

# Wantage Pre-School Playgroup

The Ark, Portway, Wantage, Oxfordshire, OX12 9BU

|                          |            |
|--------------------------|------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>   | 24/09/2014 |
| Previous inspection date | 06/07/2011 |

| <b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>                          | <b>This inspection:</b> |   |
|--|-------------------------|---|
|  | Previous inspection:    |   |
| How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend |                         | 2 |
| The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children            |                         | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision        |                         | 2 |

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is good

- Staff develop positive relationships with parents and carers through good communication and sharing of information.
- The management and staff have implemented a comprehensive assessment system for individual children, which helps them to support each child to make good progress.
- Staff build strong bonds with children which supports each child to settle quickly and feel confident and secure. This has a positive impact on their well-being and encourages them to become independent learners.
- Staff place high priority on teaching the youngest children to develop good social and emotional skills. This provides a secure foundation for future learning.
- Robust self-evaluation and action planning is effective ensuring continuous improvements in the quality of the provision.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff occasionally miss opportunities to encourage older children to use critical-thinking skills to solve problems and reason things out.
- Staff attend training which helps them to improve their knowledge, skills and practice. However, the monitoring system for staff supervision does not yet focus sharply enough on evaluating and further improving the quality of teaching.

## Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the indoor and outdoor environments.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents spoken to on the day of the inspection.
- The inspector met with the manager and spoke to staff and children.
- The inspector sampled relevant documentation.

## Inspector

Fran Keavy

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Wantage Pre-school Playgroup registered in 1999 and is operated by a parent-led committee. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 20 children on roll in the early years age group. Children attend from the local and surrounding area. The pre-school operates from purpose-built premises in Wantage, Oxfordshire. The premises are accessible at street level and there is an enclosed area for outdoor play. The pre-school is open each weekday during term time only from 8.45am to 3.30pm. Children can attend for a variety of sessions including morning, afternoon or all day. The pre-school is in receipt of funding to provide free early education for two-, three- and four-year old children. Five members of staff work with the children; of these, four members of staff hold recognised early years qualifications, with three staff qualified at level 3 and one holds a qualification at level 2.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

#### To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- strengthen staff's use of questioning in order to encourage and promote children's critical-thinking skills
  
- further develop monitoring systems to focus more sharply on evaluating and further improving the quality of teaching.

### Inspection judgements

#### How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Staff demonstrate a secure knowledge of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and a clear understanding of how children learn through play. Staff gather knowledge about individual children's learning through careful and astute observation. They use this, together with information gained from parents, to form an accurate view of children's starting points. They are able to use this knowledge to plan good quality learning experiences for children closely linked to their needs and interests. Staff use individual learning plans to record achievements and next steps. This ensures that all children's learning needs are accurately identified and shared with parents. Staff are particularly skilled at noticing children's fascinations as they engage in child-initiated activities and then using these as learning experiences. For example, young children playing in the growing area noticed a bug as it flew onto the soil and staff used this as a positive learning experience. As a result, children happily engage in activities and are motivated to learn. This is effective in preparing them for the next stage of their learning.

Staff are skilled in teaching communication skills to younger children. For example, they copy the words that young children make and add one or two other words to extend their vocabulary. They are enthusiastic and encouraging as very young children make counting type noises as they walk along an outside log path. Consequently children make good progress. Staff encourage older children to take a lead in teaching the words and actions of familiar songs to younger children. This supports their developing self-esteem. Staff plan activities to meet the learning needs of all children. However, although older children make good progress in their learning, staff occasionally miss opportunities to further extend their critical-thinking skills. For example, a child noticed that the sand had gone 'dark and muddy' when another child mixed sand and water together. Staff explained to the child that it was just wet not dirty and added wet sand to some dry sand to illustrate this, rather than encouraging the child to think about why and experiment for themselves.

Staff have developed the indoor environment to enable children to freely access a good range of resources suitable for their age. Since the last inspection, staff have invested time and resources in developing the outdoor area to form an inspiring learning environment. All children and particularly those who prefer to play outside, benefit from a wide range of inviting resources. Children's physical skills develop as they balance on a log path and learn to scoot or pedal wheeled toys. A low tree in the outdoor area provides an opportunity for children to challenge themselves to climb and balance. Children are able to develop their creativity as they play large-scale musical instruments, chalk on a board and play in the mud kitchen. Staff skilfully use opportunities that occur during routines and play to develop children's mathematical understanding. For example, children who have washed their hands are encouraged to use one towel afterwards to make sure their hands are dry. Young children are reminded about this and smile and say 'one' as they hold up one finger. Staff promote children's developing literacy skills. Younger children enjoy choosing a favourite book to read with their key person in the cosy book area. As children get older, they learn to identify their own name at snack time. Staff provide appropriate mark-making resources and proudly display children's mark making and early writing which encourages all children in their attempts to write.

Parents particularly value the regular and detailed information they receive about their child's learning. They have opportunities to talk to their child's key person informally on a daily basis and to engage in a more formal meeting each term. They have easy access to a broad range of useful information about activities and learning intentions. Consequently they are fully informed and know how to support their child's learning at home.

### **The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children**

Staff create a calm and caring atmosphere which makes for a positive learning environment. They form particularly strong attachments to their key children which provides a basis for children to develop their independence. Staff place emphasis on working together with parents to secure effective sharing of information from the start. Parents and staff subsequently work together well to ensure that each child's introduction to the pre-school is successful. Consequently young children's emotional well-being is

secure, they settle extremely well and quickly start to explore and learn. Through warm relationships and support, children become independent learners who acquire the skills, attitudes and dispositions for the next stage in their learning. Young children move confidently around the indoor and outdoor spaces and make independent choices about what to play with. Staff provide a quiet indoor space which is separated from the main room by voile strips. This forms a quiet haven for children who are tired or who wish to relax.

Staff are good role models and apply guidance on acceptable behaviour clearly and consistently. They use strategies that are age appropriate to ensure that all children begin to learn to co-operate, play happily together and make friends. They place high priority on supporting young children to feel safe and to develop good social skills. Staff are fully aware of potential harm to children. They know what to do in case of concern about a child's well-being. They are well deployed within the environment to provide continuous supervision to children, which contributes to their safety. Children learn to keep safe through well thought out routines and through discussions. Staff are vigilant as they quickly notice children who are acting inappropriately and climbing indoors. Staff remind them that they might fall and hurt themselves.

Staff teach children how to manage their personal care needs. Children who are able to use the toilet or potty are able to access them independently. They learn to wash their hands as staff are on hand to support them. Staff have provided pictures and words above the sinks as a reminder of the sequence of hand washing. They point to these as children wash their hands to support their understanding and growing independence. Staff engage younger children in nappy changing through talking about what they are doing. Staff liaise very closely with parents as children begin to learn to use the toilet. This ensures consistency and helps children through this important phase in their development.

Children have ample opportunity for fresh air and exercise in the outdoor learning environment. They learn about healthy life choices as they are offered healthy options at snack time and are reminded to eat sandwiches first during lunch. They learn from first-hand experiences about living creatures as they care for fish and large snails in tanks and closely observe insects and butterflies in the outdoor area. They care for plants and help to harvest tomatoes for their snack time. This provides them with experience of growing food to eat. Snack times and lunch times are social occasions when children talk to their friends and to staff.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision**

The management and staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children in their care. The manager is the designated member of staff for safeguarding and all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding training which is updated on a regular basis. The main door to the pre-school is locked and staff are vigilant in checking the identity of visitors. Records show that recruitment and vetting procedures are appropriate and necessary checks are undertaken to help to ensure that staff are suitable

to work with children. New staff are supported to become familiar with policy and practice within the pre-school through induction and ongoing guidance. Almost all staff are trained in paediatric first aid and this is clearly indicated in the entrance hall to the pre-school. Consequently at least one qualified member of staff is always available to respond quickly to an emergency. Staff benefit from regular supervision and staff meetings. Therefore, they feel well supported in their roles. Each member of staff identifies training needs in consultation with the manager and they are able to access suitable courses. The manager draws up an action plan after each course to ensure information is cascaded and the impact on staff's knowledge and understanding is considered and monitored. As a result, training undertaken by staff has a clear impact on staff's knowledge and the development of the pre-school provision. Staff are encouraged to reflect on their practice, however, there is not yet a sharp enough focus on evaluating and further improving the quality of teaching to enhance children's learning even further.

The manager has a clear overview of the educational programmes and how activities that are planned link to children's current interests and learning needs. She gathers assessment information to monitor children's progress and to identify groups or individual children who are making less progress than might be expected. She works well with individual parents and their child's key person to plan to support each child to make progress.

The management team are keen to drive improvements to continue to develop the quality of experiences for children. Recommendations and actions from the last Ofsted inspection have been addressed. Self-evaluation is informed by the knowledge and views of the committee, manager and staff. The views of parents are also taken into account and staff consider children's views through their responses to planned experiences. Professionals from the local authority provide additional support for the evaluation of provision. The manager formulates action plans to address priority improvements identified through this process. These form working documents that ensure a continuous cycle of improvement.

Positive relationships with parents are established. They speak very positively about the warm care their children receive from staff. They particularly value the information that staff provide about their child's learning and they feel confident to raise any concerns they may have. They consider the staff to be very approachable and describe the atmosphere in the pre-school as 'comfortable'. The pre-school has also established links with external professionals including those from local schools, other settings and the children's centre. This provides continuity of support for families.

### **The Childcare Register**

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

## What inspection judgements mean

### Registered early years provision

| Grade   | Judgement            | Description  |
|---------|----------------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding          | Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.   |
| Grade 2 | Good                 | Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.   |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of inspection.   |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate           | Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection. |
| Met     |                      | There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.   |
| Not met |                      | There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.   |

## Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Setting details

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>     | 133728                                 |
| <b>Local authority</b>             | Oxfordshire                            |
| <b>Inspection number</b>           | 842926                                 |
| <b>Type of provision</b>           | Full-time provision                    |
| <b>Registration category</b>       | Childcare - Non-Domestic               |
| <b>Age range of children</b>       | 2 - 8                                  |
| <b>Total number of places</b>      | 26                                     |
| <b>Number of children on roll</b>  | 20                                     |
| <b>Name of provider</b>            | Wantage Pre-School Playgroup Committee |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b> | 06/07/2011                             |
| <b>Telephone number</b>            | 01235 764010                           |

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

## Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012

