

Old Catton Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY356538
Inspection date	08 July 2008
Inspector	Julie Denise Edmonds
Setting Address	Lodge Lane First School, Lodge Lane, NORWICH, NR6 7HL
Telephone number	07895 175 937 or 01603 413946
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Registered person	Old Catton 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?

Old Catton Pre-school opened in 1962 and is run by a committee. The provision has operated from Lodge Lane First School since September 2007. It is situated in Old Catton, close to Norwich. There is an enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 22 children aged from two to five years may attend the group at any one time. It is open each weekday from 09:00 to 11:30 and 12:30 to 15:00 during school term times.

There are currently 62 children on roll. This includes 57 children who receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions and come from Old Catton and the surrounding local area. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs eight staff who hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean premises, promoting their good health. Effective hygiene practice includes cleaning table tops with anti-bacterial spray prior to snack times and using individual paper towels for hand drying. Children are developing independence as they follow simple hygiene routines. They learn to wash their hands at appropriate times, such as before snack time and after using the toilet. Communicable disease information is shared with parents to support exclusion of children when ill and to help prevent the spread of infection. This includes informing them of any incidences of illness at the group. Children are cared for appropriately in the event of an accident, as first aid trained staff are present and parental consent is gained to seek emergency medical assistance. Children learn about keeping themselves safe in the sun and wear sun hats. Staff talk to them about the weather before they go outdoors. Children's individual health and dietary needs are met as information is gained from parents and shared between staff.

Children take part in varied activities that help them to develop physical skills. They learn about the importance of taking regular exercise and fresh air. They enjoy outdoor play opportunities. They negotiate obstacles as they move around freely. They push along and pedal wheeled toys such as trikes, moving them forwards and backwards. They have fun as they excitedly run and chase each other. They play traditional games such as hopscotch and skittles. The children learn to 'hula hoop' competently, keeping the hoops around their waist for some time. Children develop climbing skills on the small nursery climbing frame with slide. They also use the nursery see-saw. The children use more challenging apparatus in the school grounds, including the 'trim trail' and enjoy joining school children for physical education sessions. Children are able to rest according to their individual needs.

The children eat together in small groups, sitting at tables to have their snack provided by their parents. Healthy eating is well promoted, with clear guidelines given to parents about acceptable foods for snack. The children's interest in learning about the food they eat is encouraged, with some food preparation activities offered, such as making bread, pizza and vegetable soup. The relaxed snack time is supported with some staff sitting with the children and instigating conversation. The children have access to fresh drinking water, providing them with sufficient fluid intake. The children learn that it is particularly important to drink in hot weather.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in welcoming premises. They benefit from the child-centred environment created in the play room, with an array of colourful craft work and photographs displayed attractively. The children use child-size furniture and toilet facilities. The inviting layout gives children choices from an appealing range of activities set out on table tops and on the floor. The washable floor surface offers an area where children can take part freely in messy play. Carpeted flooring provides a comfortable area to play with toys on the floor. Further toys are accessible from low-level storage in drawer units. A range of toys and activities set out for the children in the adjoining play area outdoors gives them further choices. The part-covered outdoor area provides increased opportunities for outdoor play during inclement weather. Children rest and relax in the comfortable book corner with soft seating and bean bags.

Comprehensive risk assessment and appropriate measures in place promote children's safety. Staff undertake daily checks indoors and out and individual weekly activities are risk assessed. Socket covers are in place at low-level. Effective systems prevent children from leaving the premises unsupervised. Staff are vigilant and doors and gates are monitored successfully at arrival and departure. The children learn about keeping themselves safe through planned activities, such as a 'traffic' activity outdoors. Children also receive reminders from staff about how to keep themselves safe as they play. For example, a child is asked to remove a long dressing up dress before playing outdoors on physical play equipment. Emergency escape plan practises raises children's awareness and supports safe evacuation. Fire extinguishers are checked periodically to ensure they are in working order and the evacuation procedure is on display, promoting fire safety.

