

Summary of e-Quality Counts Assessment

Name of Setting	Oswestry School Prepcare Nursery			
e-QC Number	eQC10130			
Address	Church St, Oswestry SY11 2SP			
Date of Assessment:	8 th February 2013			
	Level Achieved for Each Section			
e-Quality Counts Section	Not Met	Level One	Level Two	Level Three
1: Management				✓
2: Staff				✓
3: Observation & Reflection to Inform Practice			✓	
4: Care, Learning & Development				✓
5: Environment				✓
6: Visits & Visitors				✓
7: Equality & Inclusion				✓
8: Safeguarding Children				✓
9: Partnerships with Parents/Carers				✓
10: Nutrition, Serving Food & Oral Health - Full/Sessional (Delete)				✓
11: Health & Safety				✓
12: Babies				✓
13: School Escort Service				
14: Out of School Care				
15: Students				✓
Overall e-Quality Counts Level Achieved	Level 3			
Date	23 rd April 2013			

KEY

Level Achieved	Accreditation Status
Level 1	Indicates a setting achieving a level of quality above the national standards
Level 2	Indicates a setting achieving a high level of quality
Level 3 (Highest)	Indicates a setting achieving exemplary practice

Assessment Feedback

Assessor's comments to include areas of strength and areas to be developed within each section

AWARD e-QUALITY COUNTS AT LEVEL 3

Section 1 – Management

The structure for leadership and management is effective with all staff being fully aware of their roles and responsibilities with regards to their contribution to the success of the organisation. This begins prior to them commencing work at Oswestry Prepcare with the comprehensive job descriptions and upon appointment through induction. Regular formal meetings between staff and the manager occur to re-establish performance standards and offer support and mentoring where needed. Managers are committed to a high level of training and development of staff and encourage staff to strive for excellence. All staff are clearly valued and respected as individuals and are encouraged to work co-operatively. This is established by managers and senior staff who provide positive role models for supportive working. The Ofsted Self Evaluation Form is displayed in each room which creates a transparency and ownership of the strategy of the setting and allows all practitioners a sense of involvement and proprietorship.

In addition to constant whole team involvement in the strategy, parents are also provided with a number of different forums for contribution, these take the form of a questionnaire for parents of registered children following their taster sessions, annual questionnaires, parent review meetings, and comments book a suggestions box and a parents association.

An enhanced service level agreement with the local authority means that the setting is committed to working alongside external professionals to maintain the highest standards of childcare possible. Along with regular meetings with the Quality team at the local authority the setting is able to grow and develop the service to meet the diverse needs of their families and maintain excellent standards for the children.

Managers have a strong focus on reaching exceptionally standards at the nursery and this includes a comprehensive strategic plan which focuses on providing parents with a high quality service, retaining and motivating the workforce, ensuring an enabling environment and remaining committed to the cycle of reflective practice.

Section 2 – Staff

The setting takes pride in the fact that they invest heavily in a fully skilled and qualified workforce who are committed to raising the quality and standards of care and education in nurseries. As such 75% of staff are qualified in Childcare and Education to NVQ Level 3 or equivalent. The remainder of the staff team are working towards qualifications and the staff portfolio includes practitioners at levels 2, 3, 4, foundation degrees and EYPS. Staff are able to attend training from Shropshire Council CPD Team, Platinum Training and other local training providers. The system is open and broad with practitioners receiving regular appraisals where they are able to list three different courses or events that they would like to attend the following year.

Training in specific areas is cascaded to the whole team at staff meetings and the setting regularly employs colleges to provide whole team training in areas such as First Aid, Food Hygiene and Safeguarding.

The nursery team are all undertaking the Inclusion Development Programme which involves evaluations and interactive group activities and again this ensures practitioners have a sense of ownership of quality levels in the setting.

Practitioners speak highly of the level of support and guidance they receive and the managers commitment to continuous professional development. They have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and all are aware of their position and value to the success of the organisation. They are proud of their achievements and speak enthusiastically of the positive impact the setting is having on children's lives.

Section 3 – Observation & Reflection to Inform Practice

The setting manager and deputy carry out planned and unplanned observations on all practitioners on a regular basis. Such formal observations are evaluated and shared with the practitioner to inform the professional development plan.

There is a 'Look, Listen and Note' board within each room for parents and other staff members to see, which includes daily observations on the children which are then used to inform planning. Planning closely follows the needs and interests of the children and practitioners are able to explain the rationale behind planned enhancements to continuous provision and activities in relation to their observed behaviours of their key children.

The setting liaises with the Development Officer from the Local Authority in conducting an annual safeguarding audit and three quality visits per year which again inform the reflective practice cycle at the setting.

