

Woodston Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY152302
Inspection date	02 October 2007
Inspector	Anna Davies
Setting Address	Celta Road, Woodston, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 9ER
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Registered person	The Trustees of Woodston Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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 good. 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?

Woodston Nursery opened in its present premises in 2001 and is run by a voluntary committee. It operates from a classroom at Woodston Primary School in Peterborough. The nursery also has use of toilets, kitchen and storage facilities. Children have shared access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 18 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery opens five days a week during school term times. Morning sessions are from 09.00 to 12.00. Afternoon sessions run from 12.00 to 15.00. Lunchtime provision is offered during these times. There are currently 35 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 24 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery also receives funding for two year olds, under a pilot project operating in the local area, funded through the Children's Strategic partnership (CSP). Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery serves the local community. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs eight members of staff who work directly with the children on a full and part-time basis. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications and the manager holds a Level 6 qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through regular routines for washing their hands before eating, after using the toilet and after feeding or touching the pet rabbit. Further activities such as a visit from the hygienist encourage children to be aware of other contributing factors to their good health such as the care of their teeth. Children stay healthy and are well protected from infection because staff have effective procedures in place. For example, tables are wiped clean before being used for snack and mealtimes and nappy changing procedures are effective in preventing cross-contamination. Children are well cared for in the event of an accident. Some staff hold first aid qualifications which enables them to deal with minor accidents effectively and permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is in place so that further aid can be sought in the event of a more serious injury. Appropriate documentation is kept and shared with parents to safeguard children, including the reporting of accidents and the administration of medication. A clear sickness policy and information about exclusion periods for common childhood illnesses ensures that all children's good health is maintained.

Children benefit from many opportunities to develop their physical skills and enjoy plenty of fresh air in the spacious, fully enclosed garden. For example, free-flow play between the indoor and outdoor environments is promoted throughout the sessions. Children have lots of opportunities to develop balance and coordination skills as they create balancing beams with wooden blocks and planks and aim soft balls into large cut-out shaped holes. Their large muscle development is well promoted as they dig in the flower beds, climb on the large climbing frame, pedal tricycles and confidently negotiate obstacles in their path as they run. Children's small physical skills are promoted as they use tools such as cutters and plastic knives to create shapes from play dough and use scissors to skilfully cut out their pictures.

Children benefit from a varied and nutritious snack menu, consisting of a good variety of different fruits. A 'rolling snack' system is offered for a period of time during the sessions. This generally enables children to choose when they wish to have a snack and drink during this period which promotes their good health as they independently respond to their feelings of hunger and thirst. However, places at the snack table are limited which sometimes results in children requesting something to eat and drink but being asked to continue playing until a space becomes available. There is a system to enable children to freely access drinks of water throughout the sessions, but this is not generally used by the children. These systems are not completely effective in enabling children to independently respond to their individual needs. During snack and mealtimes, children are encouraged to pour their own drinks and help to prepare their own fruit for example, by peeling the banana themselves. This encourages their independence skills. Lunch provision is offered and parents supply packed lunches for the children. Staff promote healthy eating as they encourage children to eat savoury items first and sensitively encourage reluctant children to eat. Furthermore, children have good opportunities to learn about healthy eating and develop an interest and enjoyment of food as they use their own vegetables that they have grown in recipes and taste foods from different countries.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well-maintained and very child-focussed indoor and outdoor environment. Staff prepare the areas with a good range of appropriate resources before children arrive each day to create a stimulating environment for them. Many further resources are stored on low-level units both inside and outside, which enables children to make choices as they play. Children use a good range of developmentally-appropriate toys and equipment which are checked regularly to ensure that they remain safe for use. Toilet facilities are appropriate and although these are situated outside of the main room, staff have identified, and taken effective action to minimise, potential risks to children's safety. For example, children are always escorted to the toilets and staff take 'walky talkies' with them to ensure that contact with staff back in the main room is maintained at all times.

Children are kept safe through very good supervision. For example, staff move between the indoor and outdoor environments according to the choices that children make. Comprehensive risk assessments are used effectively to identify and minimise all potential risks to children, for example, before children play outside, external gates are checked to ensure that they are locked and a high handle on the door inside prevents children from leaving the room unsupervised. Good documentation supports the priority given by the setting to children's safety. For example, all visitors are recorded, procedures for outings are robust and clear procedures in the event that a child is lost or goes missing, are in place. Children are beginning to learn about their own safety as they practise regular fire drills, learn about the danger of strangers from a visiting policeman and are encouraged to use scissors safely.

