

Weston-under-Penyard Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	223609
Inspection date	16 January 2008
Inspector	Deborah Ball
Setting Address	Weston-under-Penyard Village Hall, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire, HR9 7PA
Telephone number	078555 18895
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Registered person	The Trustee's of Weston under Penyard 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?

Weston-under-Penyard Pre-School opened in 1985. It operates from the village hall in the rural village of Weston-under-Penyard, Herefordshire. The setting serves the local and wider communities. A maximum of 24 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open each Monday and Wednesday from 09:30 to 12:30 and Tuesday and Thursday from 09:30 to 13:30 during school term times. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 13 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 11 children receive funding for early education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs three members of staff, two of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is clearly protected through well-planned daily routines and learning from example. The children receive excellent support in learning to manage their own personal care as they wash their hands before meals, after toileting and outside play. Laminated photographs displayed in the bathroom areas identify the stages of hand washing and are available as a guide to children. Staff further encourage children's self-care skills by praising and congratulating them when they remember hygiene routines without being prompted. Exemplary hygiene procedures are carried out by staff who understand the importance of good role modelling. Positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection such as staff wear disposable gloves and aprons when assisting children in their personal care. If children become unwell, have an accident or require medication they receive prompt, sensitively managed care and treatment, in accordance with parents' wishes and any relevant guidelines. As staff have regard to all current health and hygiene guidelines, children are suitably protected from infectious diseases. Information regarding infection control and the advised minimum exclusion periods is readily shared with parents. Parents are kept well informed about any intervention or treatment and all relevant records are maintained in a confidential manner. Staff are well prepared for safeguarding children's welfare in any medical emergency as they have appropriate first aid training and qualifications. Suitable first aid equipment and relevant guidance is readily available in the pre-school.

All children enjoy access to an outstanding range of physical activities that help them to develop their confidence and skills both when using large and small apparatus, tools and equipment. Staff make excellent use of the outside area as a stimulating learning environment to support all aspects of children's learning and development. For example, the adventure playground provides children with many physical challenges, staff have created a children's garden centre where they can enjoy digging and planting seeds and children show a keen sense of personal space as they play alongside each other, pedalling their bikes skilfully to avoid obstacles and controlling their speed so that they do not bump into their friends. Children enjoy role play in the outdoor garden centre restaurant where they sit on the colourful garden furniture, order food and have a chat with their friends. Through playing energetic games, children are developing their skills of throwing and catching, hopping, skipping and jumping. Children play co-operative games, developing their understanding of sharing and turn taking. If the weather is such that children cannot go outside, the hall is rearranged to allow children to play ring games, explore the climbing frame and obstacle courses, participate in parachute activities and enjoy dancing and musical movement. There is a vast range of different and interesting tools to use and this helps children to develop co-ordination and excellent hand and finger control. For example, they use resources such as complicated puzzles, games where they are required to be precise with magnets to catch fish, they use hammers to nail the wooden pieces to the cork base to make patterns and pictures and use scissors, paint brushes, rollers and pencils freely throughout the session.

Children have excellent opportunities to develop healthy eating habits. The children are well nourished and learn about healthy living through their discussions with staff, planned activities and by seeing attractive poster displays about healthy eating topics. The children enjoy a wide variety of healthy snacks, such as fresh fruit, raisins, raw vegetables and breadsticks. Children are able to develop their independence as they skilfully use knives to prepare vegetables for a stir fry, create healthy sandwiches for a teddy bears picnic and spread butter on crackers. During

snack times, discussions are held about the types of food they eat, where it comes from, what makes them grow and what keeps them healthy. Children have a choice of milk or water to drink with their snacks and also have independent access to water throughout the session to ensure they are kept well hydrated. Children enjoy healthy packed lunches provided by parents and are supported to eat within a sociable atmosphere, discussing recent events and other matters that are important to them as well as discussing which foods are good to eat. The staff have a clear understanding of children's dietary needs and any food items provided by them are in accordance with parental wishes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, safe and well-maintained environment. Regular risk assessments are undertaken, thus ensuring most potential hazards are identified and minimised, although children's safety is potentially compromised when accessing the toilets independently as adult sized toilets are not adapted to meet the needs of individual children. The children benefit from having sufficient space to engage in play activities, with areas for active and quiet play. The staff effectively organise the furniture, equipment and space to enable children to move independently between different activities and play areas. Children's safety is maintained because the setting provides furniture, equipment and toys which are appropriate for their purpose. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

The village hall has been extensively planned to facilitate children's independent learning, as resources, which are of an excellent quality are stored mostly within their reach, promoting their independence and ability to make choices about what they want to do. Staff put out a range of equipment at the beginning of the session to create a welcoming environment and children confidently request alternative activities from the cupboards throughout the session. Children learn about safety by being encouraged to handle play equipment with care and helping to tidy away toys to prevent accidents from occurring. The children are well supervised and have a developing understanding of how to think and act safely. For example, children are taught the importance of road safety and they have regular opportunities to practise emergency evacuation procedures.

