



St Weonards Pre school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	960036
Inspection date	22 September 2006
Inspector	Janette Elizabeth Owen
Setting Address	St. Weonards CP School, Mount Way, St. Weonards, Hereford, Herefordshire, HR2 8NU
Telephone number	01981 580564
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Registered person	St Weonards Pre school
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

St Weonards Pre school was registered in 1976. It operates from rooms within St Weonards CP School in south Herefordshire. A maximum of 15 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays between 09:00 and 15:00. Children have access to a secure outside play area.

There are currently nine children aged from two years to under five years on roll. Of these, four children receive funding for early education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs two members of staff and a volunteer helper. The supervisor holds appropriate early years qualifications and one member of staff is working towards a qualification. 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 develop a good understanding of the importance of personal hygiene, supported by consistent routines and gentle reminders. Daily routines include washing hands before handling food, before and after meals and after using the toilet. Children's health is promoted well and the risk of cross-infection is minimised by the policies and procedures which are implemented in practice. The pre-school staff do not hold current first aid certificates, in the event of first aid being required when children are in the setting, staff are supported by first aid trained staff in the school. However, this arrangement is not available if children are taken on outings away from the school site. This potentially compromises children's good health and welfare.

Children are well nourished and have good opportunities to learn about healthy eating because they are able to have a hot lunch cooked at the school which complies with their dietary needs. Meals and snacks are well-balanced, freshly cooked and presented in sufficient quantity to meet the needs of the children. The children collect their own meals from the serving hatch enabling them to choose what food they are served with, helping them to develop their independence in making healthy choices. The staff help children to learn about healthy living through a range of planned activities that develop the children's understanding of what foods are good for them and how they are grown. The children provided some vegetables which were examined and talked about before being made into models of animals.

Children benefit from regular opportunities to get fresh air and exercise during playtimes and structured activities outdoors. They have access to a secure outside area where they can develop their climbing and balancing skills and their awareness of space as they use a variety of wheeled toys including bikes which they pedal with confidence. Children make good use of indoor activities such as music and movement, co-operative games and action songs to further develop their confidence in moving and turn taking. Circle games are used well to introduce children to each other by saying their names and the names of other children. Younger children are developing their independence physically and emotionally as they separate from their parents and carers and begin to join in activities with other children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children and parents are made welcome as they arrive at the provision, activities are set out in readiness for the children and staff are available to talk to parents. The areas used by the children are clean and free from hazards. The organisation of the available indoor space is not always managed effectively and the arrangements for storing toys and resources hamper children's ability to become increasingly independent in choosing activities. Staff ensure children

have ample space to move freely around when using other areas available such as the main hall and the outside area which is well utilised for a good range of activities. Children are provided with a varied range of good quality toys and resources, however, some activities provided are not age-appropriate and safe, particularly in relation to the youngest children.

Children's safety is adequately promoted, children are generally well supervised. Collection procedures are robust, ensuring children are only collected by authorised persons and there are clear systems in place for recording visitors to the setting. Although staff use risk assessments to identify some potential hazards and regular daily checks are carried out on areas used both indoors and outside, these are not comprehensive and do not fully ensure all staff are aware of potential risks to children. For example, ensuring activities are age-appropriate and pose no risk to children and that arrival procedures are clearly defined and followed to prevent children leaving the premises unsupervised. Children are learning to keep themselves safe because the staff encourages the children to begin to understand about safety issues both within the setting and outside, they are taught how to use tools safely.

Children are adequately protected because staff have a sound understanding of their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice. They follow child protection procedures in line with Local Safeguarding Children Boards guidelines in order to protect children from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are well settled and happy. All children receive a good level of support and access to a range of planned activities and opportunities for free play. The supervisor is well-qualified and knowledgeable and uses early years guidance, such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage', to support children's learning and development. However, although the range of activities are good and cover all areas of learning they are at times too advanced for the younger children in the group. This results in younger children not benefiting fully from the activities provided. Children have their individual care needs met appropriately because staff know the children well and work closely with parents to ensure children's individual needs are understood. There are good arrangements in place for sharing information with parents' through regular communication and parents involvement in children's learning.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The supervisor of the pre-school is familiar with the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and is able to plan a varied range of interesting activities to support children's development across all areas of learning. However, the assistants have yet to develop their understanding of the foundation stage and how to make effective use of teaching methods in order to fully support children's learning and development. There are inconsistencies in how challenges are provided for the children. The supervisor has high expectation for the children, resulting in some activities being beyond the understanding or ability of younger or less able children, while less experienced staff limit children's opportunity to complete task for themselves because activities are over adult-directed. This prevents children