Children are safeguarded because staff understand their roles and responsibilities to protect children and are able to put procedures into practice. Staff attend training and have access to up-to-date safeguarding children information.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a relaxed atmosphere where they gain confidence. They are encouraged to interact with others in different groupings and progress to initiate exchange. They are supported by sensitive and caring staff. The approach of staff and their interactions with the children are consistently appropriate to promote children's self-esteem. The children receive positive responses from the staff, who listen to what they say and maintain good eye contact with them. They are interested in what the children are doing. The children play happily, independently making choices. They play alongside each other and together as they develop social skills. Children achievements are valued, with their work on display.

The children freely make choices from the appealing range of toys and activities set out for them. They take part in a variety of craft work. They paint freely and enjoy messy play with 'gloop' and jelly. They have fun 'making music' as they bang hanging kitchen utensils outdoors. They play in the water tray and fill and empty containers. They enjoy table top puzzles and games. The children develop their pretend play in the home corner with play food and kitchen items. They play with a range of vehicles and a garage on the roadway mat. They take pleasure in creating models from 'Mobilo' and are keen to tell adults what they have made. Activities link to children's individual interests and ideas that are incorporated into weekly planning. Activities and play experiences meet the needs of younger children attending in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals supported by skilled staff. Spontaneous opportunities are used well to promote children's learning. Staff ask the children questions as they play, encouraging them to think and use language. For example, during play with animal figures in icy water, a staff member asks the children how animals living in a cold climate keep warm. Children solve problems appropriately assisted by staff, such as by turning the butterfly in a different way so that it will fit on the paper to draw around. Effective observation, assessment and planning systems provide experiences appropriate to children's individual stage of development and challenge to extend their learning. Planning covers all areas of learning. Observations of what children are able to do and comments about next steps are included in their individual assessment records. These

'learning stories' also include photographs and creative work and are valuable and appealing records. Key workers update children's learning stories and contribute to inform planning informally on a daily basis. Staff meetings include more formal opportunities to develop planning and promote children's individual progress. Planned focused activities indicate intended learning and support staff to make the best use of activities and experiences to fully promote the learning of all children. Planning offers children a range of experiences both indoors and out to promote their development.

Children develop a sense of belonging in the setting where their interests and ideas are valued. They gain independence and learn to manage self-care tasks, such as when they use the accessible toilet and hand washing facilities. The children enjoy staff reading to them individually and sharing books in small and large groups. Use of books is encouraged, for example, in 'our story tent' outdoors. Children choose to make their own books. They benefit from labels in the environment, helping them to understand that print carries meaning. There are regular opportunities for children to find their name cards, supporting name recognition. They are learning to link sounds and letters. The children use drawing and writing materials with increasing control and learn to write their own name. The children write for a purpose at the 'post office'. They talk in imaginary situations.

Activities support children to look at patterns and identify different shapes. The children learn about size and weight. They find the big and small bears on the wall display and weigh parcels at the 'post office'. They compare and sort different bears. Children learn colours, to count and recognise numerals. They join in with number rhymes and use their own painted foot prints in a number game.

Children have opportunities to investigate and explore, developing their knowledge and understanding of the world they live in. They become confident with modern technology, pushing buttons to make things work. They have use of the computer and gain control using the mouse and keyboard, using the arrow keys. The children learn about living things, including pets brought into the group. They take pleasure in finding mini-beasts outdoors, examining slugs and other insects in bug viewers. They grow plants, such as tomato plants, watering them to make them grow. The children design and make using a range of small and large scale construction toys and bricks. They make vehicles, robots and boats from a range of materials and test if their boats will float. They have fun playing with water and ice outdoors, learning about change as they see and talk about the ice melting. They begin to differentiate between past and present as they look at photographs to recall events at the setting.