Children's welfare is promoted and safeguarded because the staff have a clear understanding of the setting's child protection policy and the procedures that they should follow in the event of a concern about a child in their care. Staff are aware of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and are alert to any unexplained injuries to children. Child protection training has been updated and staff are conversant with Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance. There is a clear statement which is shared with parents so that they know what action will be taken if staff have any concerns about their children. The staff's willingness to record existing injuries and incidents and discuss this with parents further protects and safeguards children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and relaxed within the setting. They separate confidently from their parents and settle quickly as they explore and enjoy the stimulating pre-school environment. The effective key worker system helps children develop good, trusting relationships with staff, who know the children well and respond appropriately to their needs. This promotes children's

welfare and increases their sense of well-being and security. Staff provide a very good level of support to children which enables them to experience a wide range of activities that contribute to their successful development and learning. Staff are very caring in their approach and interested in what the children are doing. They spend time interacting sensitively with the children as they play, listening carefully to them, asking questions and offering helpful suggestions. This means children develop good self-esteem, become confident and enjoy their time at the pre-school. There is a good balance between planned, adult-directed and child-initiated activities. Staff have a clear understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and use this to plan activities that promote the outcomes for children under three years. Staff use observations to record children's development and these are used to inform future planning and the next steps in children's learning. Children's development records are well maintained and staff date entries to show progress.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and plan a wide range of topic related activities which appeal to the children and cover all six areas of learning. Plans are detailed and informative. They offer staff clear instructions as to the outcome of the activity, many of which cover more than one area of learning. Children engage in a mixture of self-chosen and adult-planned activities. A flexible approach is applied to the daily routine to ensure that children are able to develop at their own pace and initiate their own ideas. An effective key worker system is in place. Key workers know their children very well and use this knowledge to help support and challenge children in their play and learning. A clear picture of children's learning and progress is identified through the effective use of ongoing written observations and assessment records that are linked to the stepping stones, and which are used to plan experiences that support children to take the next step in their learning. Staff are enthusiastic in their delivery of the curriculum. They offer clear instructions and interact well with the children. Consequently, children achieve regular and continuous progress in all areas of learning.

Children have good levels of independence in selecting and carrying out activities. This is because staff place a strong emphasis on personal, social and emotional development and recognise that this approach underpins children's ability to fully participate in all other areas of learning. Children show high levels of curiosity and are interested in the resources and play opportunities that are available to them. They persist and concentrate for extended periods of time in their chosen activities and have become increasingly independent when dealing with their own physical needs. For example, they put on their coats by themselves to keep warm before going outside. Older children also help the younger children to get ready for outside play. Most of the children see to their personal hygiene needs independently and they also serve themselves drinks at mealtimes. With the help of staff, they are becoming aware of the needs of others and are learning to understand right from wrong.

Good progress is being made by the children in communication and language development. The children are able to hold meaningful discussions with each other, often using descriptive language to express their feelings and opinions. Staff make time for children to ask them questions and they respond by giving good answers and explanations to sustain children's interest. Effective use is made of circle time to allow children to share familiar experiences and ideas and talk about home and family. The children take it in turns to borrow Rosie Rabbit and Oscar, the pre-school rabbits. Children take the rabbits home for a night or a weekend and talk about the activities they have enjoyed with Rosie and Oscar during their time together. The children are starting to understand the concept of listening to each other and taking turns to

talk when they join in at this special time. Children enjoy having stories read to them and listen intently, showing excitement and pleasure by joining in with familiar parts of their favourite stories. They spontaneously access books for independent enjoyment, as the book area is well resourced and inviting and children relish taking books home to share with their parents and carers. The children also enjoy exploring the contents of 'Story sacks' and readily join in with action songs and rhymes. Opportunities for children to develop their fine motor skills in preparation for writing are good. The children enjoy mark-making and use appropriate implements such as pencils, crayons and chalks with increasing control, attributing meanings to marks, such as their names. Children attempt writing for a variety of purposes using different forms, for example, children attempt to write their own names on art work and make use of writing materials in the role play area, forming recognisable letters as they write letters to their friends when playing in the post office. However, children's writing is not proactively used for labelling or on the limited displays of their work.

