

West Horndon Under Five's

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 204131

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Inspector Sarah Johnson

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Registered person West Horndon Under Five'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 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?

West Horndon Under Fives opened in 1980. It is a registered charity and is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children at the pre-school. It operates from a large room within the village hall in West Hordon in Brentwood, Essex. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open on Monday to Thursday from 09.30 to 12.00 during school term times. An afternoon session operates every Thursday from 13.00 to 15.30, except for the last Thursday in each month. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 38 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 22 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area and attend for a variety of sessions. The staff at the pre-school have effective strategies in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who have English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs five members of staff. Of these, one member of staff holds an appropriate early years qualification and two members of staff are working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted because staff follow consistently good procedures. Children learn the importance of good health and hygiene practices through the daily routine. For example, they understand the need to wash their hands before snack time and after using the toilet as staff supervise them sensitively and remind them how to take time to wash their hands thoroughly. Younger children are supported to manage these routines independently as they are provided with steps to reach the sinks. Children are well protected from the risk of cross-infection as they use individual paper towels, air dryers and liquid soap. In addition, older children independently help themselves to tissues when they need to wipe their noses. Children's health is supported when they play outside in hot weather as they are encouraged to wear sun hats and large parasols are provided in the outdoor area to create ample shade.

Children receive appropriate care if they are ill or have an accident as all the required documentation and consents with regard to sickness, medication and accidents are in place to support this. A fully stocked first aid box is easily accessible and two members of staff have completed training in first aid for young children. Children are protected further as their parents provide written consents for medication and to enable staff to seek medical advice and treatment for children in an emergency.

Children enjoy a very good range of physical play activities which contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They develop their physical skills as they access the well-equipped and fully enclosed outdoor area. They enjoy activities such as pedalling on ride-on toys, using the slide, kicking balls and playing in the sand. Children are also encouraged to exercise indoors as the staff clear space for them to run around freely and play parachute games. Children enjoy moving their bodies in different ways as they pretend to slither across the floor like snakes and to hop like rabbits.

Children are well nourished as they are offered a good selection of healthy snacks including apples, raisins and cereal with milk. Children independently pour their own drinks at snack time and fresh drinking water is readily accessed by the children throughout the session, helping them to remain well hydrated. Children's dietary needs are fully met as the staff give regard to the information provided by parents in relation to their children's allergies, cultural and religious requirements.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff are motivated in providing a safe environment for children, as they conduct ongoing daily risk assessments covering all areas and take positive steps to minimise any risks. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own safety when they are reminded not to run indoors as they may trip over. There are good systems in place to ensure the safe arrival and collection of children. For example, thorough monitoring of the entrance door by staff ensures that children are unable to leave the premises unseen and parents are asked to add details to the collection book if somebody different will be collecting their children. Visitors are monitored and they are consistently asked to sign the visitor book. Children are protected further as the required fire safety precautions are in place and staff practise regular fire drills with the children to ensure they know how to keep themselves safe in the event of a fire.

Children are cared for in a child-friendly environment, where staff are effective in creating a welcoming atmosphere. For example, children enjoy bright and colourful surroundings as the room is decorated with low-level boards showing posters and examples of their creative work. The children play in a spacious hall that is organised effectively to enable them to move around freely and access well-spaced activities. For example, staff quickly stack tables and chairs to create ample space for children to undertake physical activities. Children also benefit as they can choose to flow freely between activities in the main hall and those in the outdoor area. Children are engaged as they play with a good range of resources that are stimulating and provide appropriate levels of challenge. Many resources are set out for children at a low accessible level, enabling them to reach toys and promoting their independence. There are sufficient numbers of child-sized chairs and tables to allow flexible arrangements for children to play and eat together. Children use safe equipment as staff check toys for damage on a daily basis and parents routinely volunteer to wash toys.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because most staff have completed safeguarding children training and they are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in protecting children. As a result, all staff understand the correct procedure to follow if they have any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and secure as they are warmly welcomed by staff who are pleased to see them. The staff have established warm and trusting relationships with the children, which contributes to their sense of belonging and self-esteem. For example, staff are intuitive of children's needs and offer them comfort when they feel upset for a short while. The children settle quickly into the daily routine, seeking out their closest peers and confidently choosing an activity from the range set out for them. Children remain busy through the session as they are engaged in a varied range of activities that are appropriate to their interests and stages of development. Activities are planned effectively to foster children's imaginative play. For example, the imaginative area is set up as a home with realistic equipment and dressing up clothes. This area is popular with the children and staff join in with children's role play when invited by the children.

