



Castle Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY305518
Inspection date	10 April 2006
Inspector	Joanne Lindsey Caswell
Setting Address	Castle Nursery, Wonersh and Shamley Green Church of England Infant School, Guildford Road, Shamley Green, Guildford, Surrey, GU5 0RS
Telephone number	01483 898 811
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Registered person	Castle Daycare and Preschool Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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

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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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Castle Nursery at Shamley Green has been registered since 2005 and is owned and managed by Castle Day Care and Preschool Limited. The nursery operates from single storey, detached premises within the grounds of Wonersh and Shamley Green Church of England Infant School in Shamley Green, Surrey. Children are cared for in two group rooms with their own sleep areas, nappy change and toilet facilities. A fully enclosed garden provides an outside play and learning area and can be used

throughout the year. The nursery serves the local area.

The nursery is registered to provide care for 30 children, aged under 5 years. At present, there are 48 children, aged from 12 months to 4 years on roll. This includes 14 children who receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with special needs and children who speak English as an additional language. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

A team of eight staff work with the children. All staff hold recognised early years qualifications and first aid certificates and attend Food Hygiene training. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are protected against illness and infection as staff maintain a scrupulously clean and hygienic environment. Children's rooms are extremely bright, with excellent ventilation, creating a healthy and clean atmosphere. Stringent procedures are in place to protect children from cross-infection. For example, all cots are thoroughly wiped down and all babies have their own freshly-laundered, individual bedding. All children are protected against infection during nappy changes as staff are extremely vigilant in ensuring the changing mat is cleaned appropriately between use and all staff wear disposable gloves and aprons. This contributes towards children's good health and prevents the spread of infection. All children's toys are thoroughly cleaned and the sand is sterilised regularly to protect children from germs.

Staff ensure children learn about the importance of good personal hygiene routines. For example, children clearly understand why they must wash their hands thoroughly after toileting and before eating. This enables children to recognise the importance of keeping themselves healthy, particularly whilst they are participating in cookery activities.

Children's health needs are met extremely well. Staff are attentive in recognising the signs and symptoms of illness in children as staff carry out regular checks to ensure they are familiar with children's 'normal' body temperature and general welfare. This enables staff to quickly recognise when a child is unwell and take the appropriate action. There are effective procedures in place to ensure that any child who is found to be unwell is quickly excluded from the setting, to prevent the spread of infection. Parents understand that their children must not attend the nursery if they are ill, to ensure the good health of all children. There are comprehensive written procedures in place to ensure the safe administration of any medication. This ensures that it is carried out with parents' agreement and meets the needs of the individual child.

Children have plenty of rest and sleep. Babies follow their individual sleep routines and children in the Big Room have rests and naps in accordance with their needs. Staff are particularly attentive in ensuring that sleeping children are checked

regularly.

Children benefit from plenty of fresh air and exercise. All rooms are ventilated well and children have frequent opportunities for outside play. Non-mobile babies are dressed appropriately and use relevant safety restraints, such as walkers, to enable them to benefit from outside activities. Babies improve their mobility skills as they play in the garden, kick and throw balls, bounce on the trampoline and play on the slide, all under the close supervision of staff. Babies develop their co-ordination and dexterity as they play with rattles, shake musical instruments, press buttons, handle peg puzzles and use resources such as glue sticks and paintbrushes in creative activities. Some babies successfully feed themselves and show good co-ordination. Older children enjoy extensive opportunities to develop their physical skills. They run around in the garden and enjoy vigorous, physical exercise as they dig in the garden and use the trampoline, wheeled toys and climbing frame. They carefully negotiate the balance beams and enjoy using resources such as hoops, balls and tunnels, enabling children to move in a variety of ways, to encourage their healthy physical development.

Children's dietary needs are met extremely well. Babies' weaning needs are followed, in accordance with parents' wishes and all staff are fully aware of children's individual dietary requirements. Babies' bottles are stored in accordance with environmental health regulations. All babies and children have frequent drinks and healthy snacks. Older children pour their own drinks and help themselves to healthy, nutritious fresh fruit at the 'snack bar'. This encourages children to recognise their own body's needs and help themselves to drinks and snacks when they are thirsty and hungry. Children enjoy healthy, nutritious cooked lunches. Older children are actively involved in laying the table and serving themselves. The babies are gently assisted with feeding, where necessary, and enjoy close interaction with staff. This contributes towards a very relaxed and sociable atmosphere at meal times and encourages all children to develop positive attitudes towards healthy eating. All staff complete Food Hygiene training and have an excellent understanding of environmental health regulations regarding the safe storage of all foods. This ensures that all children's meals are prepared and served appropriately to ensure children's good health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The premises provide an extremely child-orientated, safe, secure and stimulating environment. All areas of the premises are maintained to a very high standard and extensive precautions are taken to ensure all areas are safe and welcoming to children. The effective layout of the premises, enables children to be fully supervised at all times. Children access all areas freely and safely. The playrooms are spacious and are extremely well-organised, minimising all hazards and risks to children. For example, the premises are fully secure and there are strict procedures in place for the admittance of visitors to the nursery. Children do not have access to the kitchen area, safeguarding them from potential risk. Children are consistently kept safe within the nursery as staff carry out comprehensive risk assessments on all areas of the premises. This ensures that all areas used by children are maintained to a

consistently high standard and are safe for children's use.

