

# Westmill Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY339130  
**Inspection date** 30/03/2011  
**Inspector** Hilary Preece

**Setting address** Westmill Village Hall, Westmill, Buntingford, Hertfordshire,  
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**Type of setting** Childcare - Non-Domestic

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## **Description of the setting**

Westmill Nursery is a privately owned nursery and was registered under current ownership in 2006. It operates from the village hall in Westmill, on the outskirts of Buntingford, Hertfordshire. The nursery serves the local area. It is accessible to all children and there is fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 9.20am to 1.20pm with an extended session operating from 9.20am to 2.20pm on Monday through to Thursday for children in receipt of nursery education funding. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 18 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 34 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The nursery is registered on the Early Years and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery provides funded early education for three and four year olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs eight members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications at Level 3 or above. The proprietor holds an Early Years Degree and one member of staff holds the Early Years Professional Status. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is Outstanding.

Exceptionally well-developed knowledge of each child's needs enables the staff to plan relevant and motivating learning opportunities. Consequently, children make excellent progress towards the early learning goals. Rigorous and meticulous monitoring of policies and procedures ensures that children remain safe and very well protected. Partnership working is exemplary and is a significant factor in ensuring that the needs of all children are met, regardless of their starting points. A well-established culture of reflective practice and high expectations means self-evaluation is highly effective in sustaining improvement.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- reviewing the information provided for parents with regard to the procedure for making complaints.

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

Children are safeguarded by rigorous procedures. All staff are vetted before working with the children and thorough induction and ongoing training means they fully understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe. Policies and procedures such as the safeguarding children procedure are regularly re-visited during staff meetings to ensure all staff are confident in knowing what action to take in the event of any concerns. Exceptionally thorough risk assessments and daily safety checks of the entire premises mean that children's safety is consistently well managed. Space and resources are used imaginatively to fully utilise the premises and surrounding area. This provides children with a multitude of choice and some exceptional learning opportunities within safe and secure surroundings.

Leadership is highly efficient and inspirational. Staff are very well qualified and motivated to do a good job because great value is placed on supporting their continuous professional development. As a result, they feel valued and show strong commitment to their work. They are very well deployed throughout the sessions to ensure children receive high quality support and supervision. Self-evaluation is extremely effective because reflective practice is securely embedded within the setting. It takes account of the views of all levels of staff, the parents and children, with everything that the setting does being critically analysed in order to identify what works well and what could be improved. The owner and staff team are forever challenging their practice to look for more effective ways of working and to provide additional resources for the children. This is exemplified by the acquisition of a neighbouring plot of land that children, parents and staff have developed together into a delightful Secret Garden where children have greater scope to explore the natural environment and be physically active. The involvement of children and parents at every stage of the project enhances their sense of belonging and further strengthens the already strong partnerships.

Communication with parents is highly effective and they are extremely well informed through the website, newsletters and meetings. A parents' evening for new parents provides them with insight into the setting, including its routines, activities and policies followed by flexible settling in sessions to meet individual needs. Transition books are provided for parents to share with their children at home that show photographs of the nursery so that when children start they are already familiar with expectations. The nursery reports that this makes a significant difference to how easily children settle. Parents are fully encouraged to be equal partners in their children's care, learning and development. They are provided with a wealth of useful information such as general guidance on how to support children's reading and writing as well as specific feedback about their own children's progress. An effective system is used whereby parents share their own observations of children's achievements at home. This enables the staff to gain a greater understanding of each child and what they like to do at home. Strong partnership working with other agencies and early years providers ensures that all children's needs are met exceptionally well. A commitment to promoting equal opportunities for all children means that those with additional needs are supported

with a high degree of sensitivity. Well-established and effective working relationships with nurseries and schools that children move on to successfully support smooth transitions and consistency of care.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Comprehensive assessment procedures mean that staff have a thorough understanding of each child's developmental needs and interests. Records of children's learning are continuously scrutinised to assess their levels of achievement and to plan for their next steps. As a result, children make excellent progress and thoroughly enjoy their learning. This is supported by exemplary behaviour and very positive relationships. Children are extremely comfortable with their adult carers and with other children such as when negotiating and playing together in role play or when listening to stories and songs.

Activities are exceptionally well planned to provide children with highly stimulating experiences. Excellent interaction from staff ensures that every learning opportunity is seized. For example, a topic on growing enables children to sort packets of seeds, to plant and nurture them, examine seeds found in fruits and vegetables, use magnifying glasses to examine the soil and develop imaginative play in the garden centre role play area. Children show well-developed skills and knowledge during such activities. They know that plants need 'sun, water and food' to make them grow and know that the food is found in the soil. They confidently recognise number symbols that are displayed all around the garden. When a child identifies six woodlice on a picture a staff member captures the child's interest by suggesting they hunt underneath the plant troughs to find real woodlice. They show genuine curiosity and react with wonder when they find real worms and woodlice. Adults encourage children to use problem solving skills to estimate whether they saw more or less than six creatures. Learning is therefore meaningful and hugely exciting.

Children's welfare and safety are promoted very effectively. Children show mature levels of understanding with regards to keeping safe when outside. They talk confidently about the need to be careful not to get soil in the eyes and to be careful when touching plants because some may be prickly. Children show well-developed independence as they learn to manage their personal care. Younger children enjoy relaxed and safe nappy changing routines and older children confidently use the toilet and wash their hands well afterwards. They enjoy a healthy range of foods for snack. Plenty of discussion and the use of picture cards to show what is on the menu each day enables them to make healthy choices and understand what is good for their health. They develop awareness of environmental issues such as recycling by sorting their food packaging and leftover food after lunch.

Outdoor play in all weathers is possible because the partially covered outdoor area protects them from the rain and hot sun. Children move freely between indoor and outdoor activities according to their preference and careful deployment of staff means they always play safely. Children follow a well-practised procedure as they

move between the building and the Secret Garden to ensure they develop a sense of responsibility in keeping safe. They also gain an exceptional sense of community as they walk around the village to deliver Harvest gifts to the elderly and learn to recognise the different beliefs and needs of others. They find out about the Hindu festival of Diwali, for example, through a visiting parent who shows them Rangoli patterns and they learn to appreciate that some children have particular disabilities through honest and open discussion.

## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

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

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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## **Annex B: the Childcare Register**

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met