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## Cherry Trees Preparatory & Nursery School

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### Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | EY358691  |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 30 June 2008  |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Karen Pretty / Susan Smith  |
| <b>Setting Address</b>         | Cherry Trees Prep School, Flempton Road, Risby, BURY ST. EDMUNDS, Suffolk, IP28 6QJ |
| <b>Telephone number</b>        | 01284 760531  |
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| <b>Registered person</b>       | Cherry Trees Preparatory & Nursery School (Warrenhill Ltd)                          |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Integrated  |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | Full day 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](http://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?**

Cherry Trees Preparatory and Nursery School has been running since 1984 and re-registered under the current ownership Warrenhill Ltd in 2007. The nursery operates from various rooms within a converted house and portable units which include laundry and kitchen. It is situated in Risby, near Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. A maximum of 128 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 151 children aged from six months to under five years on roll. Of these, 90 children receive funding for early education. The nursery serves the immediate and surrounding local area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs 27 members of staff. Of these, 22 hold appropriate early years qualifications and four members of staff are working towards a qualification, in addition 14 are working towards further qualifications. The nursery uses the Montessori approach to education. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

#### **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

##### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good. Children's health is well promoted by the good health and hygiene practices in place throughout the nursery, for example, staff follow stringent guidelines during food preparation and nappy changing. Children are learning to follow simple health and hygiene practices from an early age through regular routines and the use of good visual prompts in the toilets for the younger children. Children aged three and over do not have access to visual prompts to further enhance their understanding.

Children receive appropriate care if they are ill or have an accident because staff are aware of children's individual healthcare needs and all the required documentation and consents are in place to support this. On occasions, parents have not signed the record of medication to acknowledge that medication has been given to their child. Staff regularly update their first aid certificates to ensure they are aware of the correct procedures to follow to maintain children's health and prevent the spread of infection. Well-stocked first aid kits are easily available in each room and a kit is always taken on outings.

Children's dietary needs are well met through the provision of nutritious home-cooked meals that take account of their individual dietary needs and preferences. The nursery employs a cook who follows stringent guidelines to ensure children receive a healthy balanced diet each day. Children enjoy favourite meals such as spaghetti carbonara and vegetables or snacks that feature fresh fruit and vegetables. Children rest and sleep according to their individual needs, following the wishes of their parents, on fold-out beds and in cots. Staff support children sensitively as they settle, or on awakening, they check sleeping children regularly to ensure they are safe and comfortable.

Young babies are frequently taken outside in buggies or play in the newly created adjoining garden to enjoy the fresh air. Indoors, they roll and move on activity mats. Staff provide appropriate activities and resources to support young children's physical and emotional development. Older children can enjoy climbing apparatus in the school field for physical play which enables them to safely climb, jump and roll. Staff provide a good range of planned physical activities such as action songs and dance. Careful planning and organisation of time ensures that all children get daily exercise and fresh air which positively promotes their health.

##### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good. Children of all ages benefit greatly from being cared for in a nursery that is safe, warm and child-centred. The colourful displays of children's artwork, both inside and outside the nursery, photographs of children enjoying activities and brightly painted pictures, create a welcoming environment where children feel happy and secure. Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where staff take appropriate steps to keep children safe. All entrance doors are kept secure and are accessible through the use of swipe cards or by ringing a bell so that staff can let visitors in to prevent unauthorised access. Stringent procedures are followed to ensure children are only collected by an authorised adult.

Staff are vigilant in supervising children to ensure that toys are safe, suitable and used appropriately. Risk assessments are regularly carried out to identify possible hazards and the action required. Generally, rooms in the nursery are well laid out with sufficient space so that children can move around in safety. Child-accessible storage facilities are contained within most of the rooms and staff rotate the available resources to provide children with stimulating range of activities range to promote their development. The baby room contains a sofa to enable staff to cuddle babies in

comfort.

The equipment is checked and cleaned regularly to ensure children are protected from any possible hazards. There are effective procedures in place for the emergency evacuation of the premises and all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to ensure the continued safety of the children. For example, the baby room has special cots to ensure their safe evacuation.

Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted because effective procedures are in place to ensure all staff understand their roles and responsibilities in protecting children. In addition, staff regularly attend safeguarding children training to ensure they have up to date knowledge of the procedures to follow if they have a concern.

**Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good. Children form warm and secure relationships with staff which helps them separate from their parents and settle well. Babies enjoy playful interactions with staff who encourage them to complete tasks such as putting shapes in the shape sorter. Young children enjoy joining in with their favourite songs and rhymes and explore the sounds different instruments make. Staff are responsive to children's interests by using additional resources to extend children's knowledge, for example, when a child was exploring colours through the felt squares staff used flashcards to further develop the learning. A broad range of activities are planned and rotated to maintain children's interest and promote their development. Young children have limited access to a range of sensory opportunities such as exploring treasure baskets to stimulate their senses and support exploratory play. They enjoy sharing books with staff who interact well with children to stimulate their interest.

Key workers complete meaningful records of progress based on 'Birth to three matters' to record children's time at the nursery, they make observations of children's play to help identify their future development. The nursery has recently introduced home visits to obtain information regarding children's home routines in order to maintain continuity of care for each child.

**Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Well-structured planning incorporates Montessori equipment and principles with the Foundation Stage stepping stones. The staff all have very good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. They all contribute to the theme based planning. Topics are broken down and clearly linked to stepping stones in weekly plans. Staff are very careful to cover all areas and provide a balance of activities across all areas of learning. Children are frequently observed during activities by staff. These observations are added to children's records and provide individual plans for each child to ensure that gaps are identified and they continue to make good progress. It is not always clear how observations have been used to assess and evaluate children's progress, and inform planning to further extend children's progress. Children's achievements are verbally shared with parents on a daily basis and through notice boards. Staff are directly involved in children's learning and work on a one to one basis with a range of children throughout the session. Children's behaviour is good throughout the session. Staff are highly skilled and resourceful at spotting opportunities to maximise children's learning potential. They follow children's interest and adapt activities to incorporate the ideas of the children. Consequently, children are very motivated to learn. Children enjoy daily access to the outside area where they go out as a whole group, the nursery already has plans in place and are working towards creating free-flow. Currently, the outdoor area is mainly used as an opportunity for physical play, although staff are actively working towards providing resources to support the whole curriculum outdoors, children will benefit further with more flexibility and choice, allowing them to move spontaneously between the indoor and outdoor environment.

Children are becoming increasingly independent as they learn to manage many tasks for themselves. They select and carry equipment and put on aprons before messy play and lunch. Children play well together in small groups, they regulate their play and congratulate one another on their achievements. Cultural and traditional days are planned for children, which respect the views and beliefs of others. Children's achievements are celebrated by staff who are very enthusiastic and display children's work on the wall giving them a sense of pride. Children are making good progress in their early writing. The children use the practical life equipment which is geared towards life skills and encourages children to use and develop fine motor skills in order to help their early writing skills. Children competently carry trays and carefully sort beads and small objects using tongs and spoons. They are starting to recognise and write simple words, one child quickly recognises the paint does not have a label and asks a member of staff to write the word for her to copy, she persists and then proudly cuts out her writing to make a label before sticking it onto the table so everyone will know where to put the paint. An organised and accessible book corner houses a range of both factual and

fiction books; this area is well supported by the staff who enrich and encourage the use of the area.

Children are making good levels of progress in their mathematical development. They enjoy using a wide range of Montessori equipment which enables them to learn about shape, space and weight. They recognise three-dimensional shapes and name them correctly when asked by staff. Measuring jugs and water encourage children to learn about quantity and capacity. Children have many opportunities to investigate, observe and explore for themselves. A wide range of activities stimulate their interest and curiosity and enhances their development in all areas of learning. Children thoroughly enjoy washing tables before lunch and use a range of materials where they learn about texture and state, they pour coloured bubbly water from cups through funnels to fill bottles. Play dough, sand, oats and rice all provide real experiences using natural materials. Children's interest in the world is enhanced by activities such as recreating the planets with balloons and papier-mâché and hanging them from the ceiling to create their own solar system. Children are encouraged to notice features of the local environment as they observe growing plants and seasonal changes.

Children enjoy a wide range of planned activities that support their physical development. Children are encouraged to manage coats and shoes with staff on hand to assist as and when required. They develop very good dexterous skills as they use the Montessori equipment. Buttons, hooks and zips encourage them to use the strength in their hands. Children persevere intently with tasks such as selecting number rods on the computer to make up 10 and fill the syringe. There are many opportunities for children to be creative. Children engage in imaginary play; the session pace allows children the space and time to develop different imaginary roles through their play. Children enjoy the planned and well thought out opportunities provided through the drama and dance sessions, they also learn about rhythm and tempo during these activities requiring skill and coordination.

#### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good. Children are welcomed into the nursery. Staff value their individual personalities and ensure all children are able to play with toys and resources which meet their individual needs, so they can become confident and independent. The children in this setting are valued and have a good sense of belonging. Children settle well and play happily together. Parents are welcomed into the setting which enables staff to get to know families very well. Children are encouraged to discuss their home lives, this helps them feel accepted and part of the community. Children are able to make choices about how to spend their time as the session is relaxed and allows time for completing chosen activities.

Effective arrangements are in place to care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The provision is proactive in ensuring children receive good levels of support, with staff attending specific training to enable them to meet children's individual needs and further develop their understanding of the code of practice. The nursery works with parents and other professionals to ensure children's needs are met and planning takes account of children's individual targets. Staff clearly understand appropriate strategies to provide children, with English as an additional language, with extra support and encouragement as necessary and share information with parents to ensure all children are able to participate within the provision.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are learning right from wrong and to show respect for others. They are learning responsible behaviour because staff are good role models and use calm and consistent strategies throughout the nursery appropriate to children's stage of development. Staff actively empower children with the skills to make their opinions known and enable them to solve minor behaviour disputes by themselves. A good system is in place to record any behaviour incidents and these are subsequently signed by parents.

The partnership with parents and carers of children receiving nursery education is good. There is a useful exchange of information between staff and parents at the beginning and end of each day. Written records are given to parents of children in the baby room to keep them informed of their child's daily routine and encourage good two way communication. Younger children are collected from their individual rooms, this promotes good communication. Parents receive full information about the Foundation Stage in the setting's prospectus. They are informed about weekly plans through short term plans which are displayed on the wall of the rooms each session. Further information about medium and long term planning is provided through the regular and informative newsletters they receive. Parents can view their child's achievement records at any time and systems are in place to ensure they regularly access these and make ongoing contributions. Notes and cards are displayed in each room from parents making positive comments on how well their children have developed at the nursery and showing appreciation for the commitment of the staff. Children's starting points are discussed with parents and previous records of achievement are used to define individual

educational needs. Therefore, children's learning is enhanced through a good working partnership.

#### **Organisation**

The organisation is good. Robust recruitment and appointment procedures are in place to ensure children are protected and cared for by qualified staff with good knowledge and understanding of child development. There are clear, comprehensive procedures in place for staff induction to ensure that they are aware of their roles and responsibilities for the care and welfare of the children that attend the nursery. Operational policies and procedures work, in practice, to support the successful running of the nursery and to promote children's good health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. The required documentation is maintained to support the welfare of the children attending. Accurate attendance registers are maintained and checked throughout the day. Overall the well-organised environment and effective staff deployment positively supports children's care, learning and play.

The nursery has embraced the self-evaluation process and they are skilful in identifying new ways to build on their existing good practice. Children benefit from ongoing improvement at the setting.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. The nursery is led by joint managers; both are strong and efficient and place emphasis on providing a good quality environment. They work closely with the staff to form a cohesive team who all work well together. The aims of the setting are mainly well reflected in all aspects of practice. Job descriptions and an effective appraisal process ensure that all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and their training needs are identified. Training plans reflect the nursery's commitment to ongoing professional development and ensure that children are cared for by knowledgeable and well-trained staff. Regular staff meetings enable staff to review the effectiveness of the curriculum planning. This ensures that the quality of nursery education is adapted accordingly to meet the individual needs of the children. Staff work closely with the local authority to ensure that teaching methods are inclusive and effective. Good systems of record keeping, which highlight developmental progress, ensure that children have a smooth transition into school.

Overall, children's needs are met.

#### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable

#### **Complaints since the last inspection**

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):

- ensure parents sign the record of medication to acknowledge each entry
- develop further children's understanding about personal hygiene through the daily routine
- provide opportunities for young children to explore various sensory and natural materials to further develop their independence, imagination and creativity.

##### **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):

- develop further the assessment and evaluation of children’s progress, to identify their starting points and the next steps in their learning to inform future planning
- continue to develop the outdoor environment to reflect all areas of learning and allow all children to move spontaneously between the indoor and outdoor environment.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

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