



Lenham Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127314
Inspection date	23 May 2006
Inspector	Stacey Sangster
Setting Address	Lenham County Primary School, Ham Lane, Lenham, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 2QG
Telephone number	07967128056
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Registered person	Lenham Nursery School
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

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.

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?

Lenham Nursery School was registered in 1992. It operates from rooms within Lenham County Primary School. It has its own cloakroom facilities and a kitchen area. A small conservatory room is available adjacent to the main play room. There is an enclosed outside play space with grassed and paved areas. It is set in a residential area within walking distance of Lenham village. Children attend from Lenham and surrounding villages.

The nursery is registered to provide 18 places for children aged between two and five years. It is managed by a committee of trustees which includes some representatives from the school. There are currently 50 children on roll of whom 42 are funded . Most children attend on a sessional basis. The setting supports children with special needs and English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week during term-time. Sessions run from 08:30 to 15:30 with children departing and arriving between 12:00 and 13:00. Children may stay for a hot school lunch.

Five staff work with the children, four of whom hold early years qualifications and one of whom is working towards suitable child care qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Good daily routines result in most children washing their hands automatically after toilet and messy play, this routine helps them understand the need for good personal hygiene and they discuss, with each other and staff the effect that germs might have on their health reinforcing their understanding.

Parents give prior written consent to administer medication so that children receive the correct dosage according to their needs. All staff hold a current first aid certificate and this ensures children receive quick and appropriate medical attention should they have a minor accident. The setting hold written parental permission to obtain emergency medical treatment which ensures children's welfare in the event of a serious accident where parents and emergency contacts are not available.

Children spontaneously talk about exercise helping to make them strong and healthy, demonstrating that this is something that they are beginning to develop an understanding of. Staff reinforce this message and as a result most children show a good awareness of what they need to do to live a healthy lifestyle.

Children enjoy snacks that are nutritious such as dried or fresh fruit and raw vegetables. Staff model positive attitudes to these snacks encouraging children to try new foods, this encourages children to develop healthy eating habits and expand their diets.

The setting has a policy of encouraging children to drink plenty of fluids to ensure that they remain hydrated and children recognise that having a drink will cool them down after physical play. The setting record details of every child's specific dietary needs and ensure that they do not have access to any foods forbidden by their culture, religion medical conditions or family preferences.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are kept very safe in this setting because staff provide good guidance and explanations which helps even very young children develop a good awareness of safety and personal responsibility for their own and the safety of others. Safety precautions such as the locked kitchen area, good security and equipment checks ensure the premises are a safe place for children to explore.

Children benefit from playing in a spacious well organised environment. This allows them to move around and play safely. They have easy and safe access to a good range of toys and resources appropriate for their age. Toys and resources are carefully selected to ensure they are suitable for children. Thorough risk assessments are carried out and clearly written health and safety policies ensure that all staff are aware of their role in prompting health and safety.

Staff have a good understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and know what action to take if they have concerns about a child in their care. This ensures staff quickly recognise when a child is being abused and can act in the child's best interest. The written policy requires a minor amendment.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff have a very good understanding of how children develop and learn. They plan a range of activities based on real life situations that help children progress in all areas of learning. A stimulating environment is offered where children's work is pleasantly displayed and labelled. Children understand from this that their work is valued and gives them a sense of belonging. The positive relationships built between children and staff helps children feel nurtured and secure and they enjoy coming to this setting as a result.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are skilled at providing a fun and stimulating curriculum which helps children to make progress in all areas of their learning. The planning is carefully monitored to ensure that over the year the curriculum is balanced. Each key worker carries out their assessments using recording systems they have devised themselves. Not all of these include enough detail to be useful to others reading the information.

The children are developing a positive disposition to learning as a result of the self esteem built from being praised for their efforts by enthusiastic cheerful staff. They enjoy stories and use books carefully. Children are beginning to use labels around the room to identify items and some label their own art work without prompting.

