



Windmill Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	220292
Inspection date	19 February 2007
Inspector	Jan Burnet
Setting Address	25 Church Lane, Middleton Cheney, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX17 2NS
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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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Windmill Nursery was established in 1968. It operates from Windmill Farm in a rural setting in Middleton Cheney, Oxfordshire. Children attend from the local and surrounding area. The premises consist of converted farm buildings surrounding a central courtyard, where the setting's pets are housed. A converted barn is used by the pre-school children and the two to three-year-old group use the opposite stable block. The nursery has its own secure area for outdoor play. Opening hours are Monday to Friday from 08:30 to 17:30 with the exception of bank holidays and a week at Christmas.

A maximum of 41 children aged from two years to under five years may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 84 children on roll and this includes 53 funded three and four-year-olds. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

A total of eight staff work with the children. Of these, four hold early years qualifications and three are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is assured because they are aware of good practice with regard to personal hygiene, for example, they confidently explain to the inspector that they wash hands before eating, after using the toilet and after feeding the pets. Hygiene routines are addressed well by staff and the risk of cross-infection is minimised because parents are aware that their child should not attend if he or she has a contagious illness. Children are well protected in case of accident because all staff members hold in-date first aid certificates.

The risk to children from unsafe food is minimal due to good food hygiene practices, for example, parents are asked to insert a cool pack in lunch boxes to keep food at a safe temperature. During group time before lunch children talk about foods in their lunch boxes that make them big and strong and why it is important to have a cool pack in their box. They talk about why it is good that fruit juice has no added sugar and that if we eat lots of sugar it is bad for our teeth. A staff member asks, "what do we need to do to keep our teeth healthy?" and children all reply, "clean them!" Staff provide a healthy mid-morning, afternoon and late snack and sometimes children eat food that they have made, for example, cakes and bread.

Children's emotional well-being is given a high priority and staff offer good support and encouragement. All children are settled and happy. They are developing skills and confidence during physical play activities when using a good range of large equipment in the outdoor play area that effectively challenges children aged two, three and four years, for example, climbing apparatus, swings, slides and sit and ride wheeled toys.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, healthy and satisfactorily safe environment. In the past the setting was a working farm and the outdoor play area is the 'farm yard' and a large garden. Examples of the children's work are displayed throughout the buildings, promoting their self-esteem. Toys, equipment and furniture are safe and clean and satisfactorily enhance children's learning and development. Children learn how to keep themselves safe, for example, they are aware of behaviour boundaries and explain that they must not run indoors, keep away from the swings when another child is swinging and hold on tight when it is their turn.

Risks of accidental injury to children are low because staff are vigilant and potential risks have been identified and satisfactorily addressed. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place, which are reviewed periodically and when there are any changes. Policies and procedures are appropriately applied by staff to support children's safety and welfare. Children are aware of the evacuation procedure because it is practised regularly.

Children's welfare is very well protected by members of staff who have a good working knowledge of abuse and neglect and are aware of their responsibilities with regard to referral if concerned about a child. The child protection procedure is thorough and is kept in a file that parents are invited to read. However, staff cannot be sure that all parents have done so.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children achieve well because staff use their knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to provide good quality care and education for young children. The framework is successfully used in the nursery to assist the children's global development. Staff work as a team to inspire children and encourage them to become independent learners. They create a stimulating environment and children confidently select, enjoy and get involved in activities. All children are keen to learn and are well supported and they benefit from a well-balanced routine that includes group times when children develop their thinking, speaking and listening skills. A good balance of adult led, adult supported and child initiated activities are organised. Toys and books adequately meet the children's needs and staff use these and a range of other materials to ensure that children experience a good variety of activities and experiences, for example household items used as musical instruments. Children readily engage in conversation with other children, staff and visitors. They enjoy outdoor play daily and a "free-flow" system operates for children who choose to play inside. They are able to access a varied range of large physical play equipment in a well organised and safe outdoor play area. This choice is available to them throughout the year. Young children are developing confidence and they are happy, settled and secure.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff inspire children's creative development and then withdraw to allow them to extend, for example, bread trays outside used as a boat and long cardboard tubes used as oars and the staff member asks, "where shall we go in our boat?" and children talk about different places to sail to. Children develop their senses in different ways and at the time of inspection are sampling Chinese food as part of their Chinese New Year celebrations. They name a range of colours and use colour in conversation, for example, one child informs a staff member that, "my mum asks me to eat green cabbage but I don't like it". Children talk about how heavy and how long the cardboard tubes are as they carry them and they stack tyres on top of each other and talk about high they are. They count and are learning to recognise numerals and are gaining an awareness of calculation, for example, singing 'my ship went to China' and on each verse adding different things that the ship brought back. At the end of the song children are able to remember several things.

Children speak clearly and confidently and are encouraged by staff to think and express their views. They are enthusiastic and sometimes need to be reminded to listen and let other children have a chance to speak. They enjoy books and stories and are developing pencil control with daily practice. They also develop good manipulative skills with a range of small toys, tools and malleable materials. Children join together to create the head of a dragon, using a large cardboard box, for their Chinese New Year celebration. They are supported by a staff member who asks, "what do you think our dragon needs?" and one child says "a face!" and the group

discuss how to make eyes. They decide to "scrunch up" their black tissue paper. Children confidently cut up tissue with scissors, use tips of their fingers to screw up tissue and use a 'Prit stick' to stick their pieces on to the dragon. They talk about colour and size. Children are developing an awareness of the link between sound and letter. When singing 'Row, row, row your boat' with a staff member they talk about words that rhyme when making up different verses. Children are able to recognise their own name and some are able to write it.