Children's welfare is safeguarded. Staff have a good understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child in their care. A written child protection policy is in place and the setting generally displays up to date information for parents so that they have an understanding of the settings responsibility to protect children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well at the setting; they enjoy their time in the stimulating and well-resourced environment. Younger children who are new to the setting are given appropriate support and reassurance to ensure that they enjoy their time at nursery. For example, staff respect their wish to keep comfort toys close by. Younger children are well supported in their all round development by a good variety of planned activities and experiences which are the same as for the older children. Staff use their knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to generally ensure that activities are planned to meet the needs of the younger children. For example, they learn to count as staff model the correct sequence of numbers whilst they count objects together. Young children are adept at using the computer, ably coordinating the mouse to control the cursor and make choices on the screen. However, large group times are not always meaningful to the children and opportunities to engage them appropriately in these, are missed. Observations are made on the children as they play so that the progress they are making in their development can be monitored. Staff value children's work and display much of this on the walls. Children's confidence and self-esteem are developed through the attention and encouragement that they receive for their achievements. Staff spend all of their time interacting with the children and supporting their play. This enhances children's enjoyment whilst at the setting.

Nursery Education:

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and use this knowledge well to plan a stimulating range of activities and experiences both inside and outside, to enhance children's learning. They understand how children learn, for example, by ensuring that activities enjoyed by children are revisited. They apply their understanding as they support children in their play. For example, they use open-ended questions and follow the children's lead as they make choices about the activities that they wish to do. Planning is detailed and covers all of the areas of learning, the learning intentions of planned activities and experiences and ideas of how they can be adapted to meet the needs of children. Some staff formally identify and record children's particular interests and next steps in their learning. However, there is not a consistent system, used by all staff, to clearly identify all children's next steps in their learning or to formally share this information with all parents. As a result, there are some missed opportunities to challenge and extend children's thinking and learning during activities such as large group story time. Observations are made of children as they play and learn and these are linked appropriately to the areas of learning in 'Record of Achievement' files. Progress sheets filled in each term demonstrate the progress that children are making towards the early learning goals. Staff manage children's behaviour generally well, using effective strategies such as 'Simon Says' to gain and maintain children's attention, for example when lining up to go to the toilets.

Children persevere with activities of their choosing for lengthy periods for example, whilst using simple computer programmes and creating detailed pictures. They demonstrate self-confidence as they sing 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star' by themselves, to the rest of the group. Children work well as part of a group as they move the parachute up and down to hold the balls in place. They show concern for other's needs and feelings as they ask friends 'what's wrong?' and learn to take responsibility for the setting's pet rabbit. Children are able to take turns and demonstrate self-control as they line up to take turns during ball games. They are beginning to learn how to take care of themselves as they independently access their coats from their pegs and put Wellington boots on to dig in the flower beds.

Children are beginning to recognise their own name as they self-register. For example, they find their name card and put it into the appropriate pocket relating to the first letter of their name. They are beginning to understand that letters put together, create a word; they are encouraged to recognise the word that they are saying when they sing the letters 'd-i-s-c-o'. Effective labelling of resources enables children to begin to identify familiar words in their environment. Children have many mark making opportunities which encourages their emergent writing skills. For example, creating party invitations. Children are keen to share their ideas and some use a good range of descriptive language to describe their pictures to others. However, some activities such as large group story time, do not allow children to extend their thoughts and ideas further, in relation to the story that is being shared. Children freely select favourite books in the comfortable book corner; they turn the pages carefully and discuss favourite features such as the sharks 'big mouth and big teeth'.

Counting and number recognition activities are practical and fun for children. Spontaneous opportunities during songs are used to reinforce basic counting skills. Older children are challenged appropriately to develop their calculation skills for example, by adding prices of play food together to find a total amount of money to pay. Displays of numbers, and in different languages, further promote children's number recognition skills. Children show an awareness of size and measurement as they use language and gestures to describe 'huge, small and tiny'

objects in familiar songs. They use mathematical language in their play, for example, to describe the weight of a container of sand as 'heavy'.

Children are beginning to make sense of the world around them by investigating and exploring through first hand experiences. For example, children investigate the properties of a cornflour and water mixture, watching it run through their hands. Children are interested in how things work. For example, they stop and start toy windmills with their fingers as they turn in the wind. They are able to observe how things change as they grow and develop during activities such as growing seeds and looking at the life cycle of a caterpillar. Children have opportunities to freely design and create during a range of activities. For example, they make detailed pictures with collage materials, create 'birthday cakes' with interconnecting bricks and build a 'really special road' from wooden planks. Children enjoy regular use of the computer and are extremely adept at coordinating the mouse to make the choices they wish to make, on screen. This furthers their knowledge and understanding of information technology. Children are developing a sense of where they live as they tell others that they live on 'planet England'.