Children learn about number, space, shape and volume through a wide range of planned and spontaneous play activities. The children are gaining ability with numbers and are becoming competent in counting and in recognising what numbers mean. Many count up to 10 and above and they benefit from seeing numbers displayed in their learning environment. Children count groups of items correctly and say what happens when items are added or taken away. They explore concepts of volume and capacity through sand and water play. Children consider different weights and sizes and comment on these as they play, for example, with different sized balls of play dough. The children use a range of tools such as cutters and rolling pins to create different shapes with the dough and their mathematical understanding is developed as staff ask the children questions about the shapes that they have cut.

Children gain knowledge of the world around them and a sense of time and place through a variety of activities. They are encouraged to talk about their lives and important events to them, so they feel special and valued. During circle time, children regularly talk about the days of the week, the month and season. Children's understanding of different cultures and beliefs is successfully promoted through stories, creative activities and celebrating festivals. For example, the children enjoy learning about France through an interesting display of French artefacts such as the national flag, bread, hens, wine bottles and books. Red, white and blue bunting is put up around the village hall, children dance to French music, learn French words such as 'bonjour' and enjoy eating a traditional French breakfast. Children's knowledge of their own community is extended by visits, for example, to the local church to look at the stained glass windows, to the nearby primary school to learn about Cinderella and they visit 'Museum on the move' where they learn about slaves. The children also enjoyed visiting the Cheltenham Everyman Theatre to see the production 'Dick Whittington'. Children are beginning to make sense of the world around them by investigating and exploring through first hand experiences in an interesting environment. The children have opportunities to observe, explore, question, and be curious, in a broad range of activities. For example, children enjoy 'cornflour magic' and they learn to observe and question as they mix cooking ingredients together when baking gingerbread men and apple crumble. Their interest in the natural world, growth and change is stimulated well as they plant sunflower seeds and ponder on how high they may grow if they water them well. The children have enjoyed visits to a local bee keeper and goat farmer and have created bird feeders using lard and seeds which they hang on trees. The children have had the opportunity to learn about sea life when they closely examine an octopus and mackerel. They are also encouraged to bring in their pets to talk about how to care for them correctly and children have enjoyed meeting Sammy the large African snail, an iguana and a snake. Children are adept at making things, handling relevant tools and equipment and they explore freely as they use sand, water, dough and a variety of different natural materials. For example,

after listening to the story of 'The Three Little Pigs' the children explored straw, bricks and sticks and investigated how to build a strong house out of each material. The children develop excellent building skills as they have the opportunity to use a wide selection of different construction toys and natural materials. A particular favourite are the large pieces of drainpipes and guttering that they can use in the outdoor area to make channels to pour water down. The children know about the uses of everyday technology and use information and communication technology and programmable toys such as the till in the post office, calculators and telephones. They expertly use the listening centre, computer, keyboard, mouse and digital camera without adult help.

Children enjoy physical activity each day, both indoors and outside. They enjoy music and movement sessions where they dance along to familiar music and rhymes. The children follow staff ideas very well, for example, travelling and balancing using a variety of body parts and participating in a range of challenging parachute games. Children use a range of sports equipment to extend and develop their physical control, such as balancing along beams, climbing on the climbing frame and rolling, kicking and catching balls.

Children are encouraged to be very creative, expressing their own ideas and thoughts through art, music, dance, role play and imaginative play. Staff have created a wonderful, stimulating and interesting environment, both indoors and outside, in which children use their senses and imaginations to create their own work and to communicate their feelings. For example, they enjoy water painting on a wall and watch with fascination as the sun dries out the design. Children use a extensive range of materials and tools to help them to express their creativity. Children's achievements are acknowledged and valued by staff; further promoting their sense of pride and accomplishment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are treated with equal concern and are highly valued and respected as unique individuals and benefit from staff who know them well and tailor care to meet their individual needs. The children develop positive views about others because of the excellent use of topics and themes which help them to value the different aspects of their own and other people's lives. Different festivals and cultural celebrations are planned to be meaningful and many interesting resources, playthings and artefacts are provided to help children consider and recognise the diversity of the wider community. For example, the children looked at Chinese writing and ate noodles with chopsticks during Chinese New Year celebrations and made diva pots during Diwali.