making progress and learning new skills. Children are generally well-behaved, the staff use positive behaviour strategies to help them understand what is expected of them. Focus activities include effective interaction and practical activities which capture children's interest, they are eager to please and willing to learn new skills. Children are given clear explanations and are offered challenging questions, children have ample opportunity to use their own experiences and offer suggestions of their own. Planning records and children's assessment documents show that children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals. Their stage of development is assessed on entry into the pre-school using information provided by parents and an initial observation of the child. This enables staff to include any specific learning requirements in the planning.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted well because staff use their understanding of each child to provide opportunities for children to develop their confidence. Children have a good attitude towards learning because the supervisor engages children's interest through good interaction and opportunities to talk about their own experiences. Staff value children's contributions to the group and listen to what children have to tell them, this enables children to be confident and self-assured. There is a good relationship between children and staff, they are happy to participate in activities and respond well to requests to do tasks. Children are able to sit still and concentrate on activities, although at times some activities are over long resulting in younger children losing concentration. All children play co-operatively, sharing toys and activities, they are happily engaged in play, showing enjoyment in the range of activities provided. The supervisor is skilled in developing children's use and understanding of language for communication. Most activities are based around providing children with information through discussions and practical tasks; there is ample time during activities for children to talk about their experiences and to ask questions. Good teaching methods are used to support the children in listening and understanding. However, staff do not use consistent methods to enable children to link sounds and letters. Children use their growing language skills to socialise, becoming part of the group and to develop relationships with staff and other children. Stories and songs are used to reinforce ideas and introduce new words to children, they thoroughly enjoy the well-read and exciting story sessions, promoting children's enjoyment of books.

Children are developing a sound understanding of mathematics through practical activities such as weighing and measuring cooking ingredients. They are able to identify basic shapes and explain what the characteristics of the shapes are, for example, that the square has equal sides and four corners. Children are able to sort and match a varied range of items. Action songs and rhymes are used effectively to help children learn to add and take away and children are able to use numbers for counting in a practical and relevant way, for example, counting children present.

The activities provided to enable children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world are good, they learn about the world around them by practical activities and by talking about what they see and are doing. The children made soup after learning about how vegetables grow and what vegetables are good for them. They learn how plants and animals live by observing living creatures and by planting seeds and plants. Children are able to use all their sense to investigate and explore objects and materials. They make good use of the outside play area for many activities as well opportunities for co-operative play and social interaction with

other children. Children extend their imaginative play in the home corner using dressing up clothes and resources to act out real situations and to explore their own ideas.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued as individuals because staff know the children well. All children are welcomed to the provision and staff obtain the necessary information from parents and carers to ensure that children's individual needs are met. They receive a good level of care because staff have a good understanding of each child's needs and that some children may require additional support. Arrangements to ensure children with learning difficulties or disabilities receive appropriate care and developmental opportunities are in place. Children are developing their sense of belonging within the school environment, joining in with activities and lunchtimes with the school children. They are actively involved in the setting and their contribution within the pre-school is valued. Children are well behaved; they are polite and show a good level of care and consideration towards others. They understand responsible behaviour; they play co-operatively and happily await their turn with activities or equipment.

Children have good opportunities to learn about the world around them and the wider society through inclusion in activities which reflect diversity such as celebrating festival and traditions. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from close links between home and pre-school. They settle well in pre-school because staff are caring and able to meet the needs of individual children and their families. Parents are provided with information on the provision and they in turn provide information on their child's development when they enter the pre-school. Staff are available to discuss children's progress with parents and to deal efficiently with any complaints or concerns parents may have. Children are able to extend their learning at home because parents receive regular information about the current topic and children benefit from the good range of books which they are able to take home and share with their family.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's needs are not effectively addressed because the training and qualification requirements are not met and staff are not deployed efficiently. The supervisor is qualified and experienced; she has a good knowledge and understanding of child care and development. However, the current lack of qualified staff results in staff not being sufficiently knowledgeable at this time to ensure the safety, welfare and development of the children. There is no named deputy able to take charge in the absence of the manager. Plans to address the training issues are in place and new staff have induction training and are provided with written policies and procedures to follow.

Documents required for the efficient and safe management of the provision are available although there are some minor omissions in the details of some policies. Children's well-being

is generally safeguarded because staff obtain all required information and any required consents from parents when children are admitted to the group.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The setting is managed by a committee of parents who support staff in the daily organisation of the provision mainly through fundraising, recruitment and organisation of meetings. The staff are not effectively managed by the management committee; they are not proactive in steering the work of the staff who carry out the daily operation of the provision. Staff appraisals are not used effectively to monitor the strengths and weaknesses of the setting. Parents are encouraged to comment on the provision and be part of their child's learning by filling in questionnaires and being part of the committee. The committee and staff are keen to make improvements to the quality of the provision and have addresses recommendation made at previous inspections satisfactorily. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection several issues were raised in relation to the care and education of the children. The arrangements for registering children's attendance needed to accurately show who was present or absent and the child protection policy was to be reviewed. In relation to nursery education recommendation were made in relation to improving the teaching of letter sounds and letters and children's understanding of calculation. The organisation of the role play area was also highlighted as an area for improvement.

Since the last inspection good progress has been made in addressing most of the issues raised. Children's safety has been improved by the accurate recording the times children arrive and depart the setting. The child protection policy has been reviewed and contains all the required information to ensure the safety and welfare of the children. The teaching of mathematics has been improved because children have more opportunities to use the concept of calculation in practical activities such as through songs and rhymes, this helps children to understand calculation in a meaningful way. Further development is still required to ensure a consistent approach is used to enable children to link sounds and letters. Issues relating to the role play no longer apply as the setting has moved into the school building.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. 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):

- maintain children's good health and welfare by ensuring a member of staff qualified to administer first aid is available when children are taken on outings away from the school
- manage the use of available indoor space to ensure space requirements are met and children have sufficient space to move freely around activities and are able to further develop their independence in selecting resources
- continue to provide staff training, enabling all staff to be effectively deployed to ensure the needs of children are met.

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):

- develop consistent teaching methods to enable children to link sounds and letters
- improve planning strategies to support teaching more effectively. Show progression along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals and the differentiation in activities for children of different ages and abilities.

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