

Little Oaks Community Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 141754
Inspection date 02/03/2011
Inspector Jenny Read

Setting address Wavendon Community Centre, Walton Road, Wavendon,
Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK17 8LH
Telephone number 01908 583826
Email
Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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.

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Description of the setting

Managed by a committee of parent volunteers. The nursery operates in a community centre in Wavendon Village on the outskirts of Milton Keynes, in Buckinghamshire. Children attend from the local and surrounding villages. The main areas used include the sports hall, a second smaller room with direct access to the enclosed outdoor play area that is partially covered, two kitchens and toilet facilities. The building is adjacent to a playing field, play park and meadow, which the group use. The nursery has an allotment for children's use. The nursery is open each weekday during school terms, from 9.05am until 12.05pm and on a Monday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons from 12.45pm until 2.45pm. From Easter, the afternoon sessions for children aged three and four years receiving free early education, will continue until 3.45pm.

There are currently 73 children on roll aged between two years and five years old. Children attend a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who learn English as an additional language. The nursery employs 14 permanent staff to work directly with the children. Three staff, including the manager are qualified teachers; one staff member has achieved a level 4 qualification and three other staff have achieved relevant qualifications at level 3. Three staff members are currently working towards a relevant qualification to level 2 and two to level 3. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The committed staff are very dedicated because the senior management team successfully inspire them. They work collectively towards meeting planned targets outlined in the nursery's business plan. These result from accurate self-evaluation and are well chosen, having had a good impact in bringing about sustained improvements for children. Staff facilitate children's learning extremely well, providing excellent support enabling all the children to achieve as well as they can. Exceptionally good use of resources and highly effective partnerships with parents, is supporting the children to develop excellent skills for the future.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the links with other settings children attend delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to support progress and consistency in children's care and learning
- develop further children's awareness of the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and their understanding of the benefits of healthy eating, regular drinks and being active .

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's health, safety and welfare are promoted successfully because most staff have good awareness of the pre-school's detailed policies, and procedures. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities. Effective induction, frequent staff meetings, annual appraisals and good access to training all help reinforce staff's understanding and on-going suitability to work with children. Staff demonstrate a high level of commitment to promoting children's safety. They complete daily safety checks of the premises inside and outside and act out some of the identified risks to children. This helps to bring the dangers to life and shows their impact on others through visual clues. Arrangements for safeguarding children are thorough, carefully managed and understood by many of the staff. Effective procedures are in place for identifying any child at risk of harm and the line management process is fully understood to ensure appropriate action is taken with any child welfare concerns. Records and documentation to support children's care, and the efficient and safe management of the pre-school, are in place.

The management team are very positive and enthusiastic in their approach. They stimulate the enthusiasm of staff who work very well as a team. Collectively they have high aspirations for the children. They are very passionate about providing an excellent range of stimulating and challenging experiences that enable them to thrive across all areas of learning. This common sense of purpose places the children at the heart of everything they do to promote inclusion, equality and diversity.

Children's well-being is significantly enhanced by exceptionally good use of the resources to support effective planning, play areas, good deployment of staff and risk assessment. The management team are very proactive in supporting staff. They review children's progress files frequently to assess children's access to all areas of learning. They review their identified 'next steps' to ensure these are appropriate and provide sufficient challenge. They check the observation and assessment sheets used to identify possible lines for development and children's interests are completed to help inform future planning.

The premises are bright, cheerful and very spacious, providing a safe, secure environment for children to play and learn. This helps children make very good progress in their learning from their individual starting points. Children's needs are exceptionally well met through highly effective partnerships between staff, parents and their children. The implementation of parent and child questionnaires invites all parents to become involved in decision-making on key matters affecting their children and the pre-school. Children can express their views and suggestions about the provision. These are actively taken on board and developed to enhance

the provision and outcomes for children. These include, compiling a staff file with photographs and details of their experience and training; providing termly progress reports for parents and implementing termly parents' meetings to discuss their children's well-being and development. As a result, parents have thorough knowledge of their own children's next steps. Parents praise the highly inclusive systems of communication which provides them with tailored guidance and information about the pre-school and precise ways they can support their children's learning at home. This results in strong levels of engagement with the pre-school.

