



Woodlands Pre-School Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY293256
Inspection date	24 January 2006
Inspector	Jane Pamela Berry / Debra Elizabeth Jean Dahlstrom
Setting Address	St. Bedes Catholic Primary School, Keepers Lane, Weaverham, Northwich, Cheshire, CW8 3BY
Telephone number	01606 784714
E-mail	
Registered person	Susan Jane McDonald
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?

Woodlands Pre-school Nursery was re-registered in 2005 following a move to new premises. The pre-school has been established since 1998. It operates from a purpose built mobile classroom at St Bedes Catholic Primary school in Weaverham, a village outside Northwich.

The children have access to a classroom and associated facilities and a designated outside play area adjacent to the building is provided.

The pre school is registered for 20 children. There are currently 27 children on roll altogether, of whom 25 are funded children. The hours of operation are from 9.00 to 11.45, Monday to Friday.

Half of the staff hold a qualification. The owner/manager and two other staff hold teaching qualifications, another member of staff is undertaking training as a classroom assistant.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, stimulating and hygienic environment. They thrive because staff follow effective procedures and practices which meet the children's individual needs. These include effective cleaning systems to prevent the risk of cross infection, such as cloths and aprons for specific tasks. Children effectively learn the importance of good personal hygiene through daily routines, for example, they wash their hands independently after playing in the garden and assemble confidently to wash their hands with soap and water before eating their snacks and visiting the toilet. All children attend to their own personal needs competently.

The good levels of adult support help children to gain a thorough understanding of staying healthy, for example, blowing their nose and covering their mouths when coughing to prevent the risk of cross infection. This is effectively supported by the staff's close adherence to the sick children policy. Staff know the children well and are attentive to their individual needs, they quickly identify if they are unwell and take the appropriate action, such as, contacting parents. Staff meet the needs of children extremely well, for example, they ensure they are not exposed to foods that may trigger allergic reactions.

Children are able to rest according to their personal needs. Effective documentation enables the staff caring for them to provide consistent care. Highly effective systems are in place ensuring the risk of cross infection is minimised. Children's independent access to fresh drinking water is limited, although adults ensure they have plenty of drinks provided during the session. Effective systems are in place to ensure children's individual dietary needs are met at all times. A range of health nutritious snacks are provided. This includes breadsticks and fresh fruit daily. The poster five fruits a day is also displayed to encourage parents to adopt a healthy eating regime.

The children enjoy a good range of planned and spontaneous activities which enable them to explore and extend their capabilities. They are confident when using a range of wheeled toys and balancing equipment. They move safely and with control, both indoors and outside, with great agility. Children are encouraged to practise their developing skills, as they participate in games like follow my leader, and through the use of a parachute to explore concepts, like under and over. They are encouraged to play outdoors and experience wet weather conditions, by slashing in puddles and an using umbrella. These early experiences enhance their physical development and nurture healthy routines and a love of sports. The children use a range of small tools

with increasing control and confidence, for example, glue spreaders and scissors. They have many good opportunities to explore both the indoor and the outdoor environment, and are supported well by the staff working alongside them during play. The individual needs of children of all ages and stages of development are met well in practice.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children freely explore the warm, stimulating and welcoming environment. This is supported by effective cleaning systems and organisation of the setting. Children have access to a range of resources that stimulate their interest and expand their learning, such as, playing with shaving foam. A very good range of natural materials are used as props to support their play. Older children are confident to self select resources from low-level storage units which successfully fosters their independence.

Staff have a sound knowledge of child protection issues and the action they would take in order to protect children from harm. Staff are aware to report concerns to the appropriate agency should they have any concerns regarding children's welfare. This is supported by the staff attending child protection training, however, the procedure to follow should a referral be instigated, for example if an allegation is made against a member of staff is unclear.

Good safety procedures are in place to keep children safe and effective staff teaching develops the children's understanding of danger and awareness of potential hazards. This includes good staff teaching about hazards, and visits from fire officer's and activities involving crossing the road safely. Children learn how to keep themselves safe through topic work and daily discussions with the staff, for example, they know how to use outdoor resources safely and how to remain safe on outings. Effective systems are in place to ensure children are collected by named persons, with suitable arrangements for emergencies. Risk assessments are carried out by staff to ensure the children's safety, both indoors and outside.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled at the setting. They enter the group happily and quickly leave their parents to play with their friends. Clear plans are in place to ensure all children take part in a range of interesting play and learning opportunities, providing stimulating and interesting challenges. Children are engaged in a range of purposeful activities, such as, making cards portraying different animals such as Zebras in the wild. The children enjoy a range of craft activities, and their own work is attractively displayed. This promotes children's imagination, creativity and free expression in their artwork.

Children receive lots of support, encouragement and contact from the staff, this means that they feel safe and secure in the care of familiar adults. The staff are very

knowledgeable about the children and they use this information well to meet their needs. The children enjoy a range of activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development. The staff are currently in the process of implementing the Birth to three framework to further enhance the play and learning opportunities to children under three years.