Younger children receive good support as the staff have a good knowledge of their needs and have sound understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Younger children are given good opportunities to explore using all of their senses. For example, they enjoy experimenting freely with blue paint as they paint their hands and make handprints on paper. When younger children are learning to deal with separation from their parents, their key person patiently offers them cuddles and constant direct attention. This helps them to form strong bonds and in time they feel reassured that there is always someone familiar close by to offer support.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and use a good range of methods to support children's learning. They have proactively completed short courses covering aspects such as creative arts and personal, social and emotional development. Children benefit as staff encourage children to try new things and make sound use of open-ended questioning to extend children's thinking. For example, they encourage children to name different shapes when they are making sandcastles from different shaped containers. Children benefit from a well-planned environment that provides them with a broad

range of learning opportunities covering all six areas of learning. Planning is displayed to ensure all staff understand the learning intentions for activities and know how to adapt activities to support or extend children's learning. Children's achievements are recorded in the form of regular observations, which are then linked to a record of when the stepping stones are achieved. Outcomes for children are promoted because observations and assessments are used effectively to plan for the next steps in individual children's learning.

Children are learning about connections and relationships in numbers, shapes and measures. They recognise numerals as they find the correct number of cakes to match a given number on a computer programme. They explore mathematical concepts such as capacity and weight as they fill different containers with sand and compare these using language such as 'heavy' and 'light'. However, opportunities for children to use mathematical language in meaningful contexts are often missed during the daily routine. Most children are able to count up to 10 and some are beginning to count beyond 10. Children confidently sort bears by different criteria such as size and colour.

Children enjoy being creative, expressing their own ideas and thoughts through art, music, dance and imaginative play. They use realistic resources to support their role play, which is often based on their first hand experiences. They choose from a selection of dressing up clothes and play alongside others who are engaged in the same theme. For example, they act out their experiences as they pretend to make dinner for each other and go to the shops to buy food. Children work creatively on a small scale as they freely paint using paintbrushes. They notice how the colours merge to create new colours.

Children demonstrate developing self-care skills when putting on their own coats and accessing the toilet with decreasing direct support. They are developing close relationships with others as they help each other to get their coats and talk eagerly about their planned swimming trip. Children work well together and negotiate roles to complete tasks. For example, they decide independently to take turns when playing with the tractor, offering to push each other along. Children are developing their competencies in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Most children recognise their own names in print when finding their name cards on the snack table. They show good pencil control as they draw large and small circles on paper. However, opportunities for children to practise their emergent writing skills are not always maximised. For example, opportunities for children to practise writing their names are often missed and they are not offered writing tools in different areas of the setting to fully encourage their use of writing for recording and communicating. Children enjoy an increasing range of books in the comfortable book area and are developing a good repertoire of familiar rhymes and songs. For example, they confidently join in with the words and actions for the 'Five Little Ducks' rhyme. Children experience limited opportunities to begin hearing and saying the initial sounds in words.

Children are making sense of the world around them by investigating and exploring through first hand experiences. They investigate aspects of the living world as they look closely at flowers and talk about the different colours on their petals. Children experience good opportunities to use everyday technology to support their learning. They confidently press the buttons on a tape player and competently use a mouse to control a programme on the computer. Children join construction pieces together and construct with a purpose in mind. For example, they explain that they are making castles and houses as they build with small bricks. Children enjoy a range of physical activities that help them to develop their skills when using small apparatus, tools and equipment. They safely use scissors during craft activities and spend time

