



Woodthorpe Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY308356
Inspection date 14 November 2005
Inspector Linda Filewood

Setting Address Woodthorpe Primary School, Summerfield Road, York, North Yorkshire, YO24 2RU
Telephone number 07749 247451
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Registered person Woodthorpe Pre-School Playgroup Committee
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Woodthorpe Pre-school Playgroup was registered in April 2005. It is run by a voluntary parent management committee and operates from two classrooms in Woodthorpe Primary School, which is situated in the Woodthorpe area of York. The group have access to their own secure outside area and the use of the main playground, when not used by school.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The group is

open Monday 12.30 until 15.00 and Tuesday to Friday 09.30 to 12.00, term time only. There are currently 40 children on roll, of these 22 children are in receipt of nursery funding. Children with special needs and English as a second language are welcomed into the group.

There are four members of staff working with the children on a full time basis, of whom three hold a relevant childcare qualification. The group are members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are beginning to understand the importance of personal hygiene through consistent daily routines. They learn why hand washing is important through appropriate explanations from staff, who make sure children wash their hands after using the toilet, before snack time and after messy play. Children are helped to stay healthy as staff adhere to their policies and procedures regarding health and safety, which includes the exclusion of sick children in order to ensure the health of others. However, children are often not encouraged to put their hands over their mouth when coughing. Most staff are trained in administering first aid and appropriate permissions and records are in place regarding the administration of medication and recording of any accident, ensuring the children are well cared for.

Children's health and dietary needs are successfully met because staff work well with parents. They help themselves to nutritious snacks, such as chopped banana, cheese, crackers, sultanas and apples at regular snack times and are offered a choice of milk or water. Drinks of water are freely accessed from the dispenser at any time during the session.

All children experience and enjoy physical activity at each session which effectively promotes their physical development. Outdoor play is included in the daily routine, unless bad weather prevents this and children are given clear explanations as to why fresh air is good for them. They enthusiastically join in a wide range of activities which challenge their skills appropriately both indoors and outdoors. They climb with confidence, successfully adjust their speed and change direction to avoid obstacles when playing on bikes or scooters. Staff give good support to children who are still gaining confidence in areas such as, pedalling a bike using stabilisers. Children competently use a wide range of small and large equipment such as scissors, paint brushes, hoops, bean bags and a play parachute. They are given good opportunities to develop fine motor skills and promote hand-eye co-ordination through, for example, the use of jigsaws and threading.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure, safe indoor and outdoor environment. Staff protect

children well by ensuring the main door is kept locked at all times and the outside areas are fully checked before children are allowed out to play. Children are welcomed into a very clean, well maintained environment, which is effectively organised to enable them to move freely and safely. All resources are in good condition, appropriate for the age of the children and can be accessed safely and independently by them.

Children learn to keep themselves safe due to clear explanations from staff. They understand the importance of using large play equipment and know, for example, they must not jump from the climbing frame especially with a toy in their hands. They know that scissors can be dangerous and must be used safely and to hold the adults hand when walking to the local park. Children participate in fire drills every term and all staff and parent helpers are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities.

Children's welfare is well considered and they are protected at all times. Staff clearly understand their role in child protection and know how to put appropriate procedures into practice, if and when necessary. Policies are in place and shared with parents, for the safe collection of children and their care if they are not collected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time in the playgroup and are fully involved in a good range of enjoyable activities which contribute satisfactory to their development. Children are interested in what they do and are encouraged to use their imagination and learn new skills through their play. For example, wooden building blocks are made into a large house with numerous chimneys which are then counted. They move around freely, accessing toys and play equipment, and are sufficiently confident to work and play independently or in groups. Older children, for instance, happily join to play imaginatively at fire-fighters rescuing people from a burning house.

