

Wildern Opportunity Group

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	507861
Inspection date	13 September 2007
Inspector	Coral Hales
Setting Address	Centre 2000, St Johns Road, Hedge End, Southampton, Hampshire, SO30 4AF
Telephone number	01489 787968
E-mail	
Registered person	Wildern Opportunity Group
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?

Wildern Opportunity Group opened in 1988 and operates from Centre 2000 in Hedge End, Southampton. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The group is open between 09.30 - 12.00 and 12.30 - 15.00 in term time only. Sessions offered are Monday all day, Tuesday morning, Wednesday all day, Thursday morning and Friday all day. On Wednesday and Friday mornings the sessions are provided for parents and children aged birth to five years to attend by referral only.

There are currently 75 children on roll. Of these, 25 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group employs eight members of staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from an advisory teacher from the local authority and from the area inclusion officer. The setting has developed close links with other agencies including the local children's centre.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean and well-maintained environment and their health is successfully promoted as staff take positive steps to prevent infection and appropriate procedures are in place to support children who are unwell. Children understand that it is important to wash their hands and most are fully independent in their practice. Their welfare is promoted because the staff can respond to accidents appropriately as current first aid certificates are maintained and parents give written consent for emergency treatment/advice.

Children are appropriately nourished and are offered healthy snacks during the session and parents wishes are followed and children's preferences are observed. Children select fruit or vegetable pieces for snack, however, they miss the opportunity to observe whole fruits and to help with the preparation as this takes place before snack is served. Children help themselves to easily accessible drinking water throughout the session and they enjoy a variety of drinks at snack time.

Children benefit from having regular opportunities to enjoy physical play and activities, both indoors and outdoors. For example, in the garden they ride bicycles, play on balancing equipment and crawl through the tunnel. They develop their climbing skills as they use the large frame and learn to control their bodies as they move to music. Children have a positive attitude to exercise and have fun as they play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are secure and there are effective procedures in place to prevent unwanted visitors gaining access, for example, the main door is kept locked and visitors are monitored and identified by staff. There is a good ratio of staff who are deployed very effectively ensuring children are kept safe in their surroundings. Children's safety is well promoted and staff have a good understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits. This enables children to become involved in helping to organise things safely and to begin to understand how to keep themselves safe. They take part in regular emergency evacuations with staff and are clear about the procedures to follow.

All children including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities use a wide range of good quality toys and resources appropriate to their age and stage of development. All equipment that is set out is accessible to children to allow them to initiate and develop their play and ideas in a safe environment.

Children are safeguarded by staff and management who have good knowledge of child protection issues and understand their professional duty regarding child protection. Training is booked to further develop staff's knowledge. Relevant policies, that are shared with parents, are in place. However these are not fully in line with new guidance issued by The Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy themselves at the group and close and caring relationships are evident. Younger children's learning is very well supported by staff and those who are less confident or are new are given time to take part in activities when they are ready. Staff use their knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework as a reference point. This ensures that activities are suitably planned for the under three's who attend the opportunity group of Wednesday and Friday mornings. All children including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are interested and participate in a broad range of purposeful and developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor activities which promote their learning.

Nursery education

Children arrive happy and eager to participate and most are settled, chatty and self-assured. Children achieve well because the staff have a good understanding of early years guidance to provide good quality education. They are absorbed, engaged and happy as they take part in the activities provided. Some play happily at a group activity without interruption, for example, as they mix and combine rice, foam and spaghetti together, really enjoying the textures. Others concentrate quietly on their own as they play with the farm and enjoy the involvement of a member of staff who effectively extends the learning through discussion. Staff know the children well and during play give them opportunities to discuss their ideas and experiences. For example, as they set out cutlery in the home corner they discuss what they use at home. Children play cooperatively together and help each other, for example, they share well as they play in the water tray, and wait to have a turn to climb through the tunnel in the garden. They negotiate as they decide who will use what equipment in the garden and initiate and organise their own ideas as they play.

Children gain a respect for others and their beliefs, cultures and traditions and the group currently support children who have English as a second language. They have opportunities to observe and take part in festivals and special occasions, for example, as they take part in fundraising activities for those less fortunate than themselves. Resources that promote positive images of diversity are well used and support the children's learning. Children interact well with each other and are confident to initiate conversations, they ask questions and pay attention to what others say. Staff effectively support and extend children's growing vocabulary, for example, during individual and group story time. Children listen with enjoyment and quickly join in with familiar stories and rhymes. Some recognise their names on cards and others link sounds to letters and handle books with confidence. They have many opportunities to attempt writing for different purposes, for example, they make appointments as they play in 'the office', and hold their pencils well and are able to explain their ideas to others. Children are successfully making sense of simple numbers in their play and can count to five and beyond. They play with bears and discuss big, small, more and less and play in the water using a good selection of equipment which enables them to predict for example, what will happen if they put too much water in a container. Children do take part in practical mathematical activities, however, daily routines such as snack time are not always used effectively to further develop children's knowledge. They select tools and build and construct selecting appropriate pieces to assemble, for example, a building using large coloured plastic pieces. They find out about and identify the uses of everyday technology and, for example, use the mobile phone, keyboard and calculators as they play and they use and understand simple programs on the computer. A selection of children's work is printed out and displayed and this helps children to have pride in their achievements.