manipulating pieces of colourful play dough. For example, they pinch small pieces with their fingers to make eyes and roll sausage shapes between their palms.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated with equal concern by staff who ensure that all children are included and have their individual needs met. Staff are able to meet children's needs as they take time to get to know them and their parents. Children feel valued as they eagerly pose to have a photograph taken with the sandcastle they have made. They are beginning to develop their understanding of diversity and the wider world around them as they enjoy activities and resources that help them to find out about different cultures and festivals. For example, they share a book about an Indian sari and make hats to celebrate St Lucia Day.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and are able to fully participate alongside their peers. This is because staff have undertaken several relevant training courses to enable them to support children effectively including a seminar about Autism and training in creating a visual environment. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator within the setting supports staff effectively. She monitors the provision to ensure the setting works with parents and other professionals to meet the needs of children with additional needs.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are very well behaved. They are kind to one another and seek out their closest peers to share their experiences with. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement, which helps them to develop good levels of self-esteem and a secure sense of belonging. For example, they feel proud when they receive a sticker for helping to tidy up the resources. Children's behaviour is well supported by the behaviour management policy which reflects the range of positive strategies used by the staff team. For example, staff demonstrate consistency in their approach and are good role models, ensuring children are calm and motivated towards behaving well.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. The staff work closely with parents to ensure their children are cared for fully in line with their wishes. Opportunities are prioritised for staff to get to know families and to discuss children's progress. For example, staff make a point of being available at the beginning and end of sessions and parents are encouraged to join the management committee so they can be actively involved in what happens at the setting. Parents receive useful information such as a prospectus which includes information about activities in the daily routine. Further information such as photographs of the staff and a folder of policies and procedures are easily accessible to parents in the entrance foyer. Children's development is facilitated as their parents are kept informed of their progress whilst at the setting. For example, the prospectus provides an overview of the Foundation Stage and the weekly planning is displayed to highlight the main topics that children will be exploring. Children's learning is enhanced as parents are provided with an annual written progress report outlining their children's learning and parents are invited to contribute to their children's assessment records.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The good management and organisation of the setting ensures that children receive good quality care. Children benefit from being cared for by staff who are suitable and have good levels of experience and knowledge for their role. Suitable vetting and recruitment procedures are followed when employing new staff and appraisals are being developed to monitor staff

performance and identify training needs. Parents are keen to take on the roles and responsibilities involved in participating in the management committee, ensuring a sound support system for the staff team.

Children benefit from the effective organisation of space and resources. However, the organisation of time and the daily routine does not fully maximise opportunities for children to enjoy sustained free play or to make choices in how they spend their time. Although children do enjoy free play during the first part of the session, they are expected to participate in adult-led activities during a substantial part of the session and are not always offered alternative activities if they do not wish to participate. Staff are actively engaged with the children throughout the session, leaving ancillary tasks for when children are not being cared for. The daily attendance records for children and staff are accurately recorded to meet the regulatory requirement. These records show that the setting complies with the conditions of registration, which contributes positively to children's safety. All other required documentation is in place and maintained to a good standard. The records of children's personal details are available at all times and are stored confidentially in a locked filing cabinet within the setting. A good selection of written policies and procedures are in place and have recently been reviewed.

The leadership and management is good. Children make good progress because staff are motivated and work well as a team to provide a caring environment where children can enjoy and achieve through play. Staff are reflective and have identified areas for improvement during the self-evaluation process and more informally during discussions at the end of each session. Outcomes for children are built upon as the staff evidently appreciate and act upon any guidance they receive from advisors at the local authority. Staff are committed to continual improvement and have demonstrated that they are willing to pursue ongoing training. Consequently, children's experiences are enhanced because staff use the knowledge they gain from training courses to introduce new ideas and activities into the provision.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to ensure good hygiene practices are in place regarding hand washing and to review the policies and procedures within the operational plan. Children's health is promoted as they are encouraged to follow good hand washing routines and they are provided with facilities that help to prevent the spread of infection. The policies and procedures have been recently reviewed and some policies, such as the complaints policy, have been updated to ensure they reflect the requirements of the National Standards.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider was asked to review the use of resources to maximise children's learning. Resources are now rotated on a regular basis to ensure children continue to experience a range of new and different learning opportunities. The provider was also asked to refine the planning to include reference to all aspects of learning and festivals and themes that enhance children's learning experiences. The weekly planning shows that children benefit from a good range of activities covering each of the six areas of learning and some of these activities relate to festivals such as Chinese New Year and Diwali.

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):

- review the organisation of the daily routine to maximise opportunities for children initiate their own play and to make alternative choices during adult-led activities.

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):

- offer further opportunities for children to begin writing as a means of recording and communicating in their play and to practise writing their own names
- make full use of spontaneous opportunities for children to use mathematical language and to begin hearing and saying the initial sounds in words.

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