The children develop balance and co-ordination as they walk on 'stampabouts' and have fun crawling through tunnels. They enjoy ball games, throwing and catching with staff. The children develop fine physical skills as they use malleable materials, such as play dough, squeezing and rolling it out. They use a variety of tools including scissors and a hand rotary whisk. They take part in action rhymes together and enjoy music. This includes using instruments and joining school children for music sessions. Children use their imagination in role play, such as at the 'farm shop' and 'travel agents.'

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff know the children well, their likes and dislikes and value their individuality. Children learn about some celebrations and festivals. They use a modern range of books and toys that reflect diversity. This supports children's awareness of the wider world and helps them to develop a

positive attitude towards others. Children form strong links with the group and develop a sense of themselves as a member of the setting. Visitors provide links with the local community and include visits from the fire service, police and dental health profession. School teachers and school children also visit the pre-school, with a 'buddy' system set up to support good relationships and transition to school.

The nursery works in partnership with parents and other professionals to ensure the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are met. Staff attend specific training to enable them to meet identified needs. Staff promote children's well-being in line with the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice, with individual plans in place. The children benefit from positive behaviour management, with the staff as good role models. Children's individual and group achievements are recognised and praised by staff, encouraging the children to behave well. For example, the children are praised at circle time when they sit still and listen. They are supported to share and take turns. They learn good manners, to say 'please' and 'thank you'. The children learn to listen and respond to instructions and progress to being helpful to others. They help the staff and each other to tidy up at the pre-school. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Initial information about individual children is gained on registration forms. Written consent supports care of children in line with parents wishes for their child, such as to take photographs. Additional information gathered includes children's favourite things and what they still need help with when they begin attending. This supports individual settling in. Daily informal communication supports a trusting relationship with parents. A useful welcome pack and regular newsletters provide information and updates. Parents are encouraged to make suggestions with a suggestion box provided and to discuss any concerns they may have. This supports partnership with parents to provide continuity of care for the children. Ofsted contact details are displayed, supporting exchange of information with the regulator. A complaints record is held by the group. However, there is no prepared summary to be shared with parents on request. This is inconsistent with working in partnership with parents to promote the welfare of children. Overall, parents are complimentary about the care and opportunities provided for their children.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. Key workers talk to parents about the Foundation Stage. Children's learning stories are 'parent friendly' and parents view them and are encouraged to add comments. Parents also view displays of photographs of the children taking part in activities with general comments about their learning. However, information provided about the Foundation Stage and planned weekly activities does not fully promote parental involvement in their child's learning to aid individual progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Robust vetting procedures are followed to ensure adults' suitability to be in contact with children at recruitment. However, there are no formal procedures to ensure the ongoing suitability of adults. Staff are motivated to keep up-to-date with current practice and attend a range of training opportunities. Available information gives parents an overall picture of how the group operates on a daily basis, including policies and procedures. Documentation and record keeping meets regulations and is well-maintained for the efficient and safe management of the setting. Confidentiality is respected.

Children and adults are welcomed into the setting by experienced and qualified staff. The friendly staff team have a high regard for the children's well-being and work efficiently together to offer smooth running sessions. The children receive constructive adult support, time and attention as they play and to meet their care needs, with more than the required number of adults present each session. Familiar routines support children to feel secure and settled. Use of space and grouping of children meets children's needs.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff inductions and job descriptions ensure staff are aware of their individual responsibilities. However, formal appraisals to address staff performance and training needs are not carried out periodically. This does not have significant impact on teaching and learning as the staff are motivated to maintain and improve standards. Staff communicate well and some self-evaluation takes place. The current committee are taking positive steps to fulfil their responsibilities and are committed to developing their roles. Staff work in partnership with other professionals involved with the setting, including teachers at the school. There are plans for increased partnership working with the school in future. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- set up a summary of the complaints record to be shared with parents on request
- implement formal procedures to ensure the ongoing suitability of adults.

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 information provided for parents about the Foundation Stage
- complete periodic staff appraisals.

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