Children play with an extensive range of high quality play materials and learning resources. Staff ensure that all toys are stored at low level, enabling children to access their play materials freely and safely. All equipment and furniture is of exceptional quality and is checked regularly to ensure it continually remains safe for children's use.

Children learn about safety as part of well-planned topic work and through discussion with staff. For example, children enjoy visits from the fire service and police who discuss aspects of safety and encourage children to learn how to keep themselves safe. Staff also give children clear explanations about safety within the nursery. For example, older children understand the importance of safety whilst using scissors. Through discussions with staff, children understand that they must not run inside as they may cause themselves, or someone else, an injury. This helps children to learn about the importance of safety and how to protect themselves, and others, from harm. Children are very familiar with the nursery emergency evacuation procedure as they undertake frequent drills. This enables children to learn how to keep themselves safe in the event of an emergency.

Children are extremely well protected against harm and abuse as staff have an excellent understanding of their responsibilities regarding child protection. All staff are familiar with the relevant procedures to follow, should they have any concerns about a child in their care. This ensures that children's safety and welfare is promoted at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely happy and settled. They develop confidence and high self-esteem as they enjoy extremely close and warm relationships with staff. This enables children to feel totally secure and comfortable within the nursery. Children in both group rooms enjoy an extensive range of extremely well-planned play and learning opportunities to stimulate their overall developmental needs. Children flourish within the setting as staff are extremely competent, highly experienced and knowledgeable early years practitioners. They have an excellent understanding of child development, enabling them to plan an exciting and imaginative range of play experiences for children. Children's developmental needs are consistently met in the planning and organisation of all play and activities, as staff make full use of the Birth to three matters framework. All babies and children are appropriately stimulated and enjoy challenges to enhance their developmental needs. For example, non-mobile babies are encouraged to reach out for toys to stimulate their physical skills and promote mobility. All babies enjoy a wealth of activities to stimulate their senses, interests and curiosity. They develop their cognitive skills as they play with musical toys and enjoy 'cause and effect' toys that reward babies for pressing buttons, lifting lids and opening doors. Babies squeal with delight as they play with balls in the garden with staff and enjoy experimenting with textures such as crushed ice, corn flour, jelly and baked beans. Babies develop an active interest in books, stories and

songs. They look at books with staff and enjoy clapping hands and using musical instruments to join in musical activities. All babies enjoy extremely warm relationships with staff. Babies approach staff happily for cuddles and receive plenty of physical affection. Staff play with the babies and encourage their overall developmental needs. They stimulate language skills through sounds and repetition and engage in games such as clapping hands and 'boo'. This encourages close interaction between staff and babies on an individual basis and enables babies to form close, trusting relationships with staff. Older children in the Big Room enjoy a wealth of extremely well-planned, fun, practical play opportunities. Staff make excellent use of the outside learning area to enable children to extend their learning and develop their skills in number, colour and letter recognition; writing and mark making, role play, sensory play and exploratory play. For example, children enjoy digging in the garden, they use the role play area and dressing up clothes and enjoy playing games matching numbers and letters. All children develop positive attitudes towards learning as all activities are presented in a fun and practical format and staff allow children to explore and experiment. Staff continue to use the Birth to three matters framework in the Big Room to closely monitor children's developmental progress. This enables staff to effectively link children's learning between the Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum to ensure that all children's individual learning needs are appropriately planned for.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff are extremely experienced, well qualified and dedicated early years practitioners. They have an excellent understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, enabling them to deliver an extremely stimulating, creative and fun range of play and learning activities. All staff are very sensitive to the children's differing needs and demonstrate a wealth of knowledge of each child's personal learning needs and abilities. This enables staff to plan activities and play opportunities which challenge and stimulate all children appropriately. Curriculum planning is comprehensive and covers all elements of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff meet on a regular basis to discuss curriculum issues and individual children's needs. Staff make excellent use of the outside area to build on, and extend, children's learning. Children benefit from the rich and stimulating learning environment, which offers a wealth of fun, practical quality play experiences. Staff and children enjoy extremely happy and warm relationships. Children approach staff happily and confidently and receive plenty of praise and positive reassurance. This increases children's self-esteem and results in a very positive and harmonious environment for children. There is a very busy and purposeful atmosphere, demonstrating that all children are appropriately stimulated and challenged. Staff utilise every opportunity to promote children's learning and engage their interests. For example, during lunch times children develop their independence as they help to lay the table and serve their meals. This encourages children to take responsibility and look after their own needs. The Big Room is extremely well organised to promote children's learning and children develop a sense of pride in seeing their work clearly displayed.

