



Greenleas Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY309982
Inspection date	13 February 2006
Inspector	Suzette Butcher
Setting Address	Greenleas Primary School, Green Lane, Wallasey, Merseyside, CH45 8LZ
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Registered person	Marie Tina Steel and Janet Elizabeth Taylor
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?

Greenleas Pre-School is privately owned and was registered in 2005. It operates from 3 rooms in a purpose-built building next to Greenleas Primary School in Wallasey, Wirral. The pre-school is open from 09.10 to 11.45 and 12.30 to 15.00 each weekday during term-time only. All children share access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 40 children aged from 2 years 6 months to 5 years on roll. Of

these 24 receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local area and the setting currently supports a small number of children with additional needs. There are 4 members of staff who all hold an appropriate early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are protected from becoming ill because staff understand and implement all required policies and procedures. Staff have current first aid certificates and update their knowledge of first aid procedures by relevant training. Good health and hygiene routines are followed to reduce the risks of cross-contamination and infections to protect everyone attending. Children are encouraged to become independent in their self-help skills as older children confidently follow good routines and look after their own toileting needs. Younger children are gently encouraged and supported in their personal care as they are reminded to wash away all the germs after toileting and before handling food. Every child attempts to put on their own coat with appropriate prompts and guidance from staff, such as helping a child to secure the bottom of the zip or pull out a sleeve to enable a child to proudly complete the task. Children learn to accept responsibility for their own health needs and develop a good understanding of the underlying purpose of healthy lifestyle routines in topics and visits from health experts. For example, they enjoy listening to a visiting nurse talking about health and hygiene or they eagerly join in role play activities with themes such as going to the dentist or the opticians. Older children confidently talk about washing away germs or brushing away bits of food from their teeth.

Daily access to a good range of energetic activities, both indoors and outdoors, enables children to have fun and make good progress in their physical development. Activities are planned to provide variety and to enable children to gain confidence as they learn to move with control and use their bodies in different ways. Children discuss the benefits of keeping fit in lively exercise sessions where they are encouraged to 'stretch up tall', balance on one leg or complete star jumps together. Time is taken to feel their hearts beating fast 'like a racing car'. Children then compare their own slower heart beats after taking deep breaths or relaxing. Every child enjoys experimenting and manipulating different materials and consistencies such as playdough, paint or sand. Fine motor control develops as they cut and stick or use pens or pencils to write letters in imaginative play situations.

Children learn about choosing healthy options and the positive effects of a healthy diet in topic work and regular discussions. Every child eagerly chooses from a selection of fresh fruit at snack time each day. A choice of fresh water or milk is available at snack time and children are consulted and given time to decide which one they would like each day. Fresh drinking water is freely available in a low level water dispenser where children confidently help themselves to a drink when thirsty and then throw the paper cone away in the bin. Each child is delighted to take their turn as they proudly carry out their role as helper at snack time. Good manners and kind actions are praised and encouraged as children help to give out the cups and plates and they remember to say 'please' and 'thank you' to everyone. Children's

dietary needs are recorded and met according to their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe and secure in the friendly environment where everyone relates warmly to each other with lots of hugs and cuddles. Colourful displays of children's art work and a homely atmosphere creates a strong sense of belonging for children and their families when they are enthusiastically welcomed and actively involved each day. A high staff-child ratio enables each child to move about freely and safely between areas in a supportive environment. Children are protected as adults identify potential risks and follow agreed procedures to minimise dangers. Staff and children share stories and join in discussions about recognising and responding to dangerous situations. They vividly recall a visit from the fire service when the firemen talked about safe procedures and showed them the fire engine. This is effectively linked to a fire practise where children understand why they must listen carefully and follow instructions to keep everyone safe. Topics about people who help us, reinforce children's understanding of safety issues as they learn more about the emergency services. Children are made aware of the consequence of their actions when they are reminded not to run indoors as they might fall and hurt themselves or others. Children practise the Green Cross Code and how to use pedestrian crossings and traffic lights in role play activities. Older children show concern for others when they remind their friends of possible dangers and guide them safely around tables and chairs. Children's well-being is protected in clear policies and procedures on child protection issues and through the staff's good knowledge and understanding of relevant issues gathered from recent training.

Good quality resources and play equipment are stored at a low level for children to help themselves and make their own choices in play activities. The wide range of resources to meet the needs of children across the age and ability range. Areas are clearly identified and labelled for different types of play with, for example, a messy play room with a low level sink which enables children to help or wash their hands independently. A pretend play room with a wide range of dressing up clothes on low hangers and home play equipment provides many imaginative play opportunities. Children eagerly gather together with the whole group for a story or circle time in the cosy corner where they sit on floor cushions and rugs. Toys and equipment are cleaned and regularly checked for safety. Items are made from different materials such as wood or soft fabrics and natural resources such as shells, feathers, dried pasta or stones are used for sorting or creative play.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children happily enter the pre-school where they gather together and share their latest news with their friends and staff. They listen carefully to staff and each other as they decide what day and month it is or count the number of children present. Younger children develop a stronger sense of time and an awareness of past and

future as they learn what happens next in familiar daily routines. They enjoy experimenting with a range of tactile play opportunities such as sand, water, playdough or paint. Musical instruments, lively stories and songs develop listening skills and extend sensory experiences for young children. Early communication skills are frequently encouraged and promoted as children's speech, signs, gestures and facial expressions are acknowledged and reinforced by staff. However, staff have limited knowledge and understanding of the Birth to three matters framework which restricts opportunities for young children. Subsequently, a realistic starting point is not established for individual children to provide effective links with the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make sound progress due to the staff's good knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones within the early learning goals. This provides a firm foundation for the Foundation Stage with comprehensive planning systems in place to provide exciting and stimulating opportunities for children. Children's progress is observed and recorded but the systems do not clearly identify children's individual strengths and weaknesses to link with the observation, assessment and planning cycle. Consequently, planning systems do not effectively build on what individual children can already do. This restricts opportunities for staff to predict and plan for the next steps in each child's development and learning. Children enjoy a wide range of opportunities where they can explore, experiment, plan and make their own decisions. There is a good balance of free play and structured activities for children across the age range although staff do not always maximise opportunities to promote children's creativity and independent learning.

Exciting new opportunities are introduced for children in topics and themes which encompass every early learning goal. Children learn new skills and make connections with other experiences as they explore ideas within a topic such as 'People who Help us' or 'Winter'. Children eagerly wait their turn and become involved in role play when the imaginative play area is transformed into a dentist's surgery or into a beach when a lifeguard comes to talk to the children. Children pretend to go camping in the forest or have their eyes tested at the opticians. A receptionist writes down names and answers the telephone or a dentist carefully puts on gloves and shines a torch to count a patient's teeth. Staff skilfully facilitate play when they introduce new ideas such as a chart to identify different teeth. This maintains interest and increases children's motivation to learn.

The development of children's language and communication skills are given high priority within the setting. Children become confident communicators as they chat happily to each other and initiate conversations with adults. Children's speech and language is enhanced by introducing rhymes, songs and rhythms as they sing and clap the syllables of each child's name or enthusiastically join in lively actions songs. Children's language is skilfully enriched in meaningful activities such as during story time where staff point out the spine of the book and children learn the meaning of 'author' and 'glossary'. Each child invents and directs their own imaginative games when they dress up as a spaceman or make dinner for everyone. Children have access to a good range of mark making opportunities. They happily write on

postcards, 'post it' notes, note pads and deliver letters in envelopes. They enjoy sharing stories together as they select a book and sit together in the quiet corner. Children develop a good understanding of mathematical concepts, calculations and numerals when they are naturally introduced in meaningful activities and practical experiences. They share a joke when staff count too many jumps in a keep fit session and then calculate how many more as they take away 8 from 10. Children learn about weighing, measuring and mixing in baking sessions when they enjoy stirring and exploring different consistencies together when they make biscuits. Children confidently find their own name each morning and post it in the box. They learn to identify initial sounds, letters, shapes, numbers and colours in weekly themes. These concepts are imaginatively introduced and reinforced throughout the week when, for example, children make eight heart shapes with white play dough, make a Valentine card or find things that begin with h.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are well behaved and considerate towards adults and each other in an atmosphere of mutual respect and support. For example, children proudly offer letters or pictures that they have made for staff or their friends and respond with 'you are welcome' when offered enthusiastic thanks. Children eagerly join the group each day and subsequently play happily together and enjoy each other's company. Older children happily share, take turns and play cooperatively in free play and younger children are gently reminded and encouraged to share and consider the needs of others in the group. Children are involved in regular discussion where they review and agree rules and boundaries. Consequently, they respect and understand why they are reminded to help to tidy away toys or put the rubbish in the bin. Minor disagreements are sensitively dealt with by staff as they skilfully intervene and respond appropriately according to the individual child's level of understanding. Staff talk quietly and calmly about the possible outcome and consequences of their actions when they both want the same toy. Younger children are gently redirected or guided and supported from an adult's knee to enable them to continue in the game. Feelings and emotions are explored and discussed when Monkey, a glove puppet joins the group and enjoys a hug from each child. Regular enthusiastic praise and encouragement from all staff promotes a positive attitude where children respond to and follow the adults' calm, consistent and respectful example. Individual achievements are celebrated enthusiastically and children eagerly line up to record their success on a 'Well done chart'.

