

Wooldale Early Care and Education Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY293232
Inspection date	16/06/2009
Inspector	Patricia Underwood
Setting address	Wooldale Road,, Wootton, Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN4 6TP
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Wooldale Early Care and Education Centre was registered in 2004. The setting is based in the Caroline Chisholm School in the village of Wootton on the southern aspect of Northampton and serves the local community and children attending the school. The nursery operates in a purpose-built single storey building where children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The out of school club operates from a room within the secondary school and also has access to the playground adjoining the classroom. Both settings can use the public library situated within the buildings. The setting offers facilities for children aged from birth to 14 years. These facilities include nursery, crèche, out of school club and holiday play scheme. Effective links with the school have been established. Disabled access is catered for with ramps and a lift to the upper floor of the school building.

The centre is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 58 children aged from birth to under five years may attend the nursery at any one time and a maximum of 32 children aged between three years and eight years may attend the out of school club at any one time. Currently there are 150 children on roll attending either the nursery or the out of school club, of these, 131 are in the early years age group and of these 50 receive funding. The centre is open all year round apart from bank holidays. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Opening times are from 08:00 to 18:00 hours. The crèche facility will be offered from 09:30 to 16:30 but only when spaces are available within the nursery unit. There are 25 staff employed, three of whom are part time. All hold relevant qualifications in either Early Years or Childcare.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the provision is good and the children are happy, settled and enjoy a good range of activities. Staff are caring and supportive and committed to ensuring children are safe.

Parents have every confidence in the setting and appreciate the level of care shown to their children. The setting is fully inclusive as the needs of all children are well catered for including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language. The managers are very aware of areas for development within the setting and are well placed to develop the setting further, consequently, capacity to improve is good.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- ensure that the purpose of all planned activities is clearly stated
- further encourage parents to contribute to their child's learning journal by adding more frequently what their child does at home.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff are committed to ensuring all facilities are well organised and run smoothly on a day-to-day basis. All staff work well as teams within their individual rooms, know their roles and responsibilities and support each other. Effective procedures are in place to identify any child who may be at risk. Staff are carefully vetted and hold appropriate qualifications. They are actively encouraged to seek training opportunities. Risk assessments are carried out both annually and daily, particularly in the outdoor area. Generic policies are regularly reviewed and updated to make sure they are appropriate for each facility. Staff sign to show they have read the updates. As a result children are well protected and safe.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Questionnaires completed by parents show how supportive they are of the facilities. They really appreciate the care staff give to their children. 'Staff genuinely care for the children', 'My child loves attending the nursery', 'The level of care is excellent'. The comments reflect and support the responses in the questionnaire. Parents are very pleased with the information they receive about their child. They find the three monthly conferences very helpful, especially as they are made aware of the next steps of learning for their child so they can help at home. Learning journals are another source of information about each child. However, few parents contribute by writing about what their child does at home, so often valuable information about the child is not shared.

There are very good links with both the Reception teacher and the secondary school. Links are also being forged with Reception teachers in the other schools that take the nursery children. This helps to make the transition from one setting to another smooth for the children involved. Very good links with outside agencies ensure children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive appropriate support

The manager knows the settings well and has various ways of recording how well the settings are meeting the needs of children. Audits from outside agencies also recognise the same areas for improvement that have already been identified. Recommendations from the previous report have been addressed so the settings are well placed to move forward.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

A warm, welcoming and stimulating environment greets the children when they arrive. A wide range of activities that reflect all areas of learning encourage the children to explore their surroundings. Planning is clear and links closely to the Early Years requirements. However, there is often insufficient clarity about the purpose of the planned activity. Assessment procedures are good and are used to highlight what the next steps are for each child's development, consequently, children make good progress from whatever their starting point. A similar planning format is used in all rooms but in the baby room planning tends to be individual because rates of development vary so much. Key workers play a vital role in

ensuring all children in their groups are given suitable tasks to further their development. They also provide stability for the children and help them to settle in more quickly.

Staff are very caring and supportive. They make children's welfare a priority. They have very good relationships with the children thus ensuring children are confident, happy and settled. Staff in the baby room demonstrate a great deal of patience as they respond to the needs of the youngest with lots of hugs and cuddles.

Children behave well as good behaviour is praised and encouraged. They know what staff expect. Personal and social skills are developing well. Children in the toddler room are becoming aware of the needs of others and how to share resources. Whereas children in the nursery are learning to take turns, listen carefully, help each other and work together. In the out of school club the older children provide good role models for the younger ones and spend time playing and talking to them thus making a positive contribution to the life of the setting.

A strong emphasis is placed on developing language and number skills. In every room staff continually talk to the children and for the older children, pose open-ended questions to stimulate discussion. A love of books is encouraged and this begins in the baby room. Staff can be seen sharing books with children, whilst children in the nursery enjoy story time. Both the toddler room and nursery provide areas for writing which the children enjoy. Children in the nursery involved in a maths activity, excitedly measured their heights. The teacher asks questions to extend their understanding of how to interpret data from their recordings. Computers are available in both the nursery and the out of school club. Children demonstrate good mouse skills and they play a variety of games. All these activities help to prepare children for their future.

The outside area is very well used but it is not as attractive as the inside. Plans have been drawn up to rectify this. The youngest children have great fun outside exploring the activities. A great deal of laughter was heard during a parachute game as children learn to co-operate. Bikes and a climbing frame for the youngest, and football and throwing games for the out of school Club, all enhance children's physical development. The layout of the building prevents the older children free flowing to the outside area because there is no direct access. However, this does not stop the children from experiencing the outside but it has to be carefully planned.

Healthy snacks of fruit, vegetables, milk and water are enjoyed by the children. Well cooked healthy lunches are provided and children's dietary needs are well catered for. Lunch time is a social occasion, children sit together and older children serve themselves. Discussion about healthy eating and an emphasis on personal hygiene contributes well to their understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met