

Upwood Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	221835
Inspection date	29 January 2008
Inspector	Emma Bright
Setting Address	Upwood CP School, Ramsey Road, Upwood, Ramsey, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE26 2QA
Telephone number	01487 813 510 (school)
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Registered person	The Trustees of Upwood 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?

Upwood Pre-School is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children at the pre-school. It opened in 1979 and operates from the dining room of Upwood County Primary School. It is situated in the village of Upwood, close to Ramsey. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open five days a week from 09:00 to 11:30 during school term times. All children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 21 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 20 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The pre-school supports children who have English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs five staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is currently working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of good personal hygiene, which they learn through regular routines and sensitive reminders from practitioners when necessary. However, the hand washing arrangements means that children cannot clean their hands effectively and this potentially affects their health. Children learn about leading a healthy lifestyle through everyday, practical experiences. They run around, exerting themselves outdoors and get plenty of exercise to promote their growth and development. After exercise, children gain awareness of the effect that activity has on their bodies; they put their hands on their chests and note that their 'hearts are beating fast'. Children develop their small muscular skills and use a good range of tools and utensils to acquire new manipulative skills. For example, they use scissors and small hammers with increasing control and this helps to encourage good hand and eye co-ordination.

Children's nutritional needs are very well met; they competently serve themselves, selecting from a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables which are attractively laid out to encourage them to try new tastes. Children thoroughly enjoy the social aspect with their peers and adults during snack time, which is provided on a 'rolling' basis so that they can choose when they want to eat. This allows them to continue their activities and enhances the flow of the session. Children demonstrate a good awareness of being healthy and are beginning to make connections about fruit being 'good for you' as they discuss their favourite healthy choices. Children are very well cared for if they become unwell or in the event of an accident because clear and detailed information is gathered from parents and records are in place to make sure that appropriate care is given. Most practitioners hold current first aid certificates and records of accidents are kept and shared with parents and carers.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children move freely indoors, accessing equipment and they confidently select resources to support and develop their own play. High emphasis is given to making sure that the environment is welcoming and well prepared with a range of activities, which stimulates children's interest and enhances their development. Children's pictures and work decorates the walls and this contributes to their sense of belonging. Resources have been carefully selected to support children's play. They are cleaned and checked regularly to ensure that they remain safe and in good condition. Thorough safety policies and procedures are clearly implemented by staff to ensure children's safety.

Children's welfare is fully safeguarded; they are well protected and kept safe from harm as all practitioners have a good understanding of their role in child protection. They regularly access training to ensure their knowledge is up-to-date and in line with local procedures. Parents are well informed about the setting's responsibilities through a clear and detailed policy, which is included in the parents' prospectus. Children's safety is enhanced by thorough security procedures to restrict access to the setting and prevent them from leaving the premises unaccompanied; practitioners are particularly vigilant in their supervision of children to ensure their safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the pre-school; they arrive eagerly, separating happily from their parents and carers, and settling readily into their activities. Children benefit from a rich learning environment where they make decisions about what they want to do; they busy themselves, selecting additional resources to support their play from the good range available to them and this enables them to extend their independent learning. Children acquire new knowledge and skills because practitioners gently encourage them to participate in activities, using very good questioning skills to help children think and develop their language.

Children play effectively on their own or with others and form strong friendships with their peers, which contributes to their sense of belonging. They confidently offer their comments and ideas, which practitioners treat with respect and this develops their self-esteem. Children enjoy warm and affectionate relationships with practitioners and this increases their sense of trust and helps them to develop a sense of self.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from practitioners' very good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage; practitioners understand how everyday activities support children's learning and they plan a balanced programme of activities and experiences that help children take the next step in their learning. In addition, children contribute to this planning which enables them to take responsibility for their learning and be included in the life of the setting. Practitioners monitor children's progress towards the early learning goals through detailed assessment records. This means they can build on what children already know and they plan experiences that help children take the next step in their learning. As a result children are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children are very independent and the range of stimulating activities enables them to share responsibility for their learning. They demonstrate pride in their work and excitedly share it with others announcing 'Look! I made a pattern'. Children offer suggestions of kind words that can be used for messages inside fortune cookies such as 'be nice', 'do cooking' and 'be nice again'. Children enjoy being together; they hold up their t-shirts and laugh uproariously at each other as they show off their navels. Children are developing very good speaking and listening skills; they confidently make valued contributions to discussions and enjoy sharing what they know. A word rich environment means that children's early literacy skills are developing very well; they demonstrate understanding that print carries meaning in activities such as cooking where they explain that a recipe 'tells you all the foods you need'. All children enjoy looking at books, alone or together; they select from a good range of books, which they handle with care and respect. Their continuing interest in books is further encouraged through a library system which enables children to take books home to share with their parents.