Children learn about growth as they observe the butterfly garden and watch as they emerge. The garden is used as a learning experience and children use this throughout the second half of the morning on a free-flow system allowing them freedom of choice of activities. This area is also used very effectively to develop children's physical skills, for example, they run, jump, ride and are given additional support to develop new skills and they are becoming increasingly independent. Children use a good range of construction kits and small world toys to develop and improve their fine motor skills.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are motivated, caring and work very well with all children who are interested and eager to learn. Well organised settling in procedures allow children to become confident to participate. They achieve well because staff provide an inviting and stimulating environment for the children. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and generally use it well to plan activities to develop children's knowledge. Activities are planned to provide a balanced range across the six areas of learning, enabling children to make good progress. Stepping stones are identified, however, it is not clear how children will be enabled to achieve the outcome. Assessment records are completed for all children and these clearly show progress and track their achievements. These are well-maintained and linked to the stepping stones. Staff's enthusiasm and motivation encourages all children to join in and take part and allows them to make good progress. They communicate really well with the children and give very effective support to all.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated equally and with respect and there are very effective systems in place to support families. Staff value and respect children's individuality and work very closely with parents to meet individual needs. Children who have English as a second language are well supported by staff and are making good progress. All children learn about diversity through a good range of play provision and well-planned activities. They experience festivals, for example, Chinese New Year and special religious events such as Easter and Christmas.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive excellent support from the experienced staff who work very closely with parents. Home visits take place prior to children attending the group. Staff are advised by the area inclusion officer and receive help and support from other local outside agencies. All children are treated with respect and kindness and their individual needs are met, for example, through individual education plans. One-to-one workers remain with children when possible and very informative and well-maintained records are kept. These clearly show all progress and are shared with parents. Staff use Makaton hand signals alongside language, to reinforce learning and this effectively supports a number of children. A named Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) is in place and staff have undertaken training in this area. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave well in the group as they purposefully occupy themselves. They receive good levels of support as they begin to learn to manage their own behaviour. They respond well in response to staff's good use of praise which is given freely. The encouragement that they receive enables them to achieve and to be rewarded for their achievements. Staff are good role models for children as their manner is calm and polite. Children develop confidence and a sense of well-being as they play together happily. Parents receive information relating to the setting and effective settling in procedures ensure both parents and children settle into the group well. A complaints policy is in place, however, this is not fully in line with new guidance and does not clearly inform the parents of the procedures to follow or current contact numbers to

use. Parents speak very highly about the quality of the provision including the referral group and all feel their children are well settled. Parents are kept informed of children's progress verbally, and new systems are in place to have more formal appointments to discuss children's achievements.

Partnership with parents is good. They are generally well informed about their child's daily planned activities as these are displayed for them to read. Information about the Foundation Stage and the nursery curriculum is available to help them to gain an understanding of how children learn. Folders are kept of children taking part in a variety of activities and this helps to inform parents. Assessment records are maintained and the Record of Achievement is then shared with the child's first school.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff provide a warm and welcoming environment where children are happy and settled and they enjoy their time in the group. They are effectively supervised at all times and ratios are very well met, and this allows for one-to-one care when necessary. Children's welfare is further enhanced by the effective organisation of space, resources and staff. All required documentation is in place and is currently being reviewed and some policies are being updated. Staff have created an operational plan, this is however, a working document and is still being developed. Staff are secure in their roles and are fully aware of their responsibilities to the children.

Leadership and management is good. Staff work well together towards common goals and clear communication between them each day enables them to provide a stimulating well-balanced programme of activities. They meet together regularly with the committee to discuss practice and group issues. Staff meetings allow them time to discuss planning, children's progress and future events. They attend training courses and workshops to further develop their knowledge and skills to allow them to support and care for children appropriately. Systems are in place to monitor, reflect and make improvements if necessary. Staff's ongoing suitability is monitored effectively and appraisals are completed, however, some are not maintained. Some systems are in place to monitor the educational curriculum and some activities are evaluated. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The setting were required to obtain prior written permission for emergency treatment/advice and to update their policies for lost and uncollected children and child protection. Parents now give all required consents and are aware of the new policies provided. This ensures parents are well informed and children's safety and welfare is maintained. The child protection policy has been updated, however, this requires some changes and is currently being reviewed.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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.

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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):

- review the policies and procedures with regard to complaints to ensure that they are relevant and contain all current information and guidance. Keep parents informed to enable them to be aware of the systems to use

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):

- further develop the plans to clearly identify how children will learn. Ensure all areas of learning are covered with regard to: promoting children's interest in practical mathematics, for example, during routines such as snack time.

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