



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 255213

DfES Number: 524337

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	08/02/2005
Inspector Name	Karen Cooper

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Whitecrest Pre-School Playgroup
Setting Address	Whitecrest Great Barr Birmingham West Midlands B43 6HQ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Whitecrest Preschool Playgroup Management Committee 1044350
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Whitecrest Preschool Playgroup Management Committee
Address	Whitecrest Great Barr Birmingham West Midlands B43 6HQ

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Whitecrest pre-school playgroup has been registered since 1979 and operates in a classroom at Whitecrest Primary School in Great Barr. The group serves the local area. Children have access to the school hall, grounds and there is a fully enclosed outdoor area available for play.

There are currently 34 children on roll. This includes 11 funded 3 year olds and 3 funded 4 years olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group supports children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens Monday to Friday 9:00 - 11:30 and Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 13:20 - 15:20 during school term times.

There are five staff who work with the children. More than 50% of the staff have early years qualifications.

How good is the Day Care?

Whitecrest pre-school provides a good standard of care for children. Staff have created a welcoming, warm environment for the children and their parents. There is a good range of equipment and furniture to meet the varying needs of the children. All staff hold a recognised early years qualification and are committed to improving their practise through training. Documentation is well maintained and held within the boundaries of confidentiality.

Safety is well addressed throughout the provision and regular checks are carried out on the premises to ensure children's safety at all times. Health and hygiene is addressed throughout and staff encourage the children's independence skills through daily routines. Snacks and drinks are provided each day, although children would benefit from fresh drinking water being made readily available. Specific dietary needs are known by staff and parent's wishes are adhered too. Staff have a good understanding of effective methods of dealing with behaviour and regular praise and encourage children for their achievements.

Children access an extensive range of toys and equipment, which encourages them to make progress in their development. Activities are interesting and exciting and the children are motivated to learn. Resources which reflect diversity are provided and celebrations of other festivals take place throughout the year, which enables the children to develop their understanding of different cultures and beliefs. Individual needs and preferences are discussed and respected. Strong relationships have been formed between the staff, children and their peers.

Good relationships have been established with parents. They are encouraged to share information about their child and are kept informed of progress of their child through a variety of means.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable, as there were no actions raised at the previous inspection.

What is being done well?

- Excellent relationships have been formed between the children and staff, who are aware of individual needs and abilities. The staff are experienced, caring practitioners who take their roles seriously.
- An extensive range of toys and equipment are provided which are well maintained, easily accessible and encourage the children's overall development. The accommodation is good, having been well adapted for use by the children. The environment is bright and stimulating with a range of children's work being displayed around the room.
- The staff foster and expect appropriate behaviour and any lapses are dealt with in a firm but kind manner, using age appropriate methods. Individual support allows the staff to stress sharing, taking turns, caring for each other and the environment.
- Staff work well with parents to support children's progress and development in all six areas of learning and value the contribution of each other.
- A prospectus is available to all parents and they are kept informed of their child's progress and about the service provided through newsletters, daily discussion, parent meetings and the notice board.

What needs to be improved?

- the availability of fresh drinking water.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

No complaints to report on.

Outcome of the inspection
Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION
<i>All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.</i>
<i>As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.</i>

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection	
Std	Recommendation
8	Ensure fresh drinking water is available to children at all times.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

The children at Whitecrest Pre-School are making generally good progress overall and are making very good progress in all six areas of learning. Younger children are well settled into the daily routine and are happy and eager to learn. The older children are confident, independent and self reliant as they choose activities. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is being fostered appropriately.

Teaching is generally good and it is evident from planning that the staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and the stepping stones for learning. Curriculum planning is effective with staff taking account of what children already know when planning future activities, although the daily activities are not evaluated to ensure their effectiveness. The staff provide equal opportunities for girl and boys ensuring all children are able to join in activities and appropriate consideration is given to children with special needs and language requirements. There is an effective system in place for assessing and observing children's attainments and progress towards the early learning goals. The staff interact appropriately with children during activities. Clear rules are set for behaviour and children's behaviour is good. Resources and accommodation are well organised to ensure children can choose and work independently.

