



## Star Playschool and Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | EY314841       |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 28 April 2006  |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Jenny Scarlett |

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Setting Address</b>    | Chiltern Primary School, Chiltern Way, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG22 5BB |
| <b>Telephone number</b>   | 01256 473345  |
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| <b>Registered person</b>  | Star Playschool and Nursery   |
| <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?

Star Playschool and Nursery opened in 2005. The playschool and nursery operates from a detached self contained building in the grounds of Chiltern Primary School in Basingstoke, Hampshire. A maximum of 66 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 91 children aged from 2 months to under 5 years on roll. Of these

56 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide geographical area. The nursery supports a small number of children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 15 staff, 13 staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. There is 1 staff member working towards a recognised early years qualification and 2 staff further developing their child care qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted effectively by staff who demonstrate a good knowledge of the procedures for promoting health and hygiene. They have a sound awareness of their own needs and the older children are able to be independent in their personal care. Children actively contribute to the development of the health and care routines such as tidying up and preparing themselves and the rooms for snack and meal times. Good procedures such as, staff consistently wearing disposable gloves and aprons for nappy changing sustain high levels of hygiene and help prevent the spread of infection. Toys and resources in the baby room are washed and sterilised regularly. This good practice maintains the cleanliness of the equipment ensuring the children play in a clean environment. Children are protected well through the staff's good understanding of the correct procedures to be followed if accidents occur or children require medication. Accidents are dealt with quickly and are accurately recorded by staff to promote children's good health.

Children's healthy growth and development is being fostered as staff show a good understanding of their individual dietary requirements. Drinks are available to all children throughout the day and staff acknowledge when young babies may be thirsty. Children begin to understand the principles of a healthy diet. Snack and lunch times are a social occasion. Children enjoy comparing the contents of their lunch boxes. Their independence is encouraged as they open their boxes and develop skills in opening packaging such as yoghurt pots and crisps. The older children show confidence to pour their own drinks. Babies and young children enjoy the one to one adult contact at meal times and are given time to taste, enjoy and finish their food in a relaxed and calm environment. Children learn how to keep themselves healthy, knowing they must wash their hands before meals and after using the toilet. Staff use effective procedures to prevent the possible spread of infection, for example, cleaning tables properly before and after the children eat.

Children benefit from fresh air and regular exercise, making good use of the indoor and outdoor environment. They move freely and confidently around the setting demonstrating good spatial awareness, for example manoeuvring prams around the tables. They develop good physical skills, demonstrating their dexterity as they draw and write with pens and pencils. Children develop good coordination skills as they run and play ball games in the garden. They learn to catch and bounce the balls to each other.

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

The provision is good.

The environment is warm and welcoming to parents and their children, who are greeted individually on arrival. The individual welcome helps the children feel secure and encourages them to settle at the start of the session. Children play in a spacious well planned environment because staff plan the room and the equipment layout carefully. They use a varied range of safe and developmentally appropriate resources, including everyday household items that are good quality and safe. The resources and play equipment support, stimulate and challenge the children's individual development needs appropriately. Equipment and resources are kept clean and in a good state of repair and are checked regularly for safety.

The indoor and outdoor play spaces are organised effectively. Staff create a child friendly environment which enables the children to explore and take risks while being appropriately supervised. Babies and young children sleep safely and comfortably and are frequently monitored. Through gentle encouragement the younger children learn to be gentle around the non-mobile babies. There is a good ratio of staff who are deployed effectively ensuring children are safe in their surroundings.

The nursery premises are secure and there are good arrangements for the safe arrival and departure of children. There are clear and robust procedures to ensure children are collected only by authorised people. Children, staff and visitors arrivals and departures are promptly recorded so that in an emergency there is an accurate record of who is in the building. Staff supervise the children closely both indoors and out with correct staff ratios being maintained at all times.

Children are protected well by staff who demonstrate a sound understanding of the child protection policies and procedures. As a result they give good priority to safeguarding the children's welfare. Staff child ratios ensure that sufficient staff are on duty to meet the individual needs of the children throughout the day.

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

The provision is good.

Children are confident, relaxed and settled in the setting. They enter the nursery happily. Children in the baby and toddler rooms develop good close relationships with the staff. They enjoy themselves in the setting and are helped to achieve. Staff are developing the Birth to three matters guidance well to provide a good and varied range of play experiences for babies and children under three. Children access a variety of activities, which staff thoughtfully plan and prepare to encourage them to develop skills and have fun. Children have warm relationships with staff. They benefit from the one to one care and the key worker system receiving much individual attention. Babies enjoy varied activities to encourage their development. They explore a variety of hand held toys and musical resources, feeling and tasting them. Activities such as jelly play and treasure baskets provide good opportunities for young children to stimulate their senses. Their achievements and developmental milestones are celebrated with praise from staff which aids their progress. Children in

toddlers have access to a good range of activities. They paint pictures and explore the texture of paint with their fingers. Older toddlers develop an interest in books as staff read to them before tea. They learn to listen to stories and join in enthusiastically when singing simple songs.

#### Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the setting having fun as they learn through play. They enter the nursery confidently and know the daily routines. Children often concentrate at one thing for long periods of time because they enjoy what they do. This is particularly evident with a small group of children playing with play dough. Some children make trays of chocolate cakes or animal shapes with the dough. Sometimes, however, when children are together as a whole group, their attention drifts and they become restless. This is because group time routines are repetitive and there are too many disturbances at the end of the session.

The staff plan and provide a good range of activities that promote children's learning. Staff are well qualified and demonstrate a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage. They use this knowledge to plan a broad range of experiences for all children. As a result the children are progressing well as independent learners. Staff receive good opportunities for ongoing training and development, which underpins their knowledge and skills effectively to support the children. Planning is linked to the early learning goals and identifies what the children are to learn from planned activities. However, plans do not consistently provide sufficient detail as to how children are grouped. Staff use observations of children's progress to complete assessment records. These are linked to the stepping-stones and used effectively to plan for each child's next stage.

Children's personal independence is developing well. They confidently attempt to change their shoes and put their coats on for outside play. Children enjoy playing the part of daily helper as they help prepare for snack. Staff utilise the opportunities to develop the children's independence further, for example, as they pour their own drinks and select their refreshments at snack times. Children respond well to the routine changes in the day. They follow clear guidelines and are aware of expectations such as tidying toys and resources away. Children develop a good awareness of their own needs and a respect for the needs of others. They show a good understanding and willingness to keep themselves safe and healthy through routines such as hand washing and caring for their environment. Children are sensitive to the needs of others, they readily share toys and resources and many children co-operate with each other.

Children have a good range of vocabulary. They use language confidently when talking to their peers and with staff. This has a positive effect on their growing social skills and self-assurance. Some children confidently recognise their own names and those of others. They self register for snack time and find their individual drawers to store their pictures and personal possessions. Most of the 4 year-olds demonstrate good handwriting skills. They confidently write their own names on pieces of work and attempt to write for a purpose. These children demonstrate how they can hold a pencil correctly.

Children benefit from having first hand practical experiences through which they learn about the world around them. They learn to look carefully at the blossom on the trees and represent what they see through painting. Staff support children's play well, helping them to think about what they are doing and encouraging them to develop their play in different ways.

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

The provision is good.

Children enter the nursery happily, looking for their particular friends and being well aware of how the sessions are run. The play and education provision is organised to ensure children have access to a varied range of activities. Younger children benefit from the positive partnership staff have developed with parents. Babies settle well because staff work closely with parents to ensure they follow their individual routine. Children's individual pegs and labelled boxes provide them with a sense of belonging as they store their pictures and personal possessions.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents and carers are well informed by staff. They share relevant background information, play activities and discuss children's specific needs. Informative notice boards with relevant up to date business information and current project work are accessible to all parents. Children benefit from the open door policy and two way sharing of information, with opportunities for parents to speak to staff on a daily basis. Parents receive regular opportunities to contribute to the assessments made on their child and are encouraged to be involved in their learning. As a result, parents and carers have a sound understanding of their child's progress.

Staff are proactive in ensuring the needs of all children are being met. They demonstrate a sound knowledge of the individual needs of the children in their care. Staff monitor the children's smooth transition for babies and toddlers into the older children's groups well. As a result children receive good support to ensure they settle and are happy in their new environment. The designated special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) demonstrates a sound knowledge of the fundamental principles of the code of practice. As a result, staff work together with parents, carers and other professional bodies to organise the environment and plan appropriate activities. This ensures the children take part at a level appropriate to their needs. Children develop a positive attitude to others through varied images displayed around the setting. Children receive good opportunities to visit the local community, as well as welcoming visitors from the community into the setting. Thus, further developing a secure knowledge of the wider world. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The nursery staff have established effective links with parents, carers and the community. Staff actively encourage parents and carers to come into the setting. Parental participation is promoted to share expertise skills and knowledge. An active parent and toddler group operates twice a week within the setting. It is well managed and attended. It is a good point of contact in the local community, and offers parents and carers a good chance to meet with others. Parenting courses are also organised and highly valued. They offer sociable, friendly opportunities for parents to gain

knowledge of how to help their children at home.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The provision for the quality of leadership and management is good. Staffing levels are good and the large majority of staff hold early years qualifications and have relevant experience. As a result, they support children's well being and education. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of their designated roles and responsibilities. Policies and procedures form part of the staff induction and help to ensure consistent provision for the children. The manager provides good opportunities for staff to undertake external and in-house training thus promoting their personal development. This is used to help develop staff skills in organising provision that meets the individual needs of the children.

Children's care is enhanced by the setting's effective organisation. Staff observe children's development and learning and keep records that help them to meet their needs. Children's records are openly shared with parents. Staff understand and follow the settings policies and procedures to take appropriate steps to protect children, promote their well-being and support their development. Children are grouped effectively with key workers. The key worker system enables staff to get to know individual children well. This helps ensure children feel secure and confident with their carers. As a result, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The manager has a strong vision for the nursery. Regular meetings are held, when staff are able to share their views and contribute to the organisation of the nursery. Staff work co-operatively to help the nursery run smoothly. They are supported by being well cared for in a homely, happy family atmosphere. The management committee and manager of the setting monitor and evaluate the provision in a constant process through the openness of the staff. They clearly know the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and work hard to ensure staff work effectively and have the relevant skills and qualifications to carry out their role.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

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. There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

## **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):

- explore ways of managing group times in the Bright Stars room so that children remain attentive and purposefully engaged (also applies to nursery education)

##### **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):

- make improvements as indicated in the care section above.

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