Partnerships with others are effective overall in helping to meet children's individual needs. The senior management team take a lead role in establishing effective working relationships with a range of appropriate professionals to provide highly effective support for children. The nursery's special needs co-ordinator attends regular review meetings to assist in devising the individual educational plans. She cascades this information robustly to the children's key persons to enable them to plan effectively to meet children's individual needs. Partnerships with other settings children attend are developing well, but require further attention to support consistency of care and development. Children successfully learn about their own and other cultures through well-planned activities and events. The children respond to cultural celebrations, such as Diwali and Chinese New Year and learn to greet each other in different languages, such as in Welsh on St. David's Day.

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

Children are eager to attend and make significant gains in their learning, demonstrating outstanding progress in developing the skills that will help them in the future. They mostly know what is expected of them through group discussions with staff about identified risks, clear explanations for safe play and through regular practice of the escape plan. As a result, more able children talk confidently about how they keep themselves safe in an emergency. Children develop independence in their health and personal care. They wipe their hands with wet wipes before meal times and more capable children are encouraged to use the toilet independently with sensitive reminders about hand washing. The drinks station is clearly labelled with signs for water and cups in different languages, many of which are relevant to the children attending the pre-school. As a result, all children readily access water when they are thirsty. Discussions and activities to help children learn about the importance of hand washing, eating healthy food, having regular drinks and plenty of exercise, has on their health, occasionally take place.

Activity plans, next steps sheets, evaluations and input from parents help to feed future planning. This is discussed with all staff at the beginning of each week ensuring they have excellent knowledge of their key children's next steps and have robust understanding of the intended learning for the activities to provide excellent

support and guidance for children. As a result, children experience a fantastic range of highly stimulating activities inside and outside that provide excellent challenge. The Early Years Foundation Stage record and progress overview forms for each child are helping staff to assess, track and monitor their key children's progress and development. They identify if children are entering, developing or are secure in particular areas of learning and use this information each term to assess children's progress and to identify any blockers that may be hindering them from progressing as well as they should. This enables the staff to take appropriate steps to close identified gaps in children's achievements.

Knowledge and understanding of the world is given exceptional emphasis based on children's enjoyment and interests in exploring and investigating different media and the natural world. Activities are well thought through, such as displaying a vase of daffodils, a picture of a daffodil and an example of one made using the various resources available to the children. This helps to motivate the children and encourage them to create their own designs. Staff nurture children's enjoyment of the outdoors to provide a wonderful range of experiences that challenge and support their learning and encourages them to care for their environment. They use household recyclable materials in their play, such as making daffodils with egg cups for St. David's Day and have fun going on nature walks in the surrounding meadows, acting out favourite stories, such as 'Going on a Bear Hunt', and making nests with small twigs and branches for their toy bird. They visit the allotment to plant and tender their fruits and vegetables, gaining experience of growing their own food to eat. They have fun searching for bugs and mini beasts in the nature area and plan to install a sensory area to further extend children's experiences.

Children learn about lifecycles and the process of change through first-hand experiences. They explore different eggs, comparing a goose egg, an ostrich egg and a normal chicken egg, talking about size and weight and using mathematical terminology successfully. Staff extend this further by cracking the different eggs to compare their yolks and using them in the cooking activity. More able children confidently recall how the daffodils begin as 'little seeds and they get bigger and bigger and bigger and turn into these big daffodils' as they hold up daffodils at various stages in their cycle to compare and talk about.

Children are active, inquisitive learners, readily asking questions during play and responding positively to staff's interaction and encouragement for them to be independent learners. Children sort the care bears into colours and find the correct number for each colour that match the different numbered and coloured containers. Children are mostly confident and self-assured because all children are valued as individuals. They proudly share their swimming certificates with the whole group, staff cheering enthusiastically and encouraging all the children to clap and recognise each others achievements. Staff skilfully support children with identified needs, engaging purposefully in their play to help develop their imagination when they pretend to be an aeroplane. Effective questioning, such as 'Are you going to draw a plane for me?', 'Does it need some wings?', 'What about a tail that points up?', 'Is it going to have a pilot; are you going to be the pilot?' and 'Where is the plane going to fly to?', helps to engage the children's attention, motivate their learning and encourages their active participation. With growing confidence the children name their plane and state the plane is going 'to Tesco to

get some shopping'.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	2
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	1

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

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