



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 127954

DfES Number: 521113

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 15/09/2004  
Inspector Name Julie Washer

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name Orchard House Pre-School  
Setting Address 82 Park Road  
Ware  
Hertfordshire  
SG12 0AN

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Orchard House Pre-School 283458

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Orchard House Pre-School  
Address 82 Park Road  
Ware  
Hertfordshire  
SG12 0AN

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

### Information about the setting

Orchard House Pre-School opened in 1995. It operates from a building owned by East Herts District Council in Ware. The group serves the local area. The setting was previously known as Ware Pre-School and operated from alternative premises.

There are currently 60 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 52 funded three year olds and 1 funded four year old. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting welcomes children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 11:45 Monday to Friday and 12:30 until 15:00 Monday to Thursday.

Four full time and one part time staff work with the children. Four have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. One member of staff is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher through the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP). The pre-school was awarded the Herts Quality Standard in May 2001 and are currently updating this accreditation.

### How good is the Day Care?

Orchard House Pre-School provides good care for children. The manager and staff are committed to expanding their knowledge through training, which provides children with a richer learning experience. Staff are well deployed within the setting and good use is made of space and resources. There is a high level of adult and child interaction. The premises are clean, well maintained and have sufficient, accessible storage both indoors and out. Resources are well presented and there is a wide range of toys and play materials to provide stimulating activities and play opportunities for children. All of the documentation is in place although the complaint's procedure requires updating and the pre-school are reviewing their procedures for retaining relevant records.

Staff give high priority to ensuring that all children are safe and well cared for. They actively promote good hygiene practices and are vigilant about safety at all times. However, the risk assessment procedures need reviewing. Staff have a good understanding of children's individual needs, they value all children and offer appropriate care and support. All children have equal access to activities, and children with special needs are supported well. Staff are aware of their responsibilities with regard to child protection.

The children benefit from a broad range of stimulating planned activities which enables them to make good all round progress in their development. Staff are interested in what children do and say, they talk and listen to them and ask questions to make them think which extends their learning. Behaviour is excellent. Staff are good role models, they are kind and caring. They speak to the children respectfully, frequently giving them lots of praise and encouragement.

The partnership with parents is good. They are welcomed by the friendly and approachable staff team. Parents receive frequent information about the setting and have informal opportunities to speak to staff daily about their child.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

At the last inspection the pre-school agreed to update the complaints procedure to include details of the regulator, and develop the operational plan and the staff handbook.

The group has extended the operational plan and the staff handbook. The complaints procedure has been developed although the manager is aware to make the details clearer.

#### **What is being done well?**

- Staff are well organised. They are encouraged and do attend relevant training on a regular basis in order to keep their skills up to date.
- There is a high level of effective adult interaction which extends the children's development and learning. Staff are interested in what children do and say, praising them to encourage their self-confidence and develop their self-esteem. They ask questions to make children think.
- Staff create a warm, welcoming and friendly environment where children can feel confident and secure. The premises are well maintained.
- There is a well presented range of age appropriate activities and good quality equipment which helps children to make progress in all areas of their development.
- High regard is given to children's safety both inside and outside which enables children to move freely in a safe environment.
- Staff develop good relationships with the children's families and get to know them well. They are friendly and approachable, and they make themselves available to talk to the parents at the end of each session. Many positive

comments were received from parents, both during the inspection and from the written questionnaires, regarding the care of their children at the pre-school.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- regulatory details in the complaints procedure
- the procedures for risk assessment and for keeping records within the appropriate time scales.

#### **Outcome of the inspection**

Good

#### **CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION**

*All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.*

*As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.*

#### **WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?**

#### **The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

Std	Recommendation
6	Develop the risk assessment procedures to include time scales.
14	Develop the complaints procedure to include the address and telephone number of the regulator and review procedures for retaining records for the appropriate time scales.

## INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

### How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Orchard House Pre-School is good. It enables children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals in knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development and generally good progress in all other areas of learning.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Staff provide a sound learning environment using a wide range of resources imaginatively to promote children's learning across all the six areas of the Foundation Stage. They have a good knowledge and understanding of how young children learn and they achieve high standards of interaction with them. Staff ask questions to make children think and respond sensitively to their individual needs. They skilfully plan a wide range of interesting and stimulating play opportunities. However, on occasions there are missed opportunities to effectively challenge the children. The assessment system is being reviewed so that it informs future planning of the next steps in the children's individual educational programme. Children's behaviour is excellent and praise and encouragement are freely used.

Leadership and management is generally good. Much of the success is due to the care and commitment of the management and staff. They have a positive working relationship and their enthusiasm and good team work ensure the smooth running of the nursery. The pre-school is committed to providing good quality care and education for all children. Staff are actively encouraged to attend any relevant training courses and team meetings take place every two weeks. A new system of regular staff appraisals is being introduced.

