



## Wrens Preschool Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | EY332504  |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 28 September 2006   |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Jima Fotopoulou   |
| <b>Setting Address</b>         | Friends Meeting House, New Street, Great Dunmow, Essex, CM6 1BH |
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| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Integrated  |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | 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](http://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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Wrens Pre-school is a privately owned pre-school, which was re-registered in the name of the current owner in 2006. There has been a pre-school on these premises since the 1960s. Wrens Pre-school operates from the Friends Meeting House in Dunmow, Essex. A maximum of 20 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09:30 to 12:00 term times only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 30 children aged from two and a half to under five years on roll. Of these 14 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from both the local and wider catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs six staff. All members of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of the staff is working towards a higher qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP), the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PSLA) and the Uttlesford Cluster Group.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in an environment where good hygiene procedures are always maintained. Children learn how to keep themselves clean and healthy by following established routines such as washing their hands before meals, after messy play or after using the toilet. Younger children are helped to establish good hygiene habits as there are plenty of visual clues both in the main room and the toilets which remind children of the importance of personal hygiene. Practitioners are aware of current hygiene procedures and ensure children's health by wiping down surfaces with disinfectant both before and after snack times; they ensure that children are not exposed to unpleasant fumes by cleaning the tables when children are not using them. All health related documentation is in place to support the practitioners and ensure that children's health is maintained at all times.

Children enjoy snacks which are nutritious and comply with individual dietary needs. Practitioners provide children with two types of fresh fruit and a biscuit for snack; children are offered drinks such as milk, water or juice which follow parental wishes. Practitioners are aware of any allergies or specific dietary requirements and liaise effectively with the parents to ensure that these are met. Any information regarding specific dietary requirements is clearly recorded in the registration forms and practitioners have developed a table which is displayed on the wall for quick reference; this ensures that children's health is effectively promoted as all members of staff are aware of children's individual needs. Children are encouraged to learn about healthy eating through visual clues in the setting and planned activities for example, exploring topics such as "health" and making collages using pictures of healthy food cut out from magazines.

Children enjoy good opportunities to engage in physical play and be active. They have access to a fully enclosed and safe garden with a wide range of play equipment which helps them develop their physical skills. For example, children develop co-ordination as they run freely kicking footballs or develop their spatial awareness by riding wheeled toys, child size bikes and scooters. They develop imagination and engage in role play making use of equipment made in previous activities such as big painted cardboard boxes which are being transformed into a "bus" in order to "drive" around the garden. Children are able to use a variety of tools and equipment with competence such as paint brushes, rolling pins, scissors, pencils, glue, play dough and chalk in order to create their pictures and develop their hand and eye co-ordination and manipulative dexterity.

## **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children's safety is effectively promoted due to the staff's good understanding of assessing and managing risks; practitioners carry out daily risk assessments and have sought advice from external agencies in order to minimise potential hazards to children which ensures their safety in the setting. Children are well protected by staff who have secure systems in place for the safe arrival and departure of the children for example, a member of the staff is always present by the door when children and their parents arrive or depart from the setting. All fire safety equipment is in place and they are checked regularly to ensure that children are kept safe indoors. Practitioners raise children's awareness of keeping themselves safe in case of a fire by carrying out regular fire drills. All health and safety documentation is in place to support the practitioners and safeguard the children.

Children enjoy access to a child-centred, well-organised and welcoming environment. Their work is nicely displayed on the walls which helps children feel valued. They are able to move freely around the setting and they have access to child size furniture which are well maintained; this enables children to play and learn in safety and comfort. Practitioners help children understand about personal safety within the setting as they encourage children to tidy up their toys in order to avoid tripping hazards. Children have access to safe, suitable and age-appropriate toys and play resources which are checked regularly for safety and cleanliness. They are able to choose their play materials from the toys and equipment that has been set out for them and their choices are respected. All children take great care not to hurt themselves or other when playing with the toys and resources or moving around the setting.

