

West Street Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	253107
Inspection date	06 March 2008
Inspector	Angela Hufton
Setting Address	2 West Street, Retford, Nottinghamshire, DN22 6ES
Telephone number	0781 7926 094
E-mail	
Registered person	West Street Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional care, Out of School 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?

West Street Pre-School opened in 1980. It operates from premises situated in the town centre of Retford. The group have access to the areas on the ground floor, which consist of two rooms, kitchen and toilet facilities. There is an adjacent enclosed outdoor play area, which has a safety surface, with covered veranda. The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding villages.

The setting is registered to provide 19 places, for children aged two years to under eight years. There are currently 27 children on roll which includes one funded four year old. Children attend a variety of sessions. The setting have systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The setting opens four days a week. Opening times are Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 09:15 to 11:45 and Friday, 12.15 to 14:45, term time only. The holiday club opens Tuesday and Thursday 09:00 to 13:00.

Of the six staff working directly with the children, five hold an early years qualification. The setting has support from the local authority and they are a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted very effectively. There are very good procedures in place to help children learn about their personal hygiene through daily routines. For example, children use the toilet independently and know it is important to wash their hands before snack time, and after toileting and messy activities. Their understanding of maintaining healthy practices is supported by the staff who offer timely reminders and role model good practice. For example, staff promptly clean their hands after supporting children to blow their noses ensuring the risk of cross-infection is minimised. Premises are clean and well maintained. Staff follow effective and detailed procedures when dealing with accidents and medication and they hold relevant first aid certificates. All written permissions are obtained from parents for the safe administration of medication. Any minor accidents are treated and recorded appropriately with parental signatures as acknowledgement of being informed. However, systems to record children arriving with an injury are not sufficiently robust. This does not fully ensure children's ongoing health and welfare needs are fully promoted. A thorough policy is shared with parents for the care of children who are ill or have infections. This ensures children are protected from cross-infection and helps them to remain healthy. Written permission is obtained from parents for staff to seek any emergency medical advice or treatment.

Children benefit from the opportunity to try a variety of foods at snack time. Each week they are offered a different snack, sometimes related to a time of year or topic being covered. This is often a small selection of raw fruits or vegetables. Children's awareness of healthy eating is effectively promoted as children have regular opportunities to help prepare and taste a range of different foods. Their individual dietary needs and requirements are well catered for as staff are proactive in ensuring their needs are met. They record information from parents about children's dietary requirements and work with them to ensure diets are adhered to. The weekly menu is displayed so that parents know what their children are being offered. Children enjoy snack time and sit in small groups with their key worker, making this a pleasant and social occasion. Most children are supported to pour their own choice of drinks and develop independence as they help set the table.

Children's physical development is promoted well. They have many opportunities to play outside with a very good range of equipment to help the development of their physical skills. For example, children eagerly climb the various rope ladders and practise throwing skills with balls and bean bags. Inside children enjoy moving to music, participating in ring games and playing games with the parachute. They enjoy these activities which enable them to move in a variety of ways and help develop their physical skills. Resources are used well to offer variety and challenge to children, such as hoops, pedal toys and a climbing frame.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is given high priority. Staff make daily checks on the environment as they set up each day and report any concerns promptly so that they are addressed. Children benefit

from warm and welcoming premises where the rooms are decorated attractively to stimulate their learning. They have access to a wide range of appropriate toys and resources that meet their developmental needs, are clean and safe to use. Children move around the room easily, accessing activities independently. Security, particularly as children arrive and depart, is carefully maintained. Children are constantly under the staff's supervision. Thorough risk assessments are completed daily through staff checking toys and equipment and recording any action they have taken.

Good arrangements are in place to protect children in the event of a fire. Staff are vigilant to keep all exits clear of furniture and activities. The emergency escape plan is regularly rehearsed with the children and an evaluation is carried out, which records which children are present and any issues that arise. Children learn the importance of keeping safe as staff talk to them about safety both indoors and outside. For example, they talk about road safety before going out on walks into the local community, the importance of staying together and understand why they must not run indoors in case they fall and hurt themselves. Children know the rules and boundaries and follow routines very well. A clear policy and procedure is in place and understood by all staff in the event of any children being lost or uncollected.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff have a good knowledge and understanding of their responsibilities with regard to child protection procedures and have undertaken appropriate training. They are fully aware of possible signs and symptoms of children who may be at risk and of their responsibility to ensure the designated person is informed of any concerns. There is a comprehensive child protection statement, which meets the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and is made available for parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs and their welfare is highly promoted. Children are enthusiastically involved, interested and stimulated in the extensive range of age-appropriate toys and resources, such as puzzles, construction, junk modelling and sand activities, which are very well planned. Staff take children's individual learning into account by presenting appropriate challenges to increase knowledge and understanding. Staff interact with children very well. They show interest in children's comments and achievements, ask them stage-appropriate questions and offer lots of praise and encouragement. For example, staff thank children for helping in tasks, such as helping put toys away before group time or helping to put the clothes on the tables for snack time. Children develop appropriate socialisation skills as they look out for and assist one another. For example, children help each other to find play food in the role play area when pretending to make breakfast and share resources in the sand tray. Children freely move from one play area to another and are spontaneous in their play and interactions with other children and adults. They take turns on the computer and enthusiastically line up for outdoor play. Staff encourage children to be independent, promoting their self-esteem and confidence. Good opportunities are provided for children to relax and have quiet times. There is a well-presented and comfortable story corner for children to sit and look at books independently and listen to stories. Children enjoy stories read by enthusiastic staff who make them fun for children. The outdoor play area is popular with the children as there are many play opportunities for them.