Team meetings are held regularly which is an opportunity for staff to discuss the development of the service and share ideas for good practice. Smaller team meetings are used to discuss ideas for enhancing children's individual learning experiences at the nursery to ensure inclusion and equality standards are met and children who may need additional support are identified.

Section 4 – Care, Learning & Development

On the day of assessment, it was clear that practitioners had an excellent working knowledge of child development in addition to a personal understanding of the needs and interests of the children in their key group. Practitioners have a good appreciation of the EYFS framework and how and where their role fits. Their interpretation of the development matters document has produced coherent and consistent child development tracking systems which inform practitioners of the ways they can broaden children's learning experiences and extend their learning.

The setting vision of providing a warm, welcoming environment for children where individual needs are met are fulfilled through extensive and inspired activities is accomplished through careful and thoughtful planning throughout the setting

Children's autonomy and self-esteem is developed through allocation of small roles and responsibilities such as a helper at snack time or a line leader. Children respond really well to this and as a result behaviour is extremely positive and children are gentle, thoughtful and helpful.

Language development is supported by labelling and environmental print and excellent communication with practitioners modelling good speech and asking open-ended questions.

Practitioners lead 'mat chat' and 'circle time' sessions where children are given the chance to talk about any news they may have and also listen to the group. Staff have a clear interest in what children have to say and respond to children's verbal and non-verbal communications.

Pyjama Drama (Early Years Drama Class) sessions encourage children's self-confidence and independence whilst Movement with Melody Bear spark children's imaginations and creativity.

Equality is promoted through resources portraying positive images and a commitment to valuing and respecting each child as an individual. The learning environment, resources and adult/child interaction is all based on the individual needs of each child.

Section 5 – Environment

The entrance to the setting is warm, friendly and inviting with appropriate information displayed for parents and visitors and an evident focus on the safety and security of the children and families.

The nursery occupies two separate buildings, the first for children under the age of three being a bright, open play space with separate rooms for children of different ages adapted to be efficient and functional and decorated to stimulate the babies and toddlers who use the space. Their outdoor play area offers a wealth of different play opportunities from space to read stories, plant,

ride bikes and make dens. The classroom for the pre-school children is also well-designed, but has the bonus of being housed in the school which is a far more traditional style, which helps to bridge the transition between nursery and school. The setting also benefits from the use of the wonderful facilities of the school such as the tennis court, forest school and ballet studio. Children visited the school valentine's café for a valentine's day snack and attended a wonderful, creative and innovative dance class at the ballet studio.

The setting has invested in good quality furniture and resources, but what sets the nursery apart is

the way that practitioners have adapted the play spaces to the interests of the children. A lovely warm and inviting cosy area for the children was adapted to look like a castle based on the children's interest in princesses and, with the help of parents now looks like an exciting, cosy area for sleeping beauty. This theme was continued through a visit to a castle and incorporated into the weekly dance class.

Section 6 – Visits & Visitors

The setting has a good understanding of value of utilising the wider environment to enrich children's learning and enhance the nursery planning. Trips are well planned, relevant and thoroughly evaluated to inform future planning. Older children benefit from weekly trips including attendance at forest school and story sessions at the local book shop.

Links have been made with the local community and as a result the children visit the local residential nursing home to sing harvest songs and take hampers. A positive relationship with the local church and florist resulted in practitioners building on children's interests following the Royal Wedding and planning a whole wedding for the children to reenact.

Children of all ages often visit the park next door and the local supermarket to buy ingredients for cookery activities. Regular outings further from the nursery are also planned as part of the settings long term monthly planning and these have included the fire station, farm and to a ceramic café where the children took part in decorating tiles to make a mosaic.

Visitors are also invited into the setting to share their roles and experiences. The setting arranges regular visits from story tellers, dental nurses, community police officers, vets and the postman. They also employ professionals on a regular basis to run specialist led sessions, including PE with a qualified teacher, forest school with a level 3 trained forest school leader, Mini music with a qualified musician and Spanish with a qualified teacher. There is a dance teacher who visits weekly to hold sessions with the children and setting leaders are constantly looking for ways in which they can utilise the knowledge and skills of external authorities such as Yoga teachers and language specialists to enhance their provision. Where possible, practitioners undertake training alongside the professionals to deliver the specialist service on a more permanent basis.

Section 7 – Equality & Inclusion

There are currently five practitioners trained in inclusion and working with children with additional needs working at the setting. All practitioners are provided with the opportunity and support to contribute to the Inclusion Development Plan (IDP) and work in line with the setting SEN policy and procedure. Trained Senco's attend 6 training sessions as a minimum, but the setting has also made the commitment to train staff in areas such as Makaton to further enhance the skills of practitioners and improve the settings ability to support children's language development.

The setting is dedicated to working in partnership with other agencies in the best interests of the child and family and trains and supports staff in developing their confidence in facilitating transitions and multi-agency working.