Children's individual needs are identified and met extremely well. The setting has exemplary arrangements to care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as staff are strongly committed to inclusion. Staff use a variety of techniques to meet the differing needs of children and constantly evaluate their progress. This means they are able to identify any possible problem areas early, and to work collaboratively with children's parents and, if appropriate, with outside agencies to provide the best possible care for each child. Where individual care and education plans are agreed, these have realistic objectives which are regularly reviewed.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The children thrive in the pre-school's caring environment, where they are constantly praised for their efforts, and for showing kindness to each other. Children's behaviour is exemplary in proportion to their level of understanding and maturity. This is because staff create an environment that encourages

children to respect boundaries and begin to control their own behaviour. Children understand clear and consistent guidelines and expectations of behaviour such as listening to each other, saying please and thank you and helping to tidy up. They play harmoniously together and are learning to share and to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Staff are excellent role models and promote children's confidence and self-esteem through positive praise and encouragement.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. The relationship developed with parents is strong and they make many positive comments about the level of care and involvement offered. Parents appreciate the very good relationships with staff established during initial visits to the pre-school and these are consolidated during daily exchanges of information about their children. Staff have a friendly and open manner and this allows parents to be confident to ask questions or discuss any issues they may have in relation to their children's development or how they are settling in the group. There is a strong system in place to support parents in their ongoing understanding of how children learn best and this is supported through the wide variety of information that is available to them. This information includes an induction pack, notices, displays about the importance of play, books and videos that can be loaned from the group, information packs about various child care aspects and the policies and procedures. There is a parents' notice board which is regularly updated to enable them to play a full part in their child's learning and includes information on events and activities the children will be involved in. Parents are given regular newsletters about the topics being covered and information about how the setting is run. The staff know the children well and are able to provide for their individual needs because the key worker system works effectively to enable the staff to provide appropriate care and learning opportunities for all children and to support parents with information and advice. Parents are extremely well informed about their child's progress through regular communication, attractively displayed photographs and access to their child's personal assessment records which include detailed observations. The parents are given clear and meaningful information on all aspects of the care and education provided. Fund-raising initiatives and open days encourage parents to become fully involved in the setting, adding to the strong community feel of the setting. Parents are regularly invited to comment on the provision for their children and their views and wishes are used to identify areas for improvement.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and settled in the well-organised care environment. They benefit from the effective organisation of space and resources, which enables the children to make choices and develop their ideas as they play. The children experience rewarding activities and benefit from the support and encouragement of a caring staff team who offer good levels of individual attention to the children. The staff use their time very well because they are actively engaged with the children and ensure all ancillary tasks are organised outside the time when children are cared for. Before the children arrive the village hall is transformed with considerable effort and precision planning on behalf of the dedicated staff team. Children's care and welfare is supported by clearly recorded, well-organised documentation. A clear operational plan, plus associated comprehensive policies and relevant guidance support the staff's practice. Policies and procedures are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that they continue to reflect current good practice and professional advice. The staff's knowledge and understanding of these contributes to their successful implementation, thus ensuring that children are safe and appropriately cared for.

The leadership and management is good. The setting is led by a parent committee who have a suitable understanding of their roles and responsibilities and support the staff in their work with the children. Children's development is enhanced through the ongoing commitment of the staff to continue to develop their knowledge through regular reviewing of practice, personal appraisals and updating training. Staff are strongly motivated and enthusiastic and work very well together as a team. They continuously strive to provide a good level of care and education for the children and have a clear understanding of the setting's strengths and weaknesses. Regular staff meetings promote consistency and communication amongst staff. There are clear recruitment and vetting procedures in place to ensure that the children's safety and welfare is promoted and effective induction and appraisal systems work well in practice. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, to improve the standards of care, the pre-school was required to improve the accessibility of resources depicting positive images of people with special needs. The pre-school has purchased a good range of resources, such as small world equipment, books and puzzles, which reflect images of people with special needs. Children's awareness of diversity is raised through independently accessing the resources which reflect positive images of people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in society and the wider world.

There were no significant weaknesses to report at the last nursery education inspection, but the pre-school were asked to improve the children's access to a wider range of general resources. A range of low-level trolleys have been purchased and are arranged around the hall. Although the staff arrange toys and resources ready for the children's arrival, they now have the opportunity to self-select from toys and resources stored at child height and confidently do so. This encourages children to make their own choices and develops their independence and natural curiosity.

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.

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):

- ensure adult sized toilets can be adapted to meet the needs of individual children.

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 the learning environment by making more use of children's own work within displays and labelling.

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