Staff have a sound understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and use this to successfully plan activities for young children. They are very knowledgeable about the objectives and record them clearly in a weekly planning sheet. Accurate records are maintained because staff complete observations which show children's progress through early milestones and

effectively plan for their next steps in learning, therefore, younger children's development and skills are well supported and promoted.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a thorough understanding of the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones which enables them to plan effective activities and experiences that are well matched to children's needs and interests. For example, they go on trips to the recycling banks nearby. Staff have adapted their planning to incorporate a wide range of activities based around the environment and recycling, effectively enhancing children's interest and enjoyment whilst helping them to learn. Relationships are very good. Staff know the children well and their teaching motivates the children, so they are keen to learn and make good progress. This is further promoted through a highly effective key worker system, which ensures children's individual learning needs are identified and promoted. Written observations are made by the staff and are beginning to be used effectively to inform planning. This is also beginning to ensure children are appropriately challenged according to their stage of development. Staff are actively working to develop the systems further to ensure observations are linked to each child's assessment file to fully identify their progress and plan for their next steps. All staff are included in the planning process, putting their ideas and suggestions forward. They make effective use of time and resources and use their monitoring procedures very well to evaluate the quality of their teaching.

Children are interested and motivated to learn as they engage in a full range of activities. They share and take turns and are confident to try new experiences. During group time the children sit quietly as they show an interest in what others have to say. For example, children eagerly discuss emotions and take turns to talk about the activities, such as why the rabbit, visiting the setting, needs water. They form good relationships with their peers, staff and student helpers caring for them, approaching staff with confidence and freely talking about their interests. Children are developing their independence as they select what they wish to do and use the bathroom independently.

Children are confident as they freely access a good supply of writing materials and resources which enable them to practise their early writing skills. For example, children confidently use hole punches, scissors and a variety of pens to mark-make, which develops their pencil control and hand to eye co-ordination skills. Through well-displayed written words and their use of books, children are developing a good understanding of words and their meaning. Children's emerging writing skills are valued and supported by the staff who adapt activities to enable children to work at their own level. For example, children are supported to use a range of labels and name cards to begin to copy or trace letters and staff promote this well because they discuss the letters and sounds each one makes as they write. Through finding their own name cards as they arrive at the setting and at snack time, the children are beginning to recognise their own names. Children enjoy stories and rhymes. They become actively involved during group time and eagerly participate in action songs, particularly enjoying pretending to lie down and sleep, jumping up with excitement and joining in with all the actions.

Children's mathematical development is progressing well through a varied programme of planned and spontaneous activities. Children count with growing confidence and are beginning to understand a range of mathematical concepts. They are supported to use a good range of number labels around the room to recognise and name number symbols. They eagerly help staff to sort a number line into the correct order before helping to put it on the wall, developing

their understanding of number sequence. Staff plan and provide a good range of activities which provide children with opportunities to explore and investigate their environment using their senses. Children take part in activities to learn about living things and show curiosity when bug hunting. They take great interest in using magnifying pots to examine the insects they have collected, including woodlice, slugs and worms and enjoy drawing pictures of their finds before gently releasing them back into the garden. Children tend to vegetables and flowers they have planted from seed, weeding and watering as necessary and take great pride in helping to care for their garden by recycling waste. Their knowledge and understanding of the world around them is further enhanced through their involvement in topics which look at different celebrations and cultures from around the world. The setting goes out of its way to utilise the resources available in the local community and has built strong links with local schools and businesses. Their technology skills are enhanced as they experience a wide range of opportunities to use computer programmes to develop mouse control and have regular access to calculators, play telephones and a range of battery operated toys and resources.

Physical and creative development is effectively promoted. Children enjoy a full and varied programme of activities which promote these areas. They enjoy independent access to a range of painting and drawing activities, modelling and use a range of tools for mark-making, cutting and sticking. They explore colour, shape and form in both two and three dimensions as they build mobiles from leaves and twigs from the garden. They confidently use scissors, pencils and different sized paint brushes which help to develop their control and co-ordination of small tools. They move with confidence and show a good awareness of space. For example, when participating in kicking balls in the outdoor area they move into a space so they have do not kick the ball near others. Children are fully supported to develop their potential and activities are adapted to ensure all can participate and experience success.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy positive relationships with staff and each other. They begin to feel a sense of belonging in the group as their opinions are sought and valued. Support is available for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and staff work effectively with parents and outside agencies to ensure their needs are met appropriately. Children are developing an understanding of how everyone positively contributes in society as the staff effectively promote inclusion. Resources, language and carefully planned activities assist learning. Children access a versatile range of resources that reflect diversity, such as small world toys, books, puzzles and role play equipment that depicts positive images of age, gender, ability and culture.

