



Wooldale Early Care and Education Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY293232 |
| Inspection date | 02 November 2005 |
| Inspector | Jill Hunn |
| Setting Address | Wooldale Road,, Wootton, Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN4 6TP |
| Telephone number | 01604 877509 |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | Bright Horizons Family Solutions Ltd. |
| Type of inspection | Integrated |
| Type of care | Full day care, Out of School 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?

Wooldale Early Care and Education Centre is run by an organisation. It opened in September 2004 and operates from the Caroline Chisholm School in Wootton, on the outskirts of Northampton.

There are currently 131 children aged from 3 months to under 8 years on roll. Of these 24 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from Wootton and surrounding areas. The setting supports children with special needs.

The centre employs 21 staff and 19 of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. There is 1 member of staff currently working towards a qualification.

A maximum of 87 children may attend the centre at any one time. The centre is open each weekday from 8:00 to 18:00 for 52 weeks of the year with the exception of bank holidays. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The setting receives support from an advisory teacher from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

All children have daily opportunities to exercise in the fresh air, which promotes their good health and development. Babies are taken for regular walks and all children are able to use the outdoor area at each session. Children have fun as they develop their physical skills by pushing and riding a variety of wheeled toys, and playing in the sand and water. Older children in the out of school club take part in outdoor activities in the school playground or play more energetic games in the sports hall. Children are able to sleep or rest in accordance with their needs. Babies' and toddlers' sleep patterns are carefully monitored as they continue their home routine.

Children are cared for in a clean and hygienic environment where regular monitoring systems ensure the levels of cleanliness are maintained. Children learn the importance of good hygiene practices through daily routines and older children become increasingly independent in their personal care. For example, children wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet and know that they do so to get rid of germs. School age children wash their bowls and cups and put their rubbish in the bin after snack time. Secure systems for nappy changing help prevent the spread of infection. However, some procedures for food handling do not always ensure that meals are served appropriately. Children's welfare is safeguarded because most staff are trained to give first aid. In the event of any accidents or if children are unwell, clear procedures are in place for the administration of medication.

Children benefit from a wholesome, nutritious and balanced diet. Menus are produced to give parents information about meal choices. Meals and snacks are carefully monitored to ensure they meet the children's individual dietary requirements. Mealtimes for babies are arranged according to their individual feeding routines as agreed with their parents. Children are provided with drinks at meal times, after active play and when the weather is hot. Babies and toddlers are offered regular drinks and school age children are able to help themselves to drinks throughout the session. However, whilst children in other age groups are able to ask for drinks at other times, drinking water is not always easily accessible to all children to encourage them to take on fluids regularly.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a secure and well maintained environment where risks of accidental injury are minimised as staff are vigilant and thorough procedures are in place to reduce potential hazards. For example, fire practises take place each month; and timers are used to ensure sleeping children are checked at frequent intervals. Staff have a clear understanding of the balance between safe limits and freedom as they allow children to develop their ideas and skills as they play.

Children learn the importance of safety and begin to take responsibility for themselves and others as they respond to clear guidelines set by the staff. For example, younger children learn that they must sit still on their chairs when eating their lunch and that they must not run inside the nursery. Pre-school children independently pick up dropped toys and sweep up the rice and sand that has been spilt. They know that this will prevent others from falling over. Children in the out of school club wear safety helmets and pads when they ride bikes and use skate boards. They take off their shoes and socks before going into the sports hall so that they do not slip over when playing ball games.

Children throughout the age groups are able to choose from a wide range of good quality toys that they can reach easily to encourage their independent play. The resources are monitored by staff to ensure they remain safe and suitable for children's individual ages and stages of development. Children are well protected by staff who have a secure knowledge of child protection procedures and a clear understanding of their responsibilities for the welfare of the children in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children in all areas of the nursery and out of school club are happy and enjoy their time in the setting. They gain confidence through regular routines and close relationships with the friendly and encouraging staff who are aware of their individual needs. Children make good progress because the staff plan an imaginative range of indoor and outdoor activities based on the children's interests that engage them well. Children are able to follow their ideas during their play with appropriate encouragement and support.

Staff make good use of the Birth to three matters framework to promote the progress and development of the very young children. The children are encouraged to explore a stimulating range of objects, textures and materials. For example, they shake sensory bottles, feel jelly and baked beans and listen and move to music. Children develop their early communication skills as staff respond to their gestures, sounds and increasing speech. Children in the two to three age group develop their confidence and self-esteem by taking part in activities at group time. They are encouraged to sing action rhymes using the 'song bag' and listen to stories. Children in the out of school club take part in a variety of interesting art and craft activities, role play and sports. They have fun in a more relaxed session at either end of the school day and during the holidays. For example, they make masks, do bubble painting and observational drawings, go for bug hunts and play ball games.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children enjoy a broad programme of worthwhile activities that captures their interests well and enables them to make good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. As a result, children eagerly take part in activities with a positive attitude to learning. Children show high levels of persistence, concentration and independence. They are industrious. They seek out play activities for themselves and initiate their own learning. Children form strong relationships with adults and each other and play together cooperatively.