Children demonstrate a good understanding of numbers, counting and calculation which they use in everyday routines. They readily use numbers in their play, for example they suggest that 'It's just two o' clock' and they cut playdough into 'nine sausages'. Children use mathematical language to describe weight as they measure how much flour they need for cooking and explain that scales 'tell you how much sugar and flour you get in'. Children demonstrate strong exploratory impulses as they investigate how to flatten large pieces of playdough and they use their well developed problem-solving skills to then loosen it from the table with long thin rulers. Children enjoy exploring playdough; they squeeze it through a garlic press and excitedly

announce 'it's like worms!' They use their imagination, dressing up in a variety of costumes and pretending to be super heroes, princesses and a coach driver. However, children have fewer opportunities to express and develop their own ideas because some of the artwork is for the end result and this impinges on children's creativity.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's behaviour is exceptional. They interact confidently with adults and their peers, learning to consider the needs of others and to work together co-operatively. Practitioners set clear boundaries and have high expectations for all children in the setting, which helps them to learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. For example, children confidently use a sand timer and understand that this is to help them know when it is their turn. Practitioners use positive language to reinforce the rules of the setting and as a result children work harmoniously together.

Children benefit from the setting's strong emphasis of working with parents and carers. Thorough settling in procedures that are based around their individual needs helps to support children in the transition between home and the setting. For example, practitioners complete home visits before children start and this enables them to gather good information to be used as starting points for care, teaching and learning. Parents receive clear and detailed information about the setting so they know about activities and events and they have daily opportunities to discuss their child with practitioners. This helps children to settle quickly and ensures their individual needs continue to be very well met. All policies and procedures are in place to share information with parents and carers.

Practitioners are sensitive to children's needs and consistently interact with them at a very high level to extend their learning and play; they listen to children's comments and ideas, treating what children say with respect. This contributes significantly to the children's sense of belonging and continuously develops their confidence and self-esteem. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They have extensive opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through a range of very well planned activities. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from practitioners' experience and caring support; practitioners actively work with parents, carers and other agencies to support the children's needs and this ensures that they are fully included in the life of the setting.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of early education is outstanding. Practitioners actively seek parents' views about their child's needs, interests and achievements before the child starts, and on a regular basis throughout their time there. This contributes significantly to children's well-being in the setting. Children's records are available to parents on a regular basis and they meet regularly with their child's key worker to ensure that they know how their child is progressing and developing. Practitioners are keen to involve parents in their children's learning. They have set up a book lending scheme and provide parents with 'activities at home' sheets. These inform parents of their current topics and suggests activities that they could enjoy at home with their children to support their learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from a very well prepared environment that promotes positive outcomes for all children and this contributes significantly to their enjoyment at the setting. Children are happy and confident because practitioners develop warm and caring relationships with them. For example, an effective key worker system ensures that all children's needs are clearly known and met. Rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that practitioners are suitable and have appropriate skills and knowledge to work with children.

Practitioners work very well together as a team and demonstrate great enthusiasm for creating a learning environment that stimulates and challenges children of all ages. Policies, records and procedures are clear and comprehensive, clearly underpinning the very good practice in promoting positive outcomes for children. All policies and procedures are in place to share information with parents and carers. However, some documentation is not complete, which could potentially affect children's welfare. Practitioners' knowledge and understanding of these documents clearly contributes to their implementation to ensure that children are safe and well cared for. There is a high emphasis on professional development and practitioners regularly attend a range of training opportunities. As a result children benefit from practices which are in line with current ideas and legislation.

The leadership and management of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. The Lead Practitioner manages the provision very well and has a clear vision of high quality childcare and education. She effectively monitors the quality of the nursery education, which ensures that children benefit from the good quality provision. All practitioners demonstrate a real commitment to continuously developing the setting's practice to ensure that all children have access to high quality learning experiences. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to develop the uncollected child procedure. The document has been updated which safeguards children welfare.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider agreed to develop opportunities for the children to explore how things work. A variety of resources and learning experiences enable children to investigate and discover how things work which builds on their natural curiosity as learners.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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.

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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):

- improve hand washing arrangements
- review and update documentation to ensure that the written procedure for lost children is complete and the daily register shows more clearly children's hours of attendance.

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 improve the programme for creative development so that children can freely explore their imagination and creativity.

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