The partnership with parents is good. They are provided with good quality information about the setting. However, the pre-school leader is aware of the need to provide parents with information relating to the Foundation Stage. They are invited to attend termly parent evenings and encouraged to be involved in their child's learning.

### What is being done well?

- Management are committed to providing good quality care and education for all children. Staff are actively encouraged to attend any relevant training courses and they work well together as a team.
- Children are confident and sociable. Relationships within the group are being developed well. Children work co-operatively together, sharing and taking turns. They show confidence when speaking with staff, visitors and other children in the group. Children are interested and keen to learn and are confident to try new activities.
- Staff interact with children effectively which enables them to feel valued. They

are friendly and approachable and know the children well, especially those needing additional support. They are good role models, they show respect for the children and encourage them to have good manners. Staff include all children in activities.

- Children are provided with stimulating opportunities to explore and investigate as they observe the growth of cress seeds they plant and learn about electrical circuit boards. They have many opportunities to use the computer and programmable toys independently.
- There are excellent opportunities for children to use their imagination through role play. They are provided with stimulating props for inspiration, for example, children dressing up as Snow White and staff interacting effectively with children as they act out the story of Peter Pan.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- procedures to develop children's assessment records so that they link to the stepping stones and early learning goals adequately, and ensure they are used to inform planning of the next steps of the children's individual educational programme
- the provision of activities and experiences that challenge the older and more able children particularly within the programme for communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

The pre-school has made very good progress since the last inspection. There were two key issues for action:

Provide more opportunities for children to recognise and write their names and simple words: Children have their own name cards which they recognise and put in a box on arrival at the group. Name cards are also laid out for them to recognise at group activities. Children write over or join dotted letters of their name. More able children draw pictures in their exercise books and staff scribe for them. Children write over or copy underneath the staff's simple sentences. Staff use the written word well around the room.

Provide opportunities for parents to share children's records more formally: Parents are welcome to speak to staff at any time and see their children's records. There are two parent's evenings a term including a session for new parents.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are happy, motivated and keen to learn. They are developing an awareness of their own needs and the feelings of others. Children are able to share and take turns and behave very well. They are forming good relationships with staff and each other and are confident to talk to visitors to the group. Children are developing personal independence skills, however, some opportunities are missed during snack times. They are introduced to the local community through visitors to the nursery.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children listen and respond well to instructions and information. They enjoy stories and participating in songs and rhymes. More able children can link sounds to letters and practise letter formation as they write over the alphabet. Younger children are beginning to recognise their name cards and post in a box on arrival to the pre-school. Staff use the written word well around the setting. However, there are missed opportunities for children to practise their mark making skills independently.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children enjoy singing number rhymes and songs. They learn about numbers as they place the date on the weather chart and count how many beads they have threaded. Puzzles and compare bears help with matching, sorting and sequencing. Children use language to describe shape and can recognise, squares, circles, triangles and rectangles. However, there is limited evidence of children practising their addition and subtraction skills through everyday routines and planned activities.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are developing early scientific skills through effective use of a good range of resources. They learn about the life cycle of a frog and a butterfly and observe the growth of the cress seeds they plant. Children explore and investigate as they participate in discovering how electrical circuit boards work. They enjoy using programmable toys and the computer independently. Children learn about the wider world as they make lanterns to celebrate Chinese New Year.

### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children benefit from a variety of physical play daily as they use the outside or inside area. They use a range of small and large equipment to develop their muscles. They show an awareness of space and move with confidence as they ride wheeled toys. Fine motor skills are developed using a range of construction kits, toys and puzzles. However, there are few opportunities for children to learn about health and bodily awareness and to explore malleable materials.

**CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement:	Very Good
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Staff plan a varied programme of art and craft work including box modelling, collage, printing and painting. Through topic work children enjoy making Incy Wincy Spider and jelly fish models. There are excellent opportunities for children to use their imagination through role play, with good use of props for inspiration such as, dressing up as Snow White and acting out the story of Peter Pan. Children match movements to music as they respond to the Sticky Kids tape.

**Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.**



## **OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

## **WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES**

- develop children's assessment records so that they link to the stepping stones and early learning goals adequately, and ensure they are used to inform planning of the next steps of the children's individual educational programme
- review the provision of activities and experiences that challenge the older and more able children particularly within the programme for communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.

*The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.*

## **SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS**

### **STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON**

*Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.*

### **STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION**

*The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.*

### **STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY**

*The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.*

### **STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

*The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.*

### **STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT**

*Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.*

### **STANDARD 6 - SAFETY**

*The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.*

### **STANDARD 7 - HEALTH**

*The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.*

### **STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK**

*Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.*

### **STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

*The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.*

### **STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)**

*The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is*

*proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.*

#### **STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR**

*Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.*

#### **STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS**

*The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.*

#### **STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION**

*The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.*

#### **STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION**

*Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.*