

Westgate Nursery School & Creche

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	511540
Inspection date	18/02/2010
Inspector	Jenny Read
Setting address	82 Cricklade Road, Highworth, Swindon, Wilts, SN6 7BL
Telephone number	01793 861268
Email	westgatenursery@highworth82.freeserve.co.uk
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Westgate Nursery School and Crèche registered in 1991 and is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The privately owned nursery may provide care for a maximum of 52 children under eight years; of these, not more than 24 may be under three years and of these, not more than 16 may be under two years at any one time. There are currently 59 children on roll in the early years age group who attend full- and part-time sessions all year round, with the exception of bank holidays and between Christmas and New Year. Of these, 26 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery also supports the government pilot for two-year-old funding. There are variable numbers on roll for the crèche depending on demand. The setting is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm. After school and holiday care is available for children up to eight years who have previously attended the nursery. There is currently one child on roll in the later years age group.

The setting operates from a two-storey detached house in the rural town of Highworth, near Swindon. Children attend from a wide area, including Highworth itself, the surrounding villages and nearby towns. There are seven base rooms and children are grouped according to age. Children under two years are mostly cared for on the first floor. There are stairs giving access to this area. Older children are cared for on the ground floor. There is a secure garden area with grass and patio surfaces for outdoor play. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 9 staff to work directly with the children, alongside the nursery manager, daycare manager and a cook. The manager holds the Early Years Professional Status qualification and National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) in Management at Level 4. Four staff hold NVQ qualifications at Level 3, three are currently working towards an NVQ at Level 3 and one at Level 2.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Many aspects of children's welfare is promoted successfully, with particular emphasis given to encouraging children's healthy well-being. Children's individual needs are met to a good standard by staff who are proactive in ensuring they have a sound knowledge of the individual needs of the children in their care. They are well engaged in a wide range of activities indoors, although little emphasis is given to planning interesting activities and experiences outdoors and the younger children benefit from only occasional outdoor play. While monitoring and evaluation of the quality of provision are inclusive of parents, staff and management, thus enabling the setting to identify appropriate improvements, this has only recently been implemented and a satisfactory account is taken of recommendations made through inspection.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the systems for monitoring the curriculum and day-to-day effectiveness of activities to ensure all areas of learning are well presented and resourced
- extend the range of activities and experiences for all children outside, ensuring equal emphasis is given to the six areas of learning to offer children the freedom to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant
- ensure equal emphasis is given to the six areas of learning, with particular emphasis on children's literacy skills and Information and Communication Technology
- review practise of the escape plan to increase children's awareness of appropriate action to take in an emergency.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Policies and procedures are reviewed yearly by senior management and staff. Staff have a thorough knowledge of most policies and implement many very well to support children's care. Awareness of safeguarding issues is satisfactory to adequately protect children from abuse. Robust recruitment, vetting and induction procedures make sure that staff caring for children are suitable to do so. Yearly appraisals and observations of practice monitor staff's ongoing suitability. There is a clear management structure, and identified management and staff roles result in everyone knowing their duties each day. The staff team are friendly, motivated and mostly engage well with the children to support and encourage their learning and development. Staff are highly committed to ensuring the service they provide is inclusive for all children and families and place good emphasis on providing a warm, welcoming place for children to play. They link well with parents to learn key words in children's own languages, provide alternative meals and rigorously protect children with allergies or specific dietary needs.

Staff are deployed well and successful implementation of the key person system and favourable adult:child ratio support children's needs and development well. The recent restructuring of staff within the groups is resulting in some positive changes for the younger children because activity ideas and resources are adapted and presented well. Staff facilitate children's play and learning well, contributing to the planning of activities and their key children's progress. This results in sound awareness of the purpose of activities to provide suitable challenge. Although planning covers most areas of learning generally well so that children experience a suitable programme of learning, systems to monitor the day-to-day activities and curriculum are not yet secure. This means some gaps are present, such as infrequent access to Information and Communication Technology, some areas of learning are not set up or poorly resourced and insufficient emphasis given to all children's experiences and learning outdoors.

Children's health is promoted successfully. The nursery achieved the 'Scores on the

Doors' safety and food recognition award highlighting their commitment. Children play in a safe and secure environment because risk assessments are detailed and well written. These clearly identify hazards to children inside and outside and are undertaken prior to each outing; ensuring risks are well understood by staff. The nursery manager is enthusiastic, highly committed and has a clear vision for the nursery's future, such as developing the garden area, resources and children's access to the areas of learning. All staff and parents contribute to the self-evaluation and detailed development plan through staff meetings and parent questionnaires. This ensures systems to evaluate the quality of care are inclusive, provide an accurate diagnosis of the nursery's strengths and areas of weakness and include recommendations from the last inspection. The manager regularly communicates clear priorities to the daycare manager and staff to drive improvement. However, new practices and ideas in some areas have been slow and the manager's ability to monitor on a daily basis is hindered due to part-time working.

