

Inspection Report for Early Years Provision

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Type of inspection Integrated

Type of care Full day care

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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?

Winyates Playgroup Limited opened in 2007 when the former setting which had been registered since 1976 became managed by a limited company. It operates from one playroom in a converted shop within the Winyates shopping centre on the outskirts of Redditch. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from

08.50 to 14.50 term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 56 children aged from two to under-five years on roll. Of these, 35 children receive funding for early education. The playgroup currently supports children with learning difficulties and there are suitable procedures to support children with disabilities or who speak English as an additional language. The setting employs five members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a local authority mentor teacher.

The Effectiveness of the Provision

Helping Children to Be Healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is protected because staff take positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and to ensure their health and medication needs are met. Daily cleaning routines ensure the premises are kept clean and good hygiene routines are followed during such things as nappy changing and preparing children's food. Children are cared for sensitively when they become ill or have an accident and three first aid staff ensure that any minor bumps and bruises are handled quickly and efficiently. Positive steps are taken to encourage children to begin to take responsibility for meeting their own hygiene needs and they are well supported when using the toilet and washing their hands.

Children are well co-ordinated and thoroughly enjoy being active both indoors and outside. There is a small paved outside area which has been carefully designed to encourage children to play, explore and enjoy moving their bodies in different ways, and this is used most days so that children get plenty of fresh air. PE sessions are used effectively to help children to develop positive attitudes to the importance of exercise as part of a healthy life-style and the children join in enthusiastically as they stretch up high, stand on one leg or curl up into a ball. Actions songs provide fun and exciting ways to move in different ways and children join in with obvious enjoyment. For example, children laughed as they crouched down then jumped up when singing a song about a 'Jack-in-the-box'. Children show a clear awareness of personal space as they play alongside each other and older children pedal their bikes skilfully so that they avoid obstacles. Slides, tunnels, rockers and balancing beams are used both indoors and out and these build on and extend children's balance and coordination skills. Painting, construction, dough and drawing tools are freely available and these help children to develop good hand and finger control. Meal times, posters, discussions and topic work are used effectively to help children to recognise the importance of staying healthy and they show a good awareness of what happens to their bodies when they are active. For example, they know how to stretch and warm up their muscles and readily help themselves to drinks when they are thirsty.

Children are helped to enjoy their food and are developing a clear understanding of why some foods are healthy and others are not. The importance of a healthy lifestyle is promoted well in the group, with a range of positive strategies used to ensure children eat healthily, learn about personal hygiene and enjoy being physically active. Photographs of healthy foods are displayed in the children's imaginative play area and a variety of healthy options are provided at snack times. Staff have achieved an award for promoting healthy eating with children and work collaboratively with their parents to ensure children enjoy healthy lunch boxes. Children sit

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together sociably for their meals and 'give thanks' for their food. They are given responsibilities, encouraged to be independent and are helped to develop simple table manners such as using cutlery and saying 'please' and 'thank you'. They choose what fruit to have for snacks and older children help to put cloths on the table, help themselves to plates and cups and tidy away afterwards. A good variety and balance of foods are offered at snack time such as wholemeal toast, honey and banana. Topic work and food tasting activities are also used positively to introduce children to varying tastes and textures. Fresh drinking water and milk are provided at meal times and children are able to pour themselves a drink of water at any time. Staff monitor the amounts children drink, particularly during warm weather or when children are feeling unwell and ensure that any special dietary requirements are known and met.

Protecting Children from Harm or Neglect and Helping Them Stay Safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a warm and welcoming atmosphere where they can learn, explore and develop safely and with close adult support. Their care room is colourful, bright and stimulating, with number lines, children's craft work and topic work displayed creatively to provide a very child-friendly environment. Clever use of dividers and storage equipment is used to create different interest areas within the room and toys and resources such as role play, painting and floor and table top activities are freely available each day. However, the rest area is under-developed and does not allow children to sit quietly, rest or sleep away from the boisterous play of others, particularly if they are not feeling well.