Practitioners have a good understanding of child protection issues which means that children are safe in their care. They are aware of the appropriate procedures to follow in case of child protection concerns; these are set out in detail in the setting's child protection policy. Practitioners have attended recent training in child protection in order to inform their practice and ensure that children are protected from abuse or neglect. The setting ensures that children are protected from unvetted people as practitioners release children only to their parents or people nominated by them. All relevant information is recorded in the children's registration forms to ensure that parental wishes are adhered to. Practitioners request to be informed beforehand if a person other than the parents are collecting the children from the setting; this is logged in the setting's authorisation book and a code of identification is agreed between the setting and the parents on the day. This ensures children's safety.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from sensitive and caring staff who motivate them to explore the activities, toys and resources on offer. They are able to form trusting relationships with a significant adult within the setting as practitioners have a key worker system in place. Children are confident and are able to achieve as the practitioners have a sound understanding of child development and learning through play. Children are encouraged to develop their skills through varied and stimulating activities which are designed to help children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals through the stepping stones.

Practitioners use plenty of praise and encouragement in order to help children develop positive self-esteem. Children's confidence is promoted through a child-centred environment which encourages them to play and learn; children are able to use their initiative as they make their own choices from a wide range of toys and resources that have been set out for them. They are able to use their imagination and engage in pretend play for example, while playing in the home corner using a broad range of child size cutlery and pretend play equipment.

Practitioners play with the children offering them appropriate support; they talk to the children helping them develop their language skills or engage in role play encouraging them to make "cups of tea". Practitioners promote a relaxed and supportive environment within the setting which ensures that children feel secure and that they can join in the activities without the fear of failure.

### Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff are keen to support children's learning and have planning in place in order to help them learn through play. However, the short-term planning does not reflect the areas of learning a particular activity is aimed at in order to ensure that children are making progress towards the early learning goals; differentiation between more or less able children is not included in the planning in order to offer appropriate challenge as well as how the activities will be adapted in order to meet different needs. Key worker assessment records which relate to the stepping stones are in place and practitioners make observations in order to monitor and assess children's development; however, existing records do not clearly reflect the observations made and how these inform the planning in order to plot children's next steps.

Children are able to count confidently up to ten through activities such as reading books where children are invited to count how many oranges the "hungry caterpillar" had. They are encouraged to perform simple subtractions as they sing songs such as the "10 green bottles". However, practitioners do not provide children with opportunities to consolidate their knowledge using a familiar context such as using snack times in order to help children develop their language and mathematical skills and perform simple calculations. Children's language development is promoted through planned activities such as the "circle time" where children are encouraged to talk about the topic of the day. Practitioners help children develop and extend their language skills by offering them the vocabulary they need in order to describe natural materials such as different types of grass or leaves. Children learn about "soft" or "dry" and "rough" as they are encouraged to observe and talk about the sensation they get on their hands after touching fresh and dried grass. Children have access to books which they share with the adults; they are able to sit quietly, concentrate and follow the story line using the pictures as clues during the story times. Practitioners encourage children to learn about letters and how they sound through activities such as reading books and repeating the sound of a letter for example, "d" for "dolphin" or creating a wall display where each child coloured the first letter of their name.

Children have adequate mark making opportunities for example by having access to mark making resources such as coloured pencils and chalk; they are encouraged to write their names on their creations. Older children are able to form recognisable letters while younger ones are

invited to make their "special" marks. Children enjoy engaging in pretend play with the staff which helps them act out observed behaviours such as making "cups of tea" and "serving pizza" or "taking videos" using a toy video camera. Children use different types of construction bricks and tools such as toy screws and screwdrivers or toy hammers in order to build tall towers or assemble a car. They are able to investigate their surroundings as they play with small world equipment such as driving their cars and trains on the railway trucks.

Children respond with excitement when practitioners invite them to match movement to familiar songs. They are able to recite them from memory and perform the movements with confidence. Children are provided with good opportunities to develop their creativity for example by creating paintings or collages using a wide variety of materials for example, children made a "blue" collage using different types of fabrics or they decorated paper plates using orange lentils and red sand. They are supported in developing hand and eye coordination and manipulative dexterity while playing with play dough using a variety of tools such as scissors, rolling pins or shape cutters or when arranging natural materials in order to create their "gardens" with increased competence. Children are becoming familiar with different cultures and beliefs through planned activities such as celebrating different festivals or trying out ethnic food.

