area as they identify features such as the bridge that links the island to the main land. They construct with a purpose as they use large wooden blocks to recreate the bridge when they return from their outing. Children have unlimited access to a computer which is conveniently located in a small room adjacent to the main play room. This means that their opportunities to develop their skills in this area are good. Another strength of this setting is the emphasis on creative and messy play. This provides children with wonderful opportunities to express themselves using many different mediums including paints, play dough and gloop to name but a few.

Overall, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals given their starting points.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel a sense of belonging and are able to make a positive contribution due to the warm and friendly welcome they receive as soon as they arrive at the group. Staff are particularly cheerful and enthusiastic, and children's peers are genuinely pleased to greet them. Children have plenty of opportunities to learn about different cultures and religions due to the interesting range of resources and activities provided by the staff. The children are currently enjoying the opportunities to learn Spanish, French and German words. Children also learn about their own community and make a positive contribution. For example, they visit the elderly people in the residential home next door and sing for them. They also take part in charity events, such as planting daffodil bulbs in the park in aid of cancer research.

Children with learning difficulties are welcome to attend the group and the staff are very aware of the importance of working closely with parents and other agencies to support children's individual needs. The staff have undertaken training in Makaton as a means of communication. Children are very well aided by staff to understand responsible behaviour. The staff act as excellent role models and they are calm and gentle in their own approach, addressing each other politely and respectfully. Behaviour issues are managed using entirely suitable strategies which children fully accept. These are totally in line with the written behaviour management policy, using appropriate explanations at a level children understand. Children are helped to develop self-esteem and respect for others as they actively listen to each other at group times. This also helps them learn successfully about the needs of others. They are regularly praised and encouraged by staff which makes them feel good about themselves and develop a strong sense of self. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children are cared for by staff who work very closely and successfully with parents to meet their individual needs. Relationships are warm and friendly, and verbal communication is clearly very good as informal conversations about children's care take place as parents drop off and collect their children. Parents express their complete satisfaction with the care and education provided for their children.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are actively involved in the initial assessments of their children's starting points and are consulted and receive feedback throughout the time that their children spend at the group. They have free access to their children's

assessment records and informally discuss their children's progress with the staff on a regular basis. Parents receive very well presented information about the educational curriculum via the display boards, and are provided with ideas of how they can support their children's learning at home, for example, reading books. Their views are sought via questionnaires, which result in very positive responses. Parents are provided with written reports about their children's progress as well as a CD containing numerous photographs of their children undertaking different activities throughout their time at the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children's care is good due to the efficient organisation of the provision. Staff demonstrate a commitment to continual development and they regularly attend relevant training courses and workshops to support them in their work. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that children are well protected and cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child development and a vast amount of experience. Children are relaxed and confident in their environment due to the effective organisation of their care and learning. Children's play opportunities are good as the staff organise the premises very well, thus allowing children to move about with ease. Indoor and outdoor space is well laid out and care is taken to ensure that children receive a good balance of indoor and outdoor play opportunities. Documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in good order and stored with a high regard for confidentiality. Policies accurately reflect the working practice observed at all times.

The leadership and management are good. Children's educational needs are very well met through the positive leadership and management of the play leader. The staff attend regular meetings about the provision of the educational curriculum. Staff have attended relevant courses and have an excellent understanding and knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. There is a very effective system for monitoring and evaluating the work undertaken. The play leader is very familiar with the principles for early years education. She and the staff evaluate the delivery of the curriculum and have an ethos of continual improvement. An effective level of ongoing support provided by the local authority education advisors and Sure Start also positively supports children's learning.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was agreed that Ofsted's contact details would be included in the complaints policy. This has been undertaken, thus improving the content of the policy. It was also agreed that the accessibility of children's book could be improved. The staff have now created a special little room where children can sit on comfortable cushions and quietly look at books of their choice.

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 records may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that the contents of the first aid kit are checked regularly and replaced as necessary.

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):

- continue to develop children's opportunities to link sounds to letters.

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