The staff have a highly positive relationship with parents and partnerships are well-established, ensuring children's needs are well met. Parents receive useful information about the setting through welcome leaflets, various notice boards, newsletters and the nursery website. Daily informal discussion, daily diary sheets, parents meetings and inviting parents to spend time in the nursery, for example around mothers day, is helping to forge strong links. Parents are well informed about all aspects of their children's achievement, well-being and development. Sharing of their children's interim and end of year progress reports, including their next steps and extension ideas, and also their progress summary report covering the six areas of learning and opportunity for parents' comment, enables parents to take an active part in their children's learning and progress. Partnerships with other agencies and providers of childcare are developing to support children's care and individual learning needs.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Relationships throughout the nursery are very good. Children are kind, polite and supportive of each other. They develop the habits and behaviour appropriate to good learners because older children take an active part in devising and discussing the 'golden rules'. Younger children are pleased to see their key person, developing strong bonds. They feel safe to hold their arms up for a cuddle, using gestures, facial expressions and words to let staff know their needs. Children are busy, engaged and are making generally good progress in their learning. Staff know their key children well, readily engage in their play and provide effective support to extend their play further. Staff model new ideas in the role play area and ask purposeful questions during activities. This increases children's interest and encourages them to think and problem solve. The youngest children are inquisitive learners, quietly exploring new experiences, such as painting with brushes. With sensitive encouragement, children develop confidence to investigate the feel of paint on their hands and communicate when they have had enough. Staff skilfully re-engage the children's interest, introducing familiar objects, such as cars, to use in the paint.

Observation and assessment is used smartly to plan activities tailored to children's individual needs and interests. For example, the current topic of 'comparisons' radiates from children's interest and discussions about similarities and differences within the room. Staff are well-informed about their key children's development. Frequent progress reports and assessments of learning across the six areas of learning successfully track children's learning and identify their next steps. Also, completion of 'What I can' and 'What I know' forms provide additional information to aid planning for individual children. The outdoor play area is spacious, however, staff use cones to restrict children's access to large parts of the garden and plan and provide few activities that engage their interests and learning outdoors. As a result, children quickly lose interest and wander around aimlessly. Children downstairs have ample space in which to play and move around freely. At the moment however, staff do not plan the play environment effectively, meaning daily access to the computer and/or technology and a well-resourced writing area is not given sufficient focus. This limits children from accessing resources across the curriculum so that they can build on what they already know and can do.

The younger children experiment with crayons on the writing wall, making circles, lines and various shapes. Circle time with the older children is used purposefully to introduce and reinforce letters and sounds, counting and to talk about the day, date, month and seasons. Children are confident speakers, readily sharing their news, asking questions and keenly recalling the animals that hibernate following their trip to Stanton Park the previous day, 'Owls can fly, when do owls come out at night?'. Children learn to recognise their name on their coat pegs and show good phonetic awareness. They eagerly await their turn when playing the letter sound game, quickly standing up and saying 'I spy with my little eye somebody's name beginning with O'. Younger children develop their early language and communication through narration of their play, regular singing of familiar songs and sharing of books. Children have fun playing the various instruments, gaily exploring the different sounds and responding well to staff instruction to differentiate soft and loud sounds.

Children are curious, active learners. They benefit from a wide range of stimulating activities that enhance their creativity, imagination and opportunity to explore different textures, such as sawdust, bubble wrap and various media in the treasure baskets. They have fun investigating paint, jelly and shaving foam. They make patterns and shapes in the foam and use their senses to describe how it feels, 'it's gooey, it's squidgy', 'it's cold'. The toddlers explore the jelly, using spoons to fill and empty the cups with growing dexterity, experimenting as they smell and taste it. Children develop healthy habits and good independence from a young age. With appropriate support from staff, they learn to wash their hands, brush their teeth, put on their coat and Wellington boots and cut their fruit with a knife safely at snack time. They make choices for themselves about where they play, although opportunities to further extend older and more able children's independence with cutting and using tools at lunch times is restricted. Through discussion and clear explanation, children learn about potential dangers to themselves and others. However, infrequent practise of the escape plan means children show little awareness of safe action to take in an emergency.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

Met