



Oldfield Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	305229
Inspection date	26 September 2005
Inspector	Elaine Murray
Setting Address	Green Lane, Chester, CH3 5LB
Telephone number	01244 317056
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Registered person	Oldfield 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?

Oldfield Pre-School is a committee run group which operates from a mobile building, situated within the grounds of Oldfield Primary School in Chester. The group have been running for several years, but have operated from the current premises since 1994, serving the local area.

There are currently 34 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. Of these 26 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group

opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9:00 to 12:00 and 13:00 to 15:25 each day. Seven staff work with the children, four of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children show an awareness of good hygienic practices as they wash their hands at appropriate times of the day. Staff follow hygienic procedures as they clean surfaces and equipment, helping to protect children from the spread of germs. All staff hold a current first aid qualification, which means that children's health is well protected in the event of an accident or emergency. Children's health is further protected as there are clear procedures for the administration of medication relating to allergies and staff have received specific training in this area. The pre-school's clear sickness policy is shared with parents and helps to protect children from the spread of infection.

Children are developing physical skills and enjoyment of exercise through regular outdoor play. They enthusiastically run, jump and play with small equipment such as balls and hoops. Children learn about healthy eating as staff provide healthy and nutritious snacks. They enjoy eating the different types of fruit provided. Children are offered milk or water at snack time and know to ask for a drink of water when they are thirsty. This helps to promote their good health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in bright, well maintained accommodation which staff make attractive and welcoming. Children's work is creatively displayed and toys and equipment are visible and accessible. This helps to foster children's sense of security and belonging. The environment is well organised, helping children to move round safely and independently. The range of toys and equipment are suitable for different ages and abilities, meeting children's needs effectively.

Staff take effective measures to keep children safe. They make a daily safety check of the premises and outdoor area. They also assess the potential risks to children of activities and equipment and take appropriate action to ensure children's safety. Children learn to protect themselves in the event of a fire or emergency through regularly practicing the fire evacuation procedure. At other times children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe is not fully developed by staff.

Children are well protected as staff have a good knowledge of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and are familiar with the procedures to be followed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are content and secure and have positive relationships with staff. Children enjoy and are involved in the wide range of activities provided, which effectively promote their all round development.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones towards the early learning goals and this is reflected in their planning and teaching. They provide a broad range of interesting, practical activities which promote much effective learning. Children show increasing skills of concentration as they complete jigsaws and a craft activity. They tidy away independently and co-operate well together in role play. Children's language skills are developed effectively as staff talk with the children about their experiences. They question children well to extend their knowledge and vocabulary, for example, in encouraging children to describe the different textures of materials in a craft activity. Children enjoy stories and are developing a good understanding of how books work. They begin to understand the purposes for writing as they make marks in the role play notepad. Children show a very good understanding of mathematical language and this knowledge is promoted well by staff. Children happily talk about 'tiny' bits of play dough and 'middle sized' plastic elephants. Staff adapt their teaching to meet the needs of different abilities as they support younger children in a counting activity and encourage more able children to think 'how many more' they have. Children show growing proficiency in counting to ten and beyond and display curiosity and interest in numbers. Children learn to explore and investigate as they take part in freezing a balloon full of water. They develop a good understanding of the uses of every day technology as they play with a toy electronic cash register and mobile phone in the 'Wendy House'. Children show a good awareness of space as they play in the enclosed outdoor area. They have limited chances to develop skills of climbing, sliding, scrambling and swinging. Children learn to express themselves creatively using a variety of media and explore sound using musical instruments.

Staff assess children's progress in all areas of learning and use this information to inform planning. However, the current system of recording assessments does not ensure that all aspects of the stepping stones are covered. For example, some aspects of physical development are not included. This means that children's progress is not effectively monitored in these aspects.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are included in the activities provided and individual needs are well met. This helps to develop children's confidence and self esteem. Children develop an awareness of diversity and the wider community through a generally good selection of resources and activities that promote positive images. Staff have a calm, positive and consistent approach to managing children's behaviour. They praise and

encourage children for their efforts and achievements. As a result children behave well. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents receive a good level of information about the setting and planned activities through an informative brochure, notice board and regular newsletters. They are encouraged to be involved in children's learning by contributing items for topics and being invited to join in, for example, in bringing musical instruments from home to show and play with the children. This has a positive effect on children's learning. The system for sharing information with parents about children's progress in the six areas of learning does not ensure that all parents are regularly informed. This means that some children's learning needs may not be as effectively met.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

All staff are experienced and most hold relevant childcare qualifications. This has a beneficial effect on children's welfare, care and learning. Staffing levels are organised so that they are within the required ratios at all times and that children have a good level of attention and support. Policies and procedures are effectively in place and contribute to positive outcomes for children. Space and resources are well organised to promote children's safety, care and learning.

The leadership and management is good. The supervisor provides positive direction and staff work well as a team to plan and teach. There is a commitment to improvement and the setting has produced a written self appraisal, identifying areas for development. This approach has a positive effect on the quality of children's learning. Planning and children's progress in learning is generally well monitored.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The last Children Act inspection recommended that the pre-school should update the electrical safety check to ensure that electrical fittings conform to safety standards and make sure that full details are recorded in the fire drill log book. Both of these recommendations have been met with positive effect on children's safety.

The previous nursery education inspection recommended that staff improve the monitoring and evaluation of planning and activities to ensure that all children's needs are met. Staff regularly monitor and evaluate their planning and take measures to ensure that activities are adapted to meet the needs of more or less able children. These improvements have had a positive effect on children's progress in learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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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):

- develop children's awareness of how to keep themselves safe indoors and outside

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):

- ensure that assessment records are more closely linked to the stepping stones for children's learning to enable their progress to be more effectively assessed
- seek ways of developing children's skills using equipment for climbing, sliding . scrambling and swinging.
- ensure that all parents are regularly informed of their children's progress towards the early learning goals.

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