Section 8 – Safeguarding Children

The setting Safeguarding policy and procedure is made available to all staff prior to commencement of employment at the nursery and made available to all parents upon registration. The policy is reviewed at least once per year and practitioners keep their knowledge current using the LSCB online to ensure numbers/contacts/legislation are up to date. External support is provided by the setting development officer who conducts an annual safeguarding audit and advises of any changes which may improve practice.

The setting has a clear commitment to protecting children and ensures parents are respected and valued as a basis for working in partnership with families to meet the needs of the child. The managers have an ethos of supporting families and working in partnership with parents and carers, and all practitioners have a non-judgemental, compassionate understanding of the issues facing families.

Section 9 – Partnerships with Parents/Carers

The setting has established a very professional service where prospective customers are provided with a proficient introduction into the provision from the setting website, prospectus and visits. A member of the management team is always on hand to communicate with parents and such interaction is always professional, courteous and respectful.

Parents speak very positively of their role and value within the organisation and practitioners speak highly of the support and trust received from parents. Practitioners work hard to ensure the needs and expectations of parents inform practice and procedures and parents speak highly of feeling empowered and important.

Within pre-school practitioners have introduced a 'question tree' used by staff and parents to write any question a child may come up with on a leaf, and each room has a look listen and note board which displays the child observations on post it notes for the parents to see and contribute to when they have time.

Setting leaders operate an open door policy where parents can come into the setting at any time to converse with managers or their key person. Coffee mornings are held to encourage informal socialising and there is a Parents Association involved in setting the strategy for the organisation and arranging fundraising activities. Parents are also involved in the day to day aspect of service provision for example a parent who bought saris in to show the children and a parent who did a pizza making session.

Section 10 – Nutrition, Serving Food & Oral Health

The setting is open for full days and as such provides a balanced menu which includes breakfast, lunch and afternoon tea. Meals are well planned, balanced and nutritious and provided by a local restaurant. Any individual dietary requirements are catered for and a parent spoken to on the day of assessment praised the setting for their enthusiasm and ability to cater for various dietary requirements. Water and milk are provided through the day and children are made aware of healthy eating through activities and displays.

Practitioners promote oral hygiene with the children by encouraging them to eat their fruit and vegetables and not foods with too much sugar in them. Activities have involved a visit from the dentist to promote oral hygiene and the children are aware of the importance of cleaning their teeth properly.

Section 11 – Health & Safety

The organisation for health and safety is of a high standard with managers creating a culture of responsibility for minimising risk. Organisation is thorough and clear and identifies possible issues and action to be taken. Quality standards checklists are used to provide a benchmark of standards of hygiene, which are clearly exceeded consistently.

A documented audit of the health and safety management system is undertaken regularly and all staff are instructed to proactively identify hazards and evaluate the risks arising from them, advise management, then go on to reduce those risks.

The premises are kept clean in good repair and maintained to a safe standard by practitioners who display proud ownership of their work environment and external contracted cleaners.

Staff attendance is managed through policies which serve to protect staff from illness and support early recovery from sickness, managed then through back to work interviews which ensure the setting works in partnership with employees to provide a supportive working environment.

The setting has a waste management policy and provides recycling activities for children and information for parents and visitors on energy efficiency and social responsibility.

Section 12 – Babies

The provision for babies is excellent with a clear bond between practitioners and babies evident.

Babies receive a lot of individual attention and activities are provided to meet their individual needs. Activities and resources are carefully planned to encourage babies to explore and investigate their environment, then enhancements are made to stimulate further development. The

environment is carefully planned to include a black and white visually stimulating area and warm bright displays. Resources are carefully organised to enable babies to access them as they choose and all are maintained to a high standard.

Staff speak distinctly and relate to babies in a gentle and considerate manner; there is a clear focus on how to promote verbal and non-verbal communication skills as practitioners constantly maintain visual contact, smile and use expression to support successful communication.

Practitioners are open, enthusiastic and professional. They work hard to create a calm and happy atmosphere with a wide range of activities such as Babble and Speak (Baby signing), Dew Drop sessions and Makaton signing which involve fun, singing, actions and signs to enhance children's language and communication skills.

Section 13 – School Escort Service

Not provided at the setting

Section 14 – Out of School Care

Not provided at the setting

Section 15 – Students

The Student induction program ensures the training fits the needs of the student and students are aware of the organisation philosophy and their role. Student mentors receive training to ensure students are appropriately supported and their contribution is valuable to the setting.

Students are never left alone with the children and do not carry out any unsupervised practice.

They are supported in understanding the policies and procedures of the setting and encouraged to contribute ideas and suggestions for quality improvement. Managers encourage students to evaluate the service and meet with them to discuss ideas around inclusive practice service improvement. Overall the setting provides positive experiences for practitioners embarking on a career in Early Years.