Every child is valued and actively involved in an inclusive environment where activities are adapted and extra support offered for children with additional needs. Information is shared between staff, parents and relevant support agencies to promote children's individual needs. However, staff do not have clear knowledge and understanding of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice and appropriate procedures to follow. Children have access to a broad range of resources and play opportunities that promote positive images of diversity. Children enjoy dressing up in Chinese clothes and listening to stories about different countries. They are involved in practical activities when they learn about different festivals such as Ramadan or

Diwali and different cultural practices in topics such as 'Children from around the world'. They enjoy learning Spanish phrases in weekly sessions with a Spanish teacher. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

There is a good partnership with parents and carers. Parents are actively involved in their child's education in weekly diaries where staff and parents write about each child's week. Written information about the next week's topic and themes is available for each family in their child's diary. Parent participation is actively encouraged with useful suggestions on ways they can support their child at home with clear and meaningful tasks to follow such as 'feed the birds and find their pictures in a book together'. Parents join in topics in practical ways when they take time to come into the pre-school and talk to all the children about their work as a lifeguard, vet, or nurse. Parents comment on their overall satisfaction with the quality of care and education provided. They state that they are particularly happy with the friendly, homely environment where their children learn about their surroundings and the local area. This promotes strong links within the local community where grandparents and friends are welcomed and involved. Information is shared on children's progress in informal chats at the beginning or end of the session to promote good continuity of care for everyone involved. Children's individual development records are shared, discussed and agreed with parents each term to further extend their involvement in their child's progress within the Foundation Stage. An 'open house' policy and good settling in procedures effectively reassure parents. This enables children to develop confidence and gradually adapt to being a part of the group.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The management team are actively involved in all the day-to-day running of the pre-school and have a sound understanding of required policies and procedures to meet the National Standards. Staff meetings are held on a regular basis to discuss planning and review events. However, there are no effective systems in place to regularly monitor and evaluate the quality of nursery education and care to enable management to identify and prioritise areas for improvement. Staff work well together as a team with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Staff members support each other effectively and communicate well in informal discussions. Keyworker systems are in place to promote continuity and consistency for children and parents.

The pre-school environment is organised to promote flexibility and creative opportunities for young children. However, the outside play area does not provide a wide range of opportunities for children. Effective systems are in place to ensure strict time limits are adhered to in the smooth running of the premises which are shared by other providers.

Staff are experienced and qualified to a recognised early years standard. They are committed to continuing their own professional development as they attend courses and share their new knowledge with the team. Training needs are identified and

advice and support is requested from the Early Years Partnership. Documentation and records are used effectively to support the care of children and comply with regulations to protect children. Policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and shared with parents. Overall, the pre-school meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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 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):

- increase staff's knowledge and understanding of the Birth to three matters framework to provide further opportunities for younger children and to effectively link with the Foundation Stage curriculum (also applies to nursery education)
- increase staff's knowledge and understanding of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice to improve procedures for children with additional needs
- increase opportunities for outside play.

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):

- review routines and activities to ensure opportunities to extend children's creativity and independent learning are maximised (also applies to care)
- identify the different starting points for individual children to build on what they can already do and plan for the next steps in their development and learning (also applies to care)
- implement systems to regularly monitor and evaluate the quality of nursery education and care throughout the setting (also applies to care).

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