Leadership and management is generally good. The staff are committed professionals who regularly review most aspects of their practice and actively seek to extend their professional development through training. The group has the support of the Pre- School Learning Alliance and through the partnership the staff ensure that the children progress in their learning.

Partnership with parents is very good. The parents are provided with good quality information through the group's brochure and from a well displayed notice board of information about the service offered and of the educational programme.

What is being done well?

- Staff have developed a good balance between directed and child initiated activities. Children are free to follow their own interests during the session. They have access to fiction and non-fiction books, role-play equipment, dressing up clothes, construction, resources and tools to support their knowledge and understanding of the world. They plant and grow bulbs, regularly participate in cooking activities and the computer is used effectively to aid their learning.
- Good planning and the use of excellent resources provide a stimulating and challenging environment for the children.
- The staff foster and expect appropriate behaviour and any lapses are dealt

with in a firm but kind manner, using age appropriate methods. A high percentage of individual support allow the staff to stress sharing, taking turns and caring for each other and the environment.

- The partnership with parent has a positive impact on children's learning. Good information is given to parents via the notice board, parents meetings and the prospectus. Newsletter provide ongoing information about special events and daily discussions keep parents informed of their child's progress. Staff value parents comments about learning at home to aid the children's assessments.

What needs to be improved?

- the evaluation of activities.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Since the last inspection, the group has made very good progress in addressing the key issue that was highlighted. The staff were required to ensure that parents of funded children are given clear information on the educational provision.

A prospectus is issued to new parents before their child enters the setting. The notice board, newsletters and children's assessment records keep parents informed of their child's progress, the learning programme and the activities that take place.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

The children are forming good relationships with staff and their peer group and separate well from parents and carers. They are interested and eager to learn and the staff are developing the children's confidence and self esteem with praise and encouragement. The children are developing good personal independence and are attempting to see to their own hygiene needs. Through planned topics the children are developing an understanding of festivals and events of our wider world.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children increase their speaking and listening skills during group times and individually. They recall experiences and listen attentively to staff when a story is being read and when given simple instructions to follow. They readily act out nursery rhymes and enthusiastically take an active part in stories, such as 'The Big Pancake'. Children regularly attempt writing and are beginning to develop their understanding that words convey meaning and many are able to recognise their own name.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Most children can competently count and recognise numbers up to 10. They are learning to solve problems appropriately in practical activities such as when using the 'Care Bears'. They put the bears in order from the smallest to the biggest. They learn to recognise the name and colour of various shapes during group time. They competently describe full and empty when playing in the sand and are beginning to learn about simple subtraction when joining in with number rhymes.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

The children learn about living things as they plant bulbs and watch them grow. They explore natural objects such as leaves, sand and wasps nest. During the daily oral sessions the children have opportunities to talk about past and present events. They are learning about technology through effective use of the computer to support their learning. All children are learning the purpose of some environmental features when they visit the local shops and good use is made of the surrounding grounds.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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The children are learning to be aware of others when they move around confined spaces indoors. They are developing physical skill in daily activities using both large and small equipment such as the trampoline, scissors and pencils. During topic work they are learning about healthy foods and keeping healthy. They handle and build well using a variety of construction toys. All children are beginning to develop an awareness of good hygiene practices through daily routines.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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The children work in two and three dimensions when modelling with clay to make heart shapes for Valentines Day and when drawing from observation. They sing songs from memory and are learning about the sounds that musical instruments make. They explore colour, texture and experiment with a variety of media through planned activities such as paint, collage, sand and cooking. They are imaginative and readily act out extended role play scenarios in the home corner such as the 'Chinese Take Away'.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- Further develop planning to include the evaluation of activities to ensure their effectiveness.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.