Staff are interested in what the children do and the children are gaining in self-esteem and confidence as their achievements are praised and valued. However, they are not always fully supported to increase their skills and build on what they already know. Children are very happy and settled and are keen to communicate with staff. They enthusiastically include staff in their role play and confidently ask for help when needed. Most staff know the children well and they build up a close and warm relationship with them.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making suitable progress because most staff have an adequate knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage. They are familiar with the early learning goals, but the systems in place do not fully monitor children's progress and achievements and are not used effectively to inform future planning. This results in some planned activities lacking sufficient challenge for more able children and any weaknesses in the children's learning not being targeted. Little information about children's attainment on entry is obtained so it is difficult to assess their starting points. Children are motivated and

enthusiastic to learn as staff adopt a very relaxed, cheerful approach with them. There is a suitable balance of activities at each session to ensure a good mix of child led and adult led activities. Most staff use open ended questions to effectively promote children's thinking and resources are generally well used, although there are few opportunities for children to practice writing for a variety of purposes.

Children communicate confidently and talk easily about their siblings and family life. For instance, they are proud of the fact that an older sister can do very hard jigsaws and comfortable that mummy will be at home while they are at playschool. Children show an obvious love of books. They are content to look at books on their own, to handle them correctly and with care, showing that they understand that print carries meaning. They listen attentively to stories and enjoy singing for short periods in large group activities.

Children willingly attempt counting when building with bricks and correctly manage to count to five; some can count confidently to ten when adding to shells in the sand tray. Children are beginning to use positional language in their play and correctly identify that they have stuck a cut out shape in the middle of their picture. They enjoy using all their senses to explore a wide range of different materials, realise that their cheeks feel cold after playing out and the sun makes shadows of their mobiles on the classroom wall. They are developing a good understanding of the natural world through topics and activities. They learn, for example, which animals hibernate in cold weather and make leaf prints for an autumn display in the classroom from leaves collected whilst outside.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are treated with equal concern and each child's individuality is valued and respected. The abundance of art work, posters, friezes or other displays enhance the environment. This fully promotes children's learning and their sense of belonging. Children are helped to become more aware of the wider world and are beginning to develop a positive attitude to diversity through a suitable range of resources and activities provided. They learn, for example, about animals in Africa, make models and pictures together for a large display on the wall and dress up in Chinese costume for a Chinese meal with chopsticks. Local walks helps the children appreciate their environment. They discuss the houses they live in and the doctors, dentists and shops they visit with their families.

There are effective strategies in place to manage behaviour and children mostly play very well together. They are learning to care for each other and respect each others feelings. They are helped to understand responsible behaviour and are learning to successfully share resources, such as taking turns on the bikes. Children are becoming aware of their own needs and the needs of others. Staff act as good role models however, the children are not always encouraged to say please and thank you when asking for something. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Children benefit from effective sharing of

information with parents through regular newsletters and a detailed notice board. Staff are very approachable and parents are comfortable in talking to them about their children. However, parents are not kept fully informed about children's learning, achievements and their progress towards the early learning goals, or are involved in their children's learning in a meaningful way.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's welfare, care and learning is promoted adequately. All records, policies and procedures required for the efficient and safe management of the provision are in place. These are suitable. They are shared with parents and regularly updated. Most staff are qualified and experienced in child development and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Ratios of staff to children are consistently maintained which ensures children receive plenty of individual attention and support, although opportunities to further develop children are often missed. Overall, activities are well planned and presented. However, full consideration has not been given to some aspects of the sessions to ensure children are not sitting for long periods of time when the younger ones, in particular, become easily distracted

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Effective recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well protected. However, as yet there are no formal evaluations of staff performance or appraisals. Staff monitor children's achievements and update the children's assessments records regularly. However, these records do not include plans for the next steps in children's learning. The committee and playgroup staff all work well together and all share the same vision, which is to improve and develop their setting to ensure children achieve their potential. Overall the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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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the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

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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):

- ensure group sessions and activities are organised to meet the needs of all children and staff/helpers are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities.

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):

- extend children's understanding of writing for different purposes and improve opportunities for children to use and recognise familiar letters, words and text in practical everyday activities.
- develop the assessment system to ensure observations show clearly what children know or understand, how they approach learning and the next steps to be included in their learning (also applies to care)
- develop planning so that it is informed by ongoing observations and assessments of children's learning, and includes sufficient detail to enable practitioners to make best use of activities and experiences to promote learning of all children and provide them with appropriate challenge (also applies to care)
- establish systems to inform parents about children's learning, achievements and their progress towards the early learning goals, and to involve them in their children's learning in a meaningful way
- develop a system for staff appraisals.

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