Children are provided with a range of opportunities to explore and investigate. They bake cakes and bread, recently brought snow indoors and watched the change as it melted, they explore outdoors for 'mini beasts' and in Spring they watch frog spawn change to tadpoles and then return them to the pond when they are ready to become frogs. An investigation table is always set up and today children sit with a member of staff and talk about items linked to Chinese New Year, for example, books showing Chinese writing, chop sticks and pottery. Children are developing information, communication, technology skills as they have access to a computer, compact disc player, electronic toys and a disposable camera that goes home with 'travel bear'.

Children's physical skills develop and improve with a variety of experiences and large equipment and they show an awareness of their own needs with regard to eating and hygiene. Children's independence is well fostered, for example, a 'rolling snack' time between approximately 9:30 and 10:30 when children collect their name card and place it on the table, wash their hands and then sit for snack, which today is noodles, rice and prawn crackers and children are trying to use chop sticks. They pour their own milk or water.

Staff ensure that admission information is thorough so that they are aware of children's skills, interests and needs. They plan themes for the year, a medium term plan then identifies learning objectives and these are then programmed in to weekly activities. Staff continually record observations which are then transferred to assessment records and inform future planning. The team organise a good balance of staff led, staff supported and child initiated play and ensure that all learn at their own pace and are challenged effectively.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed and their individual care needs are known and met well by staff. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children learn to appreciate and value each other's similarities and differences because they discuss their families and events in their lives at home and different festivals are celebrated, giving children a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the rich diversity of a multi-racial society. Resources that reflect diversity are adequate and are supplemented with books from the library. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are included and are offered good support. Thorough procedures for observation and assessment and working in partnership with parents and other professionals means that all children are challenged effectively to reach the next step in their development.

Children behave well and play cooperatively. They show consideration for others and they are learning to share and take turns. Good staff practice reflects the behaviour policy that includes, teaching children to respect themselves, other people and their environment; providing a

positive role model by treating others with friendliness, care and courtesy; helping children to find solutions and praising desirable behaviour such as kindness and willingness to share. The inspector observes two children aged three years and one asks, "can I have the aeroplane now please?" and the children exchange toys. Staff ensure that techniques for managing inappropriate behaviour include distraction and explanation and do not single out or humiliate a child. Children are aware of rules regarding behaviour that include, sitting on the carpet when asked to, looking after books and toys, remembering to say please and thank-you, being kind and remembering when hands should be washed.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Consistency of care for children is addressed with adequate written and good verbal communication. Admission forms contain all required information, an information leaflet gives brief information on the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage as it lists the six areas of learning, activity planning is displayed and parent involvement is encouraged as newsletters include information on the current theme. A daily diary system is used for all two-year-old children and some three-year-olds if parents request continuation when their child moves to the pre-school unit. However, opportunities for parents to be partners in their child's learning are limited because they are not asked to share information on achievements at home for use by staff to inform planning for their child. Parents are invited to read a file that contains all required policies and procedures, although staff cannot be sure that all parents have done so. Potentially the quality of children's care is compromised because the complaints procedure does not include the changes to regulations as of October 2005, which include notification of the outcome of a complaint for parents and their right to see the complaint record on request.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provider ensures that children's care and education are promoted by qualified and experienced staff who ensure that resources and activities in playrooms and the outdoor area are easily accessible to children. They encourage independent learning. Children's welfare and care are appropriately supported with staff implementation of the setting's policies and procedures. However, at the time of inspection the provider is in breach of the conditions of registration by caring for five-year-old children, as registration is for children under five years. Policy statements are included in a file but the complaints procedure does not include all required information. Legally required documentation is in place and is kept up-to-date and in satisfactory order.

Leadership and management of early years education is good. The nursery owner and manager ensure that children's education is promoted well by staff. All work as a team and are clear of their roles and responsibilities. Advice from other professionals is welcomed in order to improve practice and outcomes for children. Staff have attended 'in house' training organised by local authority development workers, all hold first aid and food hygiene certificates and most have attended child protection training. Recruitment, selection, induction and appraisal systems are in place and link to staff training needs. Staff meet regularly to plan activities and make plans to address identified areas for improvement.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last care inspection the provider was asked to obtain signatures from parents on medication records and make sure that there are operational procedures for safe conduct on outings. Children's welfare and safety are satisfactorily addressed because parents now sign medication records and all trips are risk assessed. The provider was asked to develop systems for the regular exchange of information between parents and staff and make sure that observations are used to plan the next steps for the children's play, learning and development. Consistency of care and assessing children's progress are satisfactorily addressed with systems now in place.

There were three key issues raised at the last education inspection. The provider was asked to develop a system of observation and assessment and ensure planning takes into account children's different developmental needs. This has been addressed well with systems implemented by all staff. The provider was also asked to ensure that there is a formal system of exchange of information with parents with regard to children's progress and provide fewer adult directed activities with less worksheets. Children now initiate some activities and experience a range of adult supported activities. Work sheets are no longer used. Information on their child's development is exchanged between staff and parents, although not in a formal way.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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 good.

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):

- comply with conditions of registration, regarding the age of children who may be cared for
- ensure that staff and parents are aware of revised regulations, October 2005, with regard to complaints procedures and records.

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 systems to ensure that information from parents is used to plan the next steps in learning for their child.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk