



The Woodside Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY281084
Inspection date	17 May 2005
Inspector	Heather Morgan
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Registered person	Pre-School Learning Alliance
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?

The Woodside Centre, formerly the Belmont Nursery, opened in 2004 and operates from three base rooms with a large, shared central area, in a purpose-built, open plan building. It is situated in a residential area of Tiverton, in Devon. A maximum of 40 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 0730 until 1800, all year round. The children have access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 71 children on roll, of whom 15 are in receipt of nursery education funding. The centre supports children with special educational needs but at present there are none attending for whom English is an additional language.

Fifteen staff work with the children, nine of whom hold relevant early years qualifications at level 2 or 3. They are supported by an administrator, a cook and a cleaner.

The centre is managed by the Pre-school Learning Alliance and forms part of a Neighbourhood Nursery Project.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a nutritious and healthy diet as they eat regular, freshly prepared meals and snacks. Their special dietary needs are met well through regular exchange of information between parents, childcare and catering staff. Younger children are offered drinks between meals, but older children cannot easily access additional drinks, despite the fact that the temperature within the building reaches uncomfortably high temperatures. This does not support them in maintaining a comfortable body temperature. Children's health and hygiene is generally promoted well by staff who implement appropriate procedures to reduce the risk of cross infection, for example they wear aprons and gloves when changing nappies. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before meals, and younger children are assisted in doing this. However, staff do not always maintain good hygiene by washing their own hands before serving food, and they store children's flannels quite close together, which increases the risk of transferring infections between children.

Children have good opportunities to play outdoors, getting regular exercise and fresh air, although the babies are taken out much less frequently. The older children are developing good control and skill in manoeuvring wheeled toys safely and confidently, but the outdoor play resources lack sufficient challenge for more able children, for example to develop climbing and balancing skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the safe, secure environment the nursery offers. They are usually protected well from unknown visitors by a coded entry system. However, at the time of the inspection, the doorbell was not working and parents were letting unknown adults into the children's play area. Children can play safely in the fully enclosed outdoor play area, which is secured by padlocked gates. The physical environment and resources are kept safe for children by staff undertaking regular risk assessments and implementing appropriate actions to address any identified potential hazards. For example, they have created a safe environment within the baby room for non-mobile babies by restricting the access of more mobile babies.

Children are regularly exposed to high temperatures within the building and are not shaded from bright light, for example when eating their lunch. There are good systems in place to protect children from sun damage when playing outdoors, and older children know that they need to put on sunhats and sun cream before going outside on sunny days.

Children's welfare and safety is satisfactorily supported by staff's basic understanding of child protection issues. They know how to access additional information and support, and all staff are booked on training to update their knowledge.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, settled and enjoy warm interactions with staff members. They are each assigned a keyworker to foster links between nursery and home, but this is not extended to ensure that young babies, in particular, receive intimate care such as nappy changing and feeding from a consistent, familiar adult throughout the day. Children are grouped into age bands and enjoy participating in a range of activities with their peer group. Some of these activities are stimulating and fun but staff do not always ensure that activities are appropriate for the age and stage of development of the children participating. Consequently children's progress and development is not always supported as activities are too difficult for them or do not provide sufficient challenge. However, they are beginning to use the Birth to three matters framework to develop their understanding of how young children progress and develop. The current methods for assessing children's progress are not used effectively to support their further development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making some progress along the stepping stones towards early learning goals as staff are developing their knowledge and awareness of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Children enjoy participating in a range of activities both indoors and outdoors and staff sometimes use questioning effectively to extend their learning, for example encouraging counting skills, engaging them in conversation and developing their vocabulary. However, children are not always confident in accessing resources independently as they are not attractively presented. Children are not always grouped appropriately to enable staff to offer appropriate support for younger, less able children and to challenge and extend learning for the more able. For example, during a whole group cooking activity, some children were interested in the changes happening as ingredients were mixed, while others were bored and fidgety waiting for their turn to stir. Topic-based plans offer children opportunities to explore and investigate different features of the environment, for example, they are currently learning about mini-beasts. However the plans lack sufficient detail to ensure that staff are clear about the learning intentions and opportunities are missed to extend children's learning. For example a planned creative activity was successful in extending children's perseverance skills but did not offer opportunities for them to express themselves freely. Children's progress is recorded in development lists

which do not link clearly to the stepping stones; therefore staff do not use them effectively to plan what children need to learn next.

Children enjoy listening to stories and are beginning to recognise their own names. However they have few opportunities to practise mark-making for different purposes, such as labelling their work or extending their role-play. They are beginning to count confidently but are not regularly developing their problem-solving skills through practical experience. They enjoy building models using commercially produced construction materials and also like to experiment with paint, sand and water. However, they are not encouraged to freely access a wide range of resources to develop their designing and building skills or to express their thoughts and ideas using different materials.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed into the nursery, settle well and are developing good relationships with each other and staff. Use of shared areas and well-planned settling in procedures help them develop a sense of community within their own group and the whole nursery. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

Children with special needs are supported well through effective liaison between staff, parents and external agencies. They are able to participate in activities with their peer group as staff ensure that there are appropriate resources and equipment to support this. Their progress is supported well by staff's clear understanding of their individual play plans and developing skills in communicating using familiar signs.

The children generally behave well and are developing an awareness of the need to respect rules. For example, older children are able to negotiate sharing and also know that they need to wear protective aprons before playing in the water. Children respond well to staff's calm management of their behaviour, although they are not always consistent in dealing with unacceptable behaviour, which does not support children in adapting their behaviour patterns.

Older children are becoming more independent; they can pour their own drinks at snack time and manage their own personal hygiene. However, they are not always able to make appropriate choices during free-play as resources are not attractively presented or organised sufficiently well to encourage children to access them freely. Although children are able to concentrate quite well, for example when listening to stories, they are sometimes distracted by noise coming from other areas within the open-plan building.

There is a satisfactory partnership with parents. Children settle well as staff liaise closely with parents to gain individual information such as likes and dislikes, or familiar home routines, particularly for young babies. There are good opportunities for informal exchanges of information, which ensures that children are cared for in accordance with their parents wishes. However, parents cannot easily access policies and procedures relating to the running of the nursery and do not receive

sufficient information about the Foundation Stage curriculum or their children's progress. This limits their ability to participate in their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Overall, the nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care and nursery education. Children receive good adult attention due to the high staff ratios and well-organised shift patterns. Children's daily routines are well-established as staff generally implement the nursery's policies and procedures well. However, many of the policies are not specific to the nursery, which results in some confusion over care issues, such as lunch time routines. Regulatory checks are not up to date for all auxiliary and temporary staff, but this does not impact on the safety of the children as these members of staff do not have unsupervised access to them.

The leadership and management of the nursery is satisfactory. Children benefit from the staff's strong commitment to improvement and development. However, at present there are no effective procedures in place to monitor the effectiveness of delivery of the nursery education curriculum. A staff appraisal system is being introduced and staff regularly attend appropriate training, using their newly acquired knowledge to improve their practice. For example the younger children are accessing more activities following staff's attendance of Birth to three matters training.

Improvements since the last inspection

Children are now grouped appropriately and have access to a range of different activities due to improvements in the organisation and use of the premises since the last inspection. They have a better choice of resources and their good health is being promoted by improved implementation of some nursery procedures. Further work is required in this area to fully promote their health and access to age and stage appropriate activities. Children's behaviour has improved as staff are beginning to take a more consistent approach to managing unacceptable behaviour. Children with special needs are now supported well through good communication between parents, staff and outside agencies.

Children's access to the Foundation Stage is beginning to improve as staff have attended appropriate training and now have a better understanding of the areas of learning. Work needs to continue in this area to ensure that children are accessing activities that build on what they already know and can do, to ensure their steady progress towards the early learning goals.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- continue to develop the range of activities for children under three to provide appropriate challenges to promote their progress and development
- ensure that all policies are implemented consistently, the premises managed appropriately and documentation kept up to date in order to promote children's health and safety

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):

- continue to develop planning and assessment procedures to ensure that staff are clear about learning objectives and how to adapt activities for children of different stages of ability, and that information is used effectively to plan what children need to learn next
- provide parents with more information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and the progress their children are making towards the early learning goals

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