Children are confident and sociable. They talk animatedly about their favourite nursery activities and show great pride in their work. They talk about their friends and people who are important to them, demonstrating their sense of belonging. Children

develop very good skills in independence. They take care of their own needs and pour their own drinks at snack time. They self-register on arrival and select their own play materials and resources. Children are extremely polite and courteous to one another. They spontaneously apologise to one another and need very little reminding about saying please and thank you. Children work and play together harmoniously. Older children are particularly kind and sensitive towards the younger children's needs. This demonstrates children's very well developed social skills. Children clearly understand acceptable behaviour and share and co-operate extremely well in their play. They negotiate with each other well and successfully resolve their own differences.

Children express themselves freely and fluently, showing extremely well developed language skills. They engage in lengthy conversation with their peers and adults and convey their needs and feelings extremely effectively. Children develop and extend their language through discussion, conversation with adults and through the use of books and stories. They ask questions and respond enthusiastically to staff's open-ended questioning. Children use language to reason and give explanations, demonstrating very well developed language and conversation skills. There are excellent opportunities for children to develop their writing skills. They use chalks, pencils and crayons competently, progressing from copy writing to writing their own names from memory and independent writing. Children develop a very good understanding of letters and sounds. The print-rich environment in the Big Room enables children to see extensive examples of letters, words and labels around them and encourages children to develop an interest in words and sounds. Children develop a very keen interest in books and stories as staff use these as a basis for topic work and discussion.

Children's mathematical skills are excellent as they use numbers confidently throughout the daily routine. They count the number of children present and enjoy many practical number and counting activities. This encourages children to develop their understanding of mathematical concepts. Children have an excellent understanding of number value. They see many signs on display depicting how many children can use designated areas in the nursery. For example, children understand that only two children may dig in the garden at any one time. Children see and use numbers at lunch time and snack time when they recognise how many spoonfuls of food, or pieces of fruit they may have. This enables children to develop a thorough understanding of number and use numbers in practical contexts. A recent topic on 'Ourselves' enabled children to draw life-size pictures of themselves and the staff and use these to compare sizes and use comparative language. Children undertake simple calculation and use their reasoning skills to put numbers in order and complete number sequences. For example, in the outside learning area children compare strings of beads of differing amounts and lengths and copy and repeat different patterns. Staff use very good practical experiences to enable children to develop a clear understanding of mathematical concepts. For example, in the outside learning area, children sort a collection of socks on a washing line. This enables children to match pairs, sort sizes and compare patterns in a practical and fun format.

Children have extensive opportunities to explore, investigate and observe nature. They undertake many activities outside, such as planting seeds and bulbs. They observe the weather and talk about the changing seasons. Children are very aware

of the rural environment and confidently recognise the sound of a woodpecker in a nearby tree. Children enjoy exploring different objects and textures on the 'Curiosity Table', where they use their senses to explore colour, texture and sounds. Children undertake many cookery activities where they observe change and compare raw and cooked ingredients. Whilst children make chocolate Easter nests, they discuss why the chocolate melts after it has been heated, enabling children to make comparisons between liquid and solid form. Children develop their understanding of the local area and the role of others through very well-planned topic work. They benefit from a number of visitors to the setting, such as the emergency services and a children's farm. Children learn about different festivals and cultures as they explore the wider world. Staff introduce children to topic work involving different countries of the world and they celebrate customs such as St Patrick's Day and St George's Day. As part of topic work on France, children learn simple French words. Children's experiences of the wider world are extended as they enthusiastically take the nursery 'bears' on trips with them and share special family experiences.

Children have many opportunities to move in a variety of ways to develop their physical skills. They move around freely inside and negotiate obstacles competently. Children play outside throughout the year with a range of equipment and apparatus. This enables children to climb, crawl, balance and use wheeled toys, enhancing their overall physical development. Children go on regular nature walks and enjoy active games using the parachute. This enables children to develop their gross motor skills and gain muscle control. Children show very good manipulative skills and dexterity as they competently use cutlery at lunch time. They develop their co-ordination by undertaking threading activities, using scissors, handling pegs and using writing materials.