Children are developing a clear understanding of how to keep themselves safe with aspects of safety included in their imaginary play and well supported by staff. For example, staff talked about the dangers of hot things as children pretended to be ironing in the home corner. Clear safety rules such as not running in the room help children to learn to keep themselves and their friends safe and there is always plenty of support when children are using large physical apparatus such as the climbing frame. Staff have a clear understanding about security, safety and accident prevention and effective risk assessments ensure that all potential dangers have been identified and appropriate action taken to minimise these. Children are supervised by a high number of well-qualified staff who monitor the entrance door at busy times and ensure the exit doors are locked at all times to prevent children leaving the premises unsupervised and to protect them from unwanted visitors. Children know how to evacuate the building quickly in an emergency and have practised this regularly to ensure they are familiar with the routine.

Adults have a clear understanding of how to safeguard children, and are vigilant and well informed. Emergency contact numbers are kept close to hand and staff understand their role in protecting children and have all been suitably vetted and checked. One member of staff is fully trained in child protection procedures and there are effective systems in place and reference guides to ensure all staff are able to act professionally should they have any concerns about a child in their care.

Helping Children Achieve Well and Enjoy What They Do

The provision is good. Staff develop warm and caring relationships with the children in their care. Good levels of reassurance and continuity is provided and this helps young children feel secure and well nurtured. A keyworker system is used effectively to group children and information about their starting points, individual needs and preferences is gained and used

effectively to plan children's next steps. Good staff continuity allows the youngest children to develop a sense of belonging with familiar and trusted adults and staff are attentive and playful adults who respond positively to children's actions, expressions and what they say. Children respond enthusiastically to the interesting and stimulating activities on offer. Two year-olds play and learn alongside their older friends, joining in with all activities and benefiting from close adult attention and the opportunities provided to be sociable and curious. Staff have a good understanding of the needs of younger children. They give the youngest children time to browse, watch and experiment and recognise that extra time and support is needed to ensure young children understand the rules for sharing and playing together. They are sensitive and patient when initiating conversations, giving children time to think, learn new words and to enjoy talking. A range of interesting, tactile materials such as sand, paint and shaving foam help young children to develop their senses and they enjoy songs, rhymes and joining in with older children's imaginary games.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

A range of quality learning experiences are offered which are structured, offer a balance of child- and adult-initiated activities and provide first-hand, positive experiences which help children to develop confidence and motivate them to learn. Children benefit from good teaching which ensures that they enjoy and achieve. Planning for the Foundation Stage curriculum is effective and is often used flexibly to allow staff to follow children's interests and ideas. Observations of what children can do are made and assessments of these are regularly analysed, discussed and used to set new challenges. Children are grouped effectively and encouraged to try new experiences through creative use of topics and themes and as a result children learn across all areas in a fun and exciting way. Resources are laid out attractively so that children have freedom of choice and are able to use their playthings flexibly, moving them around to meet their own play needs. Special focused activities are also provided which are designed to promote specific areas of the curriculum or to help individual children extend or refine their skills. A high emphasis is placed on encouraging children to be confident, motivated and independent. This is particularly important because of the age mix within the setting and ensures that all children develop the life-skills and self-assurance needed to make the most of their learning experiences. For example, children are encouraged to carry out simple tasks, be independent at hand washing and toileting and to help to tidy away their toys.

Staff work with children in small groups, sparking their interest and asking questions to help children think. This helps children to make sense of their experiences and to gain a sense of satisfaction from knowing they have learnt something new. Staff have a clear understanding of the purpose of the Foundation Stage and sessions are well planned and organised, with clear routines in place so that children feel comfortable, secure and confident with the predictable sequences that occur throughout the day. They are skilled at sparking children's imagination, following children's interests and know when to intervene and when to allow children time to develop their own ideas. This ensures children develop an enthusiasm for learning and make good progress.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is a particular strength. Children are outgoing, self-assured and often show delight as they play and learn. They enter the playgroup enthusiastically, behave well and are confident and happy during the time they spend there. They show they feel very secure with the playgroup staff and are often excited by new experiences and