Staff work as a team praising and encouraging children in order to help them develop their personal independence and form positive self-esteem. Overall, children are making a satisfactory progress given their capabilities and starting points.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are made to feel good about themselves as practitioners treat all children with equal respect and concern. Practitioners ensure that children have good quality opportunities to experience the wider community through planned activities such as celebrating different festivals, making Chinese dragons by decorating paper plates or doing hand painting; children have access to multicultural resources such as little people, books and puzzles which depict positive images of diversity and encourage children to raise their awareness of the wider community. Practitioners invite people from the local community in order to provide children with first-hand experiences of the wider society. Practitioners' good understanding of equal opportunities and positive attitude towards diversity ensure that all children are made to feel welcomed and included in the life of the setting.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well cared for as the setting works closely with the parents in order to ensure that their needs are met. For example, all relevant information is recorded in the registration forms and parents are supported through informal discussions. Knowledgeable and caring staff ensure that children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are offered the support they need and they work well with supporting agencies to ensure that individual progress is monitored and assessed. The setting adapts the activities to ensure that all children are included in the setting and has all the appropriate documentation in place in order to ensure that children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are making progress along side their peers.

Children behave well as practitioners have a consistent and positive approach in managing children's behaviour which helps them develop their understanding of what is right and wrong. Children's good behaviour is celebrated as all members of staff offer constant praise and encouragement; practitioners use age-appropriate and positive ways of dealing with challenging behaviour such as explanation and distraction. This helps children raise their awareness of what is expected of them. All related documentation is in place to support the staff and ensure that parents are kept fully informed.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Practitioners encourage open communication with the parents and their views are respected and welcomed. Practitioners ensure that positive relationships are formed with the parents as they exchange verbal information with them through the key worker system where children's progress is discussed in an informal manner. The setting has a parental involvement policy in place in order to encourage parents to contribute to their children's learning; practitioners use a pin board where the topic of the week is displayed along with information of how parents can reinforce their children's learning at home or how they can be involved in their children's learning in the setting. Parents have access to all policies and procedures as these are displayed on the information board; they receive sufficient information regarding the educational programme through the setting's prospectus, notices and regular newsletters. The setting has systems in place in order to ensure that any complaints will be recorded and dealt with effectively. The contact details of the regulator are displayed, as required, in order to ensure that parents are able to express any concerns.

Children's social development is promoted as they are encouraged to play together, share toys and resources or take turns for example, children enjoyed sharing books with each other and the staff. Practitioners use constant praise and encouragement which help children form positive self-esteem and confidence. Children feel confident to approach adults and engage in conversation with them. Planned activities and multicultural resources ensure that children are provided with opportunities to experience the wider community and develop positive images of diversity. All children are encouraged to explore the toys and resources, participate in the activities on offer and try out new skills without the fear of failure. This positive approach ensures that children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children have access to a welcoming and child-centred environment which helps them feel secure and confident. They are happy and settled in the setting and practitioners appropriately support children's learning and play.

Documentation is maintained appropriately and all policies and procedures are in place to ensure the smooth running of the setting. However, the existing registration system does not include children and staff's accurate times of arrival and departure in order to ensure children's safety and the procedures of recording accidents in the accidents record book does not ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times. All members of staff have a recognised early years qualification which ensures that children are appropriately cared for and have attended further training in order to ensure that their practice remains current. There are robust procedures in place for appointing new members of staff which means that children are

protected. All members of staff have been suitably vetted and they are aware not to leave children unsupervised with unvetted people which ensures children's safety.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The manager has a clear vision for the nursery education and all children are helped to develop reaching their potentials. The manager monitors the provision through daily observations and informal discussions with the staff. Staff are monitored and motivated through regular staff meetings and almost daily verbal feedback from the manager, where good practice is pointed out. The manager ensures that equality of opportunity is promoted for both the children and the staff which means that individual needs are assessed and acted upon. The manager is committed in offering all members of staff the opportunity to develop professionally by encouraging them to attend further training.

Overall, the children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not Applicable

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since registration 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 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):

- ensure that the actual times of arrival and departure for both children and staff are recorded on the daily register and ensure that confidentiality is always maintained, this refers to the accidents 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):

- ensure that children are provided with opportunities to consolidate their knowledge within a familiar context such as using snack times to help them develop their mathematical and language skills
- review the existing system in assessing children's individual progress to clearly reflect the observations made and use these to ensure that planning clearly reflects individual children's next steps
- develop the short term planning to include which areas of learning a particular activity is aimed at and use differentiation in order to offer appropriate challenge for more or less able children and to clearly show how activities will be adapted to meet different needs.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)