Children are developing a sense of belonging, they are familiar with the daily routines and remind others of what happens next in daily routines. The children encourage and help one another to put on their coats to go outside to play. Children are confident and eager to learn. They excitedly call children over, in order that they may look at creatures they have found in the garden. Staff provide children with open ended questions enabling them to think and to communicate. Adults introduce new words regularly, for example, explaining how the animals use 'camouflage' in order to protect themselves in the jungle.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have an extensive knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and plan a range interesting activities across the six areas of learning. Staff attend ongoing training and have good links with the local authority. The staff team work well together and are in the process of developing the planning systems with the help of advisory teachers. Planning identifies the next steps in children's learning and assessment systems are in place to chart children's progress, however, the records do not contain enough information on how children have achieved the various stepping stones. Staff do, however, provide the children with a very good range of interesting well planned activities that actively engage their interest. This keeps them well motivated, for example, the children are particularly eager to explore the outdoor area in wet weather suitably equipped with umbrellas and Wellington boots. Staff are skilled at providing open ended questions that enable children to think, communicate and to solve problems, such as investigating the worms in the garden and conducting scientific experiments with pretend volcanoes.

Children are confident to see to their own needs and are confident and eager learners. They are inquisitive and ask lots of questions, such as, how their brain works. Children are very supportive and help one another to complete tasks. They register themselves confidently on the registration board on arrival. Staff offer support and provide gentle reminders to enable them to find their name, such as, sounding out the initial letter of their name. They enjoy listening to stories and re-enacting them with staff, such as pretending to go on a bear hunt. They are keen to help recreate stories through artwork music and movement sessions, where they pretend to be different characters in the story line. The children sing a range of songs confidently and often burst into song spontaneously. Children practice their mark making skills in the writing area and have very good opportunities to write for different purposes in other areas. This enhances and contributes to the children's emergent writing skills and language development.

Children confidently count each other as they go outside with the more able children recognising and counting numerals above ten. There are very good opportunities for children to recognise and identify the meaning of words and numbers around the

environment, such as through the interactive number lines and signs that are displayed. The plans show children sing songs which help them to learn about simple addition and subtraction, such as 'five current buns', and the children have very good opportunities to solve simple problems, for example, measuring ingredients during the baking activities.

Children learn to take care of living things through planned practical activities, for example, growing vegetables, planting seeds and looking at nature, including wildlife. They use recyclable materials to good effect, for example when building a boat in the outdoor area. They construct with a range of building materials and make models using their fine movements and hand and eye co-ordination. They have opportunities take part in a variety of art and craft activities, and they are not overly directed by staff. This enables the children to use their imagination and natural creativity. They enjoy good opportunities in role play to act out scenarios, such as being a veterinary nurse or a shopkeeper. The children have good access to technology and enjoy playing on the computer and operating a camera.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have equal access to the play activities ensuring they are all valued and included. Staff are knowledgeable about the children's individual needs. These are well met in practice by familiar and consistent staff. The effective use of newsletters and notice boards ensure parents are kept fully informed of their children's progress

The children are developing a good understanding of their local community and the wider world through planned and spontaneous activities. Positive images are displayed attractively around the environment. Children celebrate a range of festivals throughout the year which incorporates the different nationalities, for example, opportunities to look at customs and festivals, such as, Chinese New Year. Children with special needs receive appropriate care and education from staff, who liaise closely with the child's parents and other professionals to ensure their needs are met, this includes meeting with other agencies involved in planning for children's specific needs. This ensures all children make rapid progress with their development and maximises opportunities for their learning.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They understand the need for safe boundaries both indoors and outside. The children respond well to the staff's requests, such as, at tidy up time when asked to put the toys away. They respond well and have a very good understanding of basic rules, enabling them to feel safe and secure and to make the most of learning situations. This is supported by the behaviour management policy and the systems implemented by staff. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement from the staff for their achievements and efforts. This has a positive impact on their confidence and self-esteem. Children are polite, they share resources and take turns well showing consideration for one another. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents receive good quality information on their child and the setting which includes daily verbal handovers on children's interests

and achievements. Parents also receive written profiles of children's development, although these are in the early stages of development. Parents are supportive of the setting with several parents helping to plant fruit trees to create the nature garden early in the year. Regular newsletters and notice boards keep parents up to date on the curriculum and how they can make valuable contributions to their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management is good. All staff are fully inducted which means that they have a secure understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Clear, effective recruitment and vetting procedures ensure staff appointed are suitably qualified, experienced and have a child-centred approach. Regular appraisal systems ensure staff's development and training needs are met. Regular staff meetings ensure staff work well as a team and in a consistent manner, although delegation is not used to optimum effect.

Detailed policies and procedures are in place, although there are some omissions with regards to the child protection policy. All the legally required documentation which contributes to the children's health, safety and well-being is satisfactorily in place, including medication, accident and incident records. This maintains children's safety and welfare.

The good ratios of qualified staff significantly improve the quality of care and education for all children. Staff work with the children consistently on a daily basis, ensuring that they are fully supported with their learning and development needs. The environment is well organised to enable children to move freely between different work areas, successfully extending their ability to make informed choices and exert their growing independence. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report. 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):

- enable the older children to access drinking water independently

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 the assessment profiles by including direct observations on the children's progress as they move through the stepping stones and extend the use of information to inform the future planning for individual children.

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