Children excitedly call out and identify the number that corresponds to the date on the number line. They count each other at registration and compare the number of boys and girls using wooden number lines and say which number is bigger. They understand that a taller block represents a larger number and this corresponds to it,

meaning there are more girls than boys.

Children show care and concern when handling the worms from the wormery. They cradle them gently and walk slowly around the class room comparing how active their worm is with others and how big. They are respectful that they are living creatures and children repeatedly remind each other to be careful and not to hurt the worms. Children are beginning to explore cultures and beliefs different to their own in topic work and all children have opportunities to celebrate festivals and celebrations important to their own family customs.

Children move confidently and in a variety of ways. They are competent when using the ride on toys and large apparatus. They show good co-ordination when jumping, running and balancing. They respond and move enthusiastically during music and movement sessions.

Creativity is promoted positively within the setting and children develop creative skills through accessing a wide range of equipment and materials. Children enjoy dance, role play and music sessions. They enjoy accessing a wide and interesting range of art and craft materials and are encouraged by staff to explore these in freely as well as in focused activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are cared for on an individual basis. Their care needs are discussed in detail with their parents and are well met by key workers who get to know the children well. The daily routines include enough flexibility to enable children to have time to follow their own interests as well as work together in small groups. Children with special needs are catered for well. The environment is wheelchair friendly and staff have experience of adapting resources and activities to meet the needs of different children.

Children have good access to toys and play materials that promote positive images of a range of different cultures, religions and disabilities. This extends their knowledge of the wider community, offers good opportunities to discuss and answer children's questions and promote understanding and respect.

Children respond well to the well thought out, consistent, positive behaviour management strategies. Staff make expectations of behaviour clear and give reasons for requests to stop or modify behaviour. As a result children understand why certain behaviour is not acceptable and are provided with the tools to begin to work out for themselves what is right and wrong.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are given good quality information about the setting, its aims and details of the routines their children will follow. Parents views are canvassed and where possible requests are met. Staff value parents input and maintain friendly, open lines of communication. Children benefit from being cared for by adults who are kept well informed by their parents.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The staff group are appropriately qualified and staffing rotas ensure that overall the required ratios of adults to children are usually exceeded. Children gain security and confidence from the well organised routines and this helps them to relax and enjoy their time in the setting.

Leadership and management is good. Staff work well as a team and clear communication allows them to provide a well-balanced programme of activities. Individual staff training needs are identified and staff attend a range of courses, which demonstrates their commitment to improving practice.

All staff are invited to take part in the regular evaluation of the service provided in order to monitor and improve what is offered to the children. As a result the setting are skilled at identifying their strengths and taking action to address weaknesses. Staff have good knowledge of the Foundation Stage which enables them to plan a well-balanced range of activities in a rich learning environment.

The written policies help to guide the staff and inform the parents, but do require some amendment to ensure that they meet the requirements of Ofsted. One of these issues has been missed despite being highlighted at the last inspection.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Improvement in some areas have been very good. Children are now more independent at snack time, serving each other and are provided with the tools to safely cut fruit etc. The arrangements for ensuring that all checks are available at inspection is adequate. The recommendation to ensure procedures for allegations made against members of staff are in place had not been met and continues to be a recommendation of this report.

Complaints since the last inspection

One complaint was received by ofsted in June 2005. This related to concerns about the evacuation of the nursery during a lightening strike, children's access to drinks during the session and the settings behaviour management strategies. The setting responded to the complaint providing details of their procedures and polices and outlining the action that they took during the emergency evacuation. Ofsted were satisfied with the response and the provider remains suitable for registration.

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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 that the child protection policy includes the procedure to be followed in the event that an allegation is made against a staff member
- ensure that the procedure to be followed in the event that a child becomes lost is produced in writing to improve clarity

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):

- include more specific information in assessment to provide greater clarity in where children are in their learning

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