Children are confident speakers because staff encourage them to express their views and feelings during activities and group discussions. They regularly use their early writing skills for different purposes as they choose from a range of equipment and develop their ideas in their play. Children link sounds to letters, share books and readily recognise their names from cards during daily routines. They count confidently and regularly during activities, compare groups of objects and begin to solve simple number problems. Children competently use language to describe size, shape and position and investigate patterns with pegs and beads.

Children begin to make sense of the world around them through a variety of exciting activities, visitors and outings. They explore a range of interesting textures and materials using their senses. They investigate objects such as magnets, clocks and cameras, to see how they work. Children freely express their imaginations through movement sessions, art and craft activities, music and role play. They competently use a variety of tools and small equipment with increasing control. For example, hole punchers, pencil sharpeners, nails and hammers. However they do not sufficiently challenge and develop their whole body movements and use large equipment.

Children make good progress because the staff have a secure understanding of how young children learn. Staff use the planning which covers the six areas of learning of the Foundation Stage curriculum, to build on children's interests and events that occur. They make good use of effective questioning to challenge children's thinking skills and consolidate their learning. Staff make regular observations of children's progress towards the early learning goals. They use this information to plan the next stage in children's learning although the method used is not systematic and may not always be clear to other staff.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and play a full part in the nursery and out of school club because staff value and respect their individuality. Children develop a sense of belonging and settle quickly in the welcoming environment as they form good relationships with staff and each other. Children with special needs integrate well because suitable procedures are in place and activities are adapted to ensure all children can participate to promote their welfare and development.

Children behave very well. They learn what is expected of them as they respond to reminders from staff. Children in the out of school club show their awareness of right and wrong by drawing up their own list of behavioural rules. Children learn to share

by being encouraged to take turns during games and group activities. They begin to appreciate diversity through play materials and some planned activities that reflect the community and wider world. For example, children learn about Easter and the Japanese 'Tree of Wishes'. These foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children's care, welfare and development are promoted because staff have established secure partnerships with parents and carers. They work together successfully to meet children's individual needs. Information about the setting and the activities is available to parents through a wide range of good quality written notices, newsletters and displays. Information about children's care and development is shared verbally at each session and in writing each day for children in the younger age groups. Parents and carers speak positively about the setting, the staff and their children's achievements.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is good. Parents receive written information about the Foundation Stage and are able to become involved in their children's learning by attending sessions and events in the nursery. Staff ensure that parents are aware of how their children are progressing towards the early learning goals by sharing observations and comments on a regular basis. Parents are able to view their children's assessment records at any time. They are able to continue their children's learning at home through suggestions made in booklets and visits from 'Patch the dog'. Parents' views about their children's abilities and interests are sought when the child joins the nursery and this allows staff to build on what children already know. However, this information is not always routinely updated and used when planning individual children's next stage in their learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care and learning are enhanced by the well organised environment. The space and resources are laid out thoughtfully to maximise play opportunities for the children throughout the age groups. Children benefit from a high proportion of qualified staff who support them well during activities and allow them time and space to initiate their own learning. Children's welfare is safeguarded by clear documentation that is maintained to a high standard. There is a comprehensive operational plan, which is effectively implemented. It explains how the setting operates and ensures that staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. The manager and staff work well together as a strong, successful and committed team. They regularly reflect on their practice and have clear aims for the continued improvement of the quality of the care and nursery education for the children. Comprehensive systems are in place for staff recruitment, induction and appraisal. These ensure that the personal development of the children and the professional development of the staff are promoted. Overall, the range of children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration, Ofsted has received a complaint concerning: the safety and supervision of children using scissors and tools; the nursery's complaints procedure and the way concerns raised with the nursery were dealt with. Ofsted wrote to the provider and asked them to provide information about these issues under: National Standard 2 (organisation); 5 (equipment); 6 (safety) and 12 (working in partnership with parents and carers). The information provided, including details of action taken since the concerns were raised, demonstrated that the nursery is meeting the National Standards as required and Ofsted took no further action. 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):

- make sure that staff responsible for the serving of food always comply with regulations relating to food safety and hygiene
- improve the accessibility of fresh drinking water so that it is readily available to children at all times.

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):

- provide further opportunities for children to challenge and develop their whole body movements and use large equipment

- develop the method used to plan the next step in individual children's learning so that it is more systematic and takes account of parents' observations of their children's progress.

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