Children have good opportunities to be creative through a range of activities. They readily express and communicate their own ideas, for example, they tell staff how they wish to create a 'butterfly' painting by folding the paper in half. They have opportunities to use their senses to explore materials such as soap flakes. Children's interest in music is stimulated through activities outside such as saucepans and a string of bells hung on the fence so that children can listen to the different sounds they make. Children use their imagination well as they use resources to support their ideas. For example, they use a magnifying glass to be their favourite television character and take it in turns to be the shopkeeper in the pretend shop, selling drinks.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are confident and well behaved. Minor incidents are dealt with appropriately and sensitively, and staff provide good role models. Good strategies are used so that children understand expectations of their behaviour. For example, before walking to the toilets, children are set clear expectations with regard to walking sensibly and quietly so as not to disturb other children. Younger children spend time watching the older children as they play and talk which gives them further opportunities to learn the routines and expected behaviours whilst at the setting.

Children are generally respected as individuals. Children benefit as staff offer all children their full attention and individual support to ensure that they enjoy their time at the setting. Staff have a good awareness and understanding of inclusion. For example, key words and phrases are labelled around the room, in different languages according to the needs of the children in the setting. There are very effective systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The setting works closely in partnership with parents and outside agencies to effectively meet the needs of all children. For example, appropriate documentation enables children's progress to be monitored and shared. Children learn about different religions and cultures through a meaningful range of activities. For example, children visit the local Hindu temple and visitors share their experiences about multicultural festivals such as Eid. Furthermore, a good range of resources that reflect diversity help children to further understand and appreciate the diverse society in which they live. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children benefit from the good relationships between the staff and their parents. Parents receive a prospectus about the setting and have access to other leaflets on parenting topics, within the setting. Notice boards both inside and outside and regular newsletters ensure that parents are kept up to date with what is going on at the setting and the care of their children. Information is sought from parents at an initial home visit and on a daily basis, to ensure that children's individual needs are met.

The partnership with parents and carers for nursery education is good. Parents receive information about the Foundation Stage in the prospectus and a display within the setting shows photographs of children participating in activities under each of the areas of learning which enables parents to learn about the learning opportunities provided by the activities on offer at the setting. Planning is clearly displayed for parents and parents are welcome in the setting when they wish which enables parents to become involved in their child's learning. However, whilst some staff share children's next steps in their learning with parents and use on-going information from the parents to help them when planning the next steps, this is not consistent amongst all staff. This means that some parents are unaware of the area of learning the staff are focussing on with their child in order that they can support this learning at home. Daily discussions and parent consultations, held twice a year, give parents good opportunities to discuss their child's progress with staff.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well cared for by suitably qualified staff who have been appropriately vetted to ensure that they are suitable and have sufficient skills and knowledge to work with children. The maintenance of high staff ratios and effective staff deployment during the sessions ensures that children receive good levels of care and attention. For example, children eagerly greet the lunchtime assistant who is employed so that other members of staff may have lunch breaks. The setting is well-organised and good use is made of all available space both indoors and outdoors to give children much enjoyment and many learning opportunities, wherever they choose to play. Sessions generally run smoothly although the organisation of snack time and large group times, require reviewing.

The wide range of policies and procedures are clear, comprehensive and up to date. These effectively underpin the good practice of the setting to ensure positive outcomes for children. There is a positive attitude towards staff training and good systems are in place to monitor the practice and development of staff. For example, regular appraisals enable further training requirements to be identified. This ensures that children benefit from the up to date knowledge of skilled and experienced staff. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The quality of the leadership and management of nursery education is good. The committee and manager work well together to ensure that children make good progress in their learning. The manager provides a good role model for other staff; she works directly with the staff and children and encourages all staff to play an active role in the 'team'. The manager's belief that 'children are at the centre of their education' is evident in the care offered by the setting and the improvements that the manager and staff have made to the indoor and outdoor environments to further promote the learning opportunities for children attending. Good links are made with the school which benefits those older children making the transition into the adjoining school each year. For example, children spend an afternoon a week in the school for

some of the summer term. Sound systems are in place to monitor the provision of nursery education and these are generally effective.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to ensure that hand washing is adequately promoted within the setting. Children routinely wash their hands before eating, after using the toilet and after feeding or touching the pet rabbit. Children are learning the importance of following these good routines through discussion and reminders from staff. This ensures that children's good health and hygiene is promoted.

At the last inspection for nursery education the provider was asked to include regular opportunities for children to engage in mark making for a purpose, especially during role play activities. Children now have many routine opportunities to mark make when using the indoor and outdoor environment which include drawing, painting and chalking. The provider was also asked to provide regular opportunities for children to engage in simple calculation. Staff use spontaneous opportunities to promote these skills as children play. This ensures that these activities are meaningful to children. Furthermore, staff have received in-house training to improve the provision of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. As a result, children's learning in these areas is effectively promoted.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. 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):

- enable children to effectively respond to their individual needs. This specifically relates to snack time and access to fresh drinking water throughout the day
- ensure large group times are meaningful and engage children appropriately.

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 a consistent system for recording children's next steps of learning
- share children's next steps in their learning with all parents and develop on-going opportunities for parents to share their own knowledge and observations about what their children know and can do so that this information can be used by staff when planning children's next steps of learning.

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