Children learn about the wider community through a wide range of practical activities. Their knowledge and experiences are successfully extended as craft activities linked to culture and festivals are included. Topics have aspects to develop an awareness of the environment, tidying up and taking care of others. This ensures children develop a strong sense of independence and self-worth as they are encouraged to share, take turns and listen to others. Children are well behaved as they accept and respond to the firm and consistent expectations of the staff. Children are very confident in the setting and show a sense of belonging to a wider group. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents and carers receive detailed and informative information about the services provided and how their child will be cared for. They receive a prospectus which includes the settings' aims and objectives, the 'Birth to three matters' framework and have access to a full copy of the settings' policies and procedures. A comprehensive settling-in procedure is in place, which

is adaptable to ensure the needs of new children and parents are catered for. Parents are asked to complete a 'child profile' form, which records their likes, dislikes and interests. Information regarding activities and topics the children will be engaged in is provided through regular newsletters which includes activity suggestions for parents to carry out at home. The ongoing sharing of information ensures continuity of care and any changes to children's circumstances can be addressed immediately. There is an informative notice board and parents receive regular information about forthcoming events and activities. Parents and carers are very happy with the provision; they highlight their delight with the friendly, professional and approachable staff.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early years education is good. They are well-informed about the Foundation Stage for nursery education through clear written information. Parents are further informed about their child's progress through daily exchanges of information with their child's key worker and by invitation to more formal meetings with staff to discuss their child's progress through the stepping stones. Each child has their own development file that parents have access to, which includes photographic and pictorial evidence of their achievements, and are actively encouraged to participate in monitoring their child's progress. This partnership is further developed as parents are encouraged to be involved in supporting their child's learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are very relaxed and self-motivated in a well-organised and inspiring environment. They are confident to initiate and progress their own play, enjoying their time in the group. The setting has good systems in place to support their working practices and promote the children's care and well-being. Comprehensive policies support consistent and professional practice. At times this wealth of information means some records are duplicated and it is not clear as to the current version, for example, child record forms or the complaints policy and procedure. Staff share and receive information with parents regularly. All committee changes are notified at the earliest opportunity to ensure relevant checks are undertaken to protect children.

Children are in the care of qualified and experienced staff who support them well to ensure they are happy and settled in the setting. High staff ratios are maintained to ensure children's individual and specific needs are met. Children are supported to learn whilst having fun because thorough organisation, effectively planned routines and developmentally appropriate activities are in place which the children are eager to engage in. Regular staff meetings and a positive attitude to training ensures children receive care from motivated and informed adults.

Leadership and management of early education is good. The committee and manager have a clear vision for the setting and the education that it provides. They plan effectively to maintain the quality of provision through staff training, resources and keeping up to date with changes to the curriculum. The manager is very proactive in her approach and has an in-depth knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and is able to support and monitor the provision being delivered by staff. She works alongside the established staff team who are deployed extremely well to ensure children have very good support. The manager spends quality time observing the delivery of the curriculum, evaluating the outcomes for children and implements effective action plans to address any identified areas. Annual appraisals for all staff ensure they maintain and update their professional skills and attitudes through training.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting agreed to two recommendations to improve their practice. The first of these was to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. Staff have attended training to improve their awareness and now have a very clear understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of any concerns, enabling them to effectively protect children. The second recommendation was to provide more opportunities for parents to receive regular information on their children's progress and provide details of the procedure for complaints. The setting have taken positive steps to address these issues, promoting children's welfare and care.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting agreed to three recommendations to improve the educational provision. These were to evaluate planning to ensure a balanced curriculum across all six areas; to improve staffs knowledge of the early learning goals to enable them to identify the learning intention of activities; to enable parents to be involved in their child's assessment. The setting have taken suitable steps to address this and staff now have a good awareness of the learning intentions of activities. Clear systems are now in place to ensure planning covers all areas and parents are now actively involved in their child's development files. This all supports children's progress in their early education.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint made to Ofsted that required the provider to take action in order to meet the National Standards. This related to concerns about Standard 2: Organisation, Standard 4: Physical Environment and Standard 6: Safety. Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to the provision on 15/09/2005. As a result of the investigation the provider was given one action under Standard 4 to take positive steps to promote safety in the setting and ensure proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents and minimise risks in the outside area. The registered person continues to be qualified for registration.

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):

- continue to develop policies, procedures and record keeping to promote the welfare, safety and care of the children with particular regard to existing injury records, the complaints procedures and child registration forms.

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 observations and assessments to more clearly identify each child's next steps and use this to plan for their individual progress.

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