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the things they do. They sit well at circle and story time, looking, listening and learning to take turns in their conversations and talk freely about their homes, families and experiences. Children's independence is promoted really well and they respond with pride at being chosen to help with simple tasks such as choosing the fruit for snack time or putting cloths on the table for lunch. They are encouraged to look after their possessions, placing them on coat racks or in their drawers and readily assist with tidying away their toys. They learn to share, take turns and work together harmoniously and respond positively to the clear guidelines and expectations set by staff. For example, they learnt to consider others when making a get well card for a friend in hospital.

Children are developing well in the area of communication, language and literacy. They express themselves freely as they play and four-year-olds are quick to share what they know, respond eagerly to questions and talk about their ideas. Staff use words, pictures, symbols, games and gestures effectively to aid children's understanding and communication skills and this helps children to recognise their own names and aids their independence when choosing resources. For example, toy boxes all have photographs and words explaining the contents so that children can freely help themselves to their toys. Imaginative and fun games, songs and stories help children to link sounds to letters and as a result most older children are able to recognise the letters in their names. They readily choose to look at books independently and story times are rich learning experiences as children help to act out the familiar story with puppets and soft toys, count, sort and shout out excitedly what they think will happen next. Children make marks in sand, shaving foam and paint and a wide variety of pens, chalk and pencils are freely available to help them develop their early writing skills. Three-year-olds thoroughly enjoy colouring and drawing their own pictures while some four-year-olds can form recognisable letters and are beginning to write their own names.

Mathematical development is a particularly strong in this setting. Children count confidently and show increasing skill in recognising and using numbers due to the many practical first-hand experiences offered. For example, they counted the number of staff present, linked this to their fingers and calculated what would happen if one or more was added or taken away. Children easily recognise numbers on dominoes, table top games and number lines and often match, sort and count everyday items such as toy clothes on a washing line. Staff regularly explain things to children using mathematical words such as 'circle and square' and provide good quality mathematical resources to help children compare shapes, describe position and quantity.

Children are progressing generally well in the area of knowledge and understanding of the world. They explore confidently and learn effectively through practical hands-on experiences. A broad range of stimulating experiences are provided that allow children to investigate and explore different materials such as sand, water and shaving foam and they learn through all their senses as they freely use wool, silk and paint in their craft work. Children have opportunities to observe and question as they plant sunflower seeds and watch them grow and interesting topics about such things as 'Life-cycles' and 'Africa' help them to explore nature and the wider world. However, children have limited opportunities to discover why things happen and how things work and this hinders their ability to learn to test things out and solve problems. There are a wide range of resources available to help children to learn to build, stick and design various objects and they use everyday technology such as a tape recorder and microphone in their play and have regular access to a computer.

Children's creativity is widely encouraged as they sing, make up their own games and enjoy a wealth of different craft materials. Many of their paintings, collage work and pictures are

displayed around their learning room to show that it is valued and they freely paint, colour and draw both indoors and in the pre-school garden. They readily make up their own games, pretending to iron or get dinner out of the oven, and use their imaginations widely when playing in the den. They respond excitedly and with real enjoyment to songs, rhymes and when acting out stories and often take their imaginations outside to the play house. Children use a wide variety of musical instruments to experiment with sound and enjoy playing along to their favourite songs.

Helping Children Make A Positive Contribution

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children have a strong sense of belonging which has been achieved through staff efforts to create a warm and caring environment where both children and their families are welcomed and valued. Very positive relationships are developed and staff help children to feel good about themselves. For example, children sang goodbye to each other at the end of the session and beamed with pride when being chosen to help with simple tasks. They are constantly praised and given a high level of support and this ensures children settle quickly and develop good self-esteem. Staff talk to parents about their child, gain early information about their care needs and developmental starting points and provide advice to help parents support their children at home. Resources are used to best effect in helping children to feel settled and to create an exciting environment where children want to learn. Children respond well to the clear, consistent guidelines and expectations set by staff and are learning to play together, take turns, share and listen to each other. Circle time is used effectively to discuss how to behave and children freely express their ideas and opinions. Staff provide good role models for children by being calm and fair and use positive gestures such as a 'thumbs up' sign and reward stickers to ensure that even the youngest children understand when they have done well.

Children broaden their experiences through well developed themes that help them to look at and investigate their own cultures and the beliefs of others. They learn about other countries, different cultures and how people live through topic work and regularly visit the shops to learn about their local community. Positive role models are seen as children play with books, puzzles and dressing up clothes and children's birthdays and other special days are celebrated through a 'Let's celebrate together' board. Children regularly talk about their families and compare this with the lives of their friends and this helps them to recognise similarities and differences in the way people live. All children are valued and respected within the group and there are effective strategies in place to identify and support children with additional needs. This includes working closely with parents and liaising with other outside professionals when necessary.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Strong relationships are developed as parents share what they know about their children with staff, are given advice on how to support children's learning at home and are given plenty of opportunities to discuss their child's progress. They are warmly greeted by name and invited into the setting at arrival and collection times so that there is a free and friendly exchange with staff on a daily basis. Parents are provided with clear information about the setting and the educational programme offered and talk freely to staff about their children's responses to their learning. Notices and regular newsletters help to keep parents informed of what their children will be learning, including such things as topic themes, the colour of the week and special activities. Parents of three and four-year-olds attend progress meetings to discuss their child's achievements and are given a copy of their child's records before

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they move on to full time education. Parents are widely encouraged to share what they know about their child and this is recorded and regularly updated through daily discussions. This helps staff to understand what stage each child is at when they join the group and to gain information about their changing needs and interests. Parents' views and concerns are respected and acknowledge and they know how to make a complaint on behalf of their children if they wish to.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are supported well and enjoy the many stimulating learning experiences offered. Staff have a high regard for the well-being of all children and respond effectively to children's learning and development needs. High staffing levels are maintained to ensure staff have the time to spend with children, sometimes on an individual basis if necessary and this ensures children are given close attention at all times and benefit from additional help when needed. The key worker system allows staff to observe and assess children's progress and to form close bonds with both children and their parents. Staff work well together, understand their roles and responsibilities and group children effectively. Good employment and vetting procedures ensure that children are well protected and cared for by qualified and experienced staff.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. The playgroup is lead by an experienced owner/manager who has a clear vision for the future of the setting and is commitment to responding to the needs of the children and families attending the group. She fully involves her staff in the decision making and planning processes and regular staff meetings are held to share information and discuss children's progress. There are strong bonds between the staffing team who are committed to putting the needs of children first and often work outside their normal hours to plan and facilitate children's learning. Yearly appraisals and daily observations ensure that staff have a shared understanding of good practice issues and teaching methods and the manager works alongside her staff on a daily basis, guiding practice and ensuring children are making good progress. Daily chats between staff are used effectively to highlight practice and teaching issues and assessments of the setting's strengths and weaknesses are made, although evaluations of the nursery education are not yet fully developed in helping staff to monitor and consistently improve the educational programme.

A good range of documentation, policies and records ensure children's health, safety and well-being are carefully considered. There is a clear operational plan in place and this is regularly updated to meet changes in legislation and practice and to reflect the experiences of the children attending the group. Policies and records are kept to a high standard and this underlines the group's commitment to providing a good standard of care for children. All documentation and records are stored within easy reach so that staff can easily up-date records and gain appropriate signatures from parents and confidential records are kept securely. Overall the children's needs are met.

Improvements Since the Last Inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints Since the Last Inspection

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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 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):

- review the rest facilities to ensure children have a comfortable place to rest away from the boisterous play of others, particularly if they are feeling unwell.

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):

- extend the range of activities offered to help children discover why things happen and how things work
- review and extend the methods used to evaluate the nursery education programme.

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