Children have excellent opportunities for creative role play. They enjoy a diverse range of themes, including a kitchen, florist shop and doctor's surgery, enabling children to express their ideas and develop their imagination. Children enjoy playing with dolls and use supporting resources appropriately to develop and extend their games. Children access art and craft materials freely and easily. They undertake an extensive range of creative activities using a variety of techniques and media. Children's art and craft work adorns the walls and ceilings of the nursery, reflecting children's own, individual styles. Staff are sensitive in giving children freedom of expression in their creative work. This enables children to develop their own ideas and express their own creativity. There are extensive opportunities for children to use their senses. There are a wealth of tactile materials displayed around the room at children's height, enabling them to explore texture. Children enjoy using 'feely' boxes where they can use their senses to identify different resources. Children enjoy using their senses during nursery activities. For example, during the cookery activity making chocolate Easter nests, children identify the aroma of melted chocolate.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are consistently valued as individuals within the nursery. They see many examples of photographs of themselves on display at low-level and both rooms have

children's art and craft work on display. This enables children to develop a very strong sense of belonging within the nursery and a sense of pride in their surroundings and achievements. The entire nursery is totally child-centred, enabling all children to feel special within the nursery. From the moment children arrive in the morning and excitedly ring the doorbell, positioned at child-height, they are warmly welcomed into the nursery by staff. This promotes children's self-esteem and enables them to develop self-confidence and feel good about themselves. Children's individual needs are clearly identified and catered for. For example, babies follow their personal care routines, as agreed with parents. Staff ensure that routines followed at nursery reflect those implemented at home, providing consistency and security for children. Staff ensure they fully understand and recognise each child's comfort measures, sleep routines, feeding patterns and medical needs. This ensures that each child is regarded as an individual and the care routines are tailored appropriately to support this.

Children see many positive images of diversity on display. There are plenty of pictures depicting disability and differing cultures, nationalities and ethnic diversity. Curriculum plans demonstrate children regularly celebrate different customs and festivals and learn about the world around them. This increases children's knowledge and understanding of the wider world and helps children to understand the needs of others. As a result of this, children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Children's different learning needs are clearly identified and addressed in planning, to ensure that children receive appropriate levels of challenge, according to their ability.

Children with special needs are supported extremely well. There is a designated Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), who is familiar with legislation and is experienced in identifying children's individual needs. Staff work in conjunction with the SENCO, parents and external agencies, where necessary, to support all children appropriately.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. Staff act as positive role-models and greet and address children politely and warmly. They use calm and effective strategies to manage children's behaviour and offer a highly stimulating and challenging range of activities and learning opportunities. This ensures children are always positively engaged and limits the opportunities for unacceptable behaviour. Children clearly understand acceptable behaviour and remind one another about the importance of sharing. Staff manage behaviour effectively by allowing children to resolve their own differences. This is successful as children negotiate and co-operate with one another as part of their play. Children enjoy high levels of praise, positive encouragement and reassurance. This creates a very happy, positive and harmonious environment for children.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Staff provide a wealth of information and actively encourage parents to become involved in their children's care and education. Parents receive a wealth of information regarding the nursery's policies and procedures and the Foundation Stage curriculum. There are informative notice boards displayed for parents offering a range of written information and photographs depicting nursery activities and the children's daily achievements. Parents share in their children's learning, as staff display curriculum activities and

timetables. This enables children to share their achievements and extend their learning with their parents at home. Staff encourage parents to share their own skills and be closely involved in the nursery. They are invited to social events, such as the Easter parade, and staff organise information evenings to enable parents to be better informed about the Foundation Stage curriculum. Parents' feedback is valued and staff act on comments made on the parents' questionnaire to enable them to improve practice and develop closer working relationships with parents. Staff offer an 'open door' policy, enabling parents to talk to staff at any time. This contributes towards the warm, welcoming and relaxed environment between parents, children and staff.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The nursery is organised extremely well. Staff are fully qualified, competent early years practitioners who have an excellent understanding of early years care and education. All staff are familiar with the national standards and adhere to these in daily practice. For example, appropriate staffing ratios are in place and children are cared for in appropriate age groups. There is a comprehensive operational plan in place, which all staff fully understand and implement in daily practice. This contributes towards the highly effective, efficient organisation of the nursery. A full induction programme is available to support all new staff and students. This ensures all staff are familiar with nursery policies and procedures. Staff have access to extensive further training and all staff hold first aid and food hygiene certificates. This ensures that standards of care are consistently high, due to staff's updated knowledge and training. There are stringent procedures in place to ensure that all staff are appropriately vetted and cleared to work with children. Children have excellent opportunities to experience a fun, busy and stimulating day, due to the effective organisation of activities. All regulatory documentation is maintained in full and children's records are stored confidentially and securely.

The leadership and management are outstanding. The nursery manager is a motivational leader who takes an active role in the delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff are extremely dedicated and committed to their roles, the children and the success of the nursery. As a result of this, they work consistently hard to identify areas for development and on-going improvements. Staff development is given high priority and all staff have frequent opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills through the completion of further training. The staff team is extremely strong and all staff work very well together.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk