



La Maternelle Stapeley

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY264410
Inspection date	13 November 2006
Inspector	Rachel Ruth Britten
Setting Address	Broad Lane Primary School, Broad Lane, Stapeley, Nantwich, Cheshire, CW5 7QS
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Registered person	La Maternelle Ltd
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Out of School 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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

La Maternelle Stapeley Out of School Club is one of a number of provisions run by La Maternelle. It opened in September 2003 and operates from the main hall of Broad Lane primary school, situated in the Stapeley area of Nantwich. A maximum of 26 children may attend the club at any one time. It is open each week day during term time from 08.00 to 09.00 and from 15.00 to 18.00. In addition, children may access the La Maternelle holiday care provision, based at another venue.

There are currently 50 children aged from four to eight years on roll. All of these attend the school in which the club is situated. The club can support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or children who speak English as an additional language. However, there are no children presently attending for whom this is the case.

The club employs five regular staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. The club has access to relief staff and a number of students available to La Maternelle.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well protected because staff employ good health and hygiene policies and procedures. They check that toilet areas are clean and ensure that there are sufficient toilet paper, soap and paper towels to last for the whole session. Staff have allocated roles and responsibilities to ensure that the environment remains clean and safe, checking areas before and throughout sessions. They also help children to learn and practise simple good health and hygiene procedures for themselves by reminding them to wash their hands before all food and after use of the toilet. They also ensure that children learn about the importance of physical exercise. They set a good example by cleaning tables thoroughly, by talking about all these areas, and by involving children in some food preparation, table laying and menu planning.

Policies and procedures are robust and help to protect staff and children's health. Daily checks are completed on all areas for cleanliness and repair, including fridge temperatures. Particular health needs and any dietary requirements are obtained at enrolment and staff know these needs well and keep written reminders in the kitchen area. Fresh water is put in the main activity room with individual cups so that children have access to drinking water throughout the sessions, although few children seem to make use of this. There is also a clear sickness policy and medication is not administered unless a parent has given written consent and instructions. Accidents are professionally treated by staff qualified in first aid and are clearly recorded.

Children enjoy a great deal of outdoor physical activity and play outside in the playground for one long session on the day of inspection. The playground is large and all children are encouraged to come outside. Staff join in with this enthusiastically, playing tennis, football, swing ball and group games, such as 'chicken or hero' with everyone joining in. Indoors, there is sufficient space for a badminton court to be erected later in the evening and children are playing table snooker throughout the session. All this activity promotes children's physical well-being and coordination skills. Equally, children can rest in the 'chatterbox' area on cushions, either listening to music, reading, or chatting. Restful games, such as computer games, construction, craft, board games or jigsaws are all used when children want to be quieter and there is a designated quiet time before snack when children watch a video.

Children respond well to breaks for snacks and sit together in small groups in an orderly way. They help to lay the table and clear it afterwards, sitting together until everyone has finished. On the evening of the inspection, they have ham sandwiches, followed by Madeira cake or fruit. This is the menu chosen by the child whose 'week' it is. Children are not very involved with food preparation however and not many children are choosing to eat the fruit option either at snack time or upon arrival at club. Nevertheless, the provider has obtained nutritionist advice about the menus and is advised that they are balanced.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe environment with a lively out of school atmosphere. It is tidy, warm, clean and welcoming, with clean rugs and floor cushions to relax upon. There is limited display room, but children's work and posters are displayed and a box of sample crafts can be viewed too. Younger children are always collected from outside their classrooms after school and escorted to the club building. Staff are fully committed to ensuring that children move about the setting safely and with increasing responsibility for themselves. For example, they ask that children put chairs back under tables when they get up and that they walk around sensibly indoors. All children join in well with group activities, such as meals and outdoor play sessions and the purposeful and sensitive staff ensure that children are listened to and never left alone to sit or wander aimlessly.

Children use a very good range of games and equipment and are knowledgeable about what is available, thanks to a very well set out room, with accessible open trolleys for books and games and labelled clear plastic storage boxes for construction, small world, role play and craft materials. Role play, dolls, arts and crafts, construction, books and electronic resources are all in good supply and efforts are made to provide the games and resources which children most enjoy. For example, a 'chatterbox' corner provides a comfortable area to talk and listen to music and a number of headsets are available so that music can be played quite loudly without disturbing others. Likewise, children enjoy the badminton and table snooker when numbers are lower and when there is more space towards the end of sessions. The children's council have also been able to choose some new resources and say that they are hoping to get a potter's wheel.

The areas used by children are safe because rooms and outside areas are risk assessed on an annual, monthly and daily basis as appropriate. A daily visual check is done on windows, lighting, electrics, toilets, heating, equipment and outdoor areas. Spontaneous risk assessments are used to adapt the environment for safe use when the stage is erected for example. Good systems for liaison between staff and the provider ensure that maintenance issues are promptly dealt with through a diary communication book and working relationships with the school. The areas used outside are coned off so that children remain within open, designated parts of the playgrounds. However, access gates are not locked and there is no lock to the entrance door used for the club. This means that children are able to leave the building unsupervised and it is possible for unauthorised persons to enter the building unchallenged. Staff vigilance and agreed routines mean that children are rarely out of the hall, but they may be visiting the toilets in the corridor unsupervised. Staff will check for them if they do not return to the hall in the expected time, but the unlocked door does pose some risk for children.

Children's awareness of how to keep themselves safe in the setting is good because staff follow detailed policies and procedures for health and safety, fire safety, lost and uncollected children and site security. Fire drills are regularly practised. Staff talk to children appropriately about how to take care of their own safety both day to day and in the event of various emergencies. Simple rules, such as not to run indoors, only two children on the games console, do not kick the football too hard, do not go down the corridor unless you are going to the toilet and ask to go to the toilet, are all adhered to and help to ensure children take care of their own safety.

Children are well protected from abuse because staff have a thorough understanding of their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Staff are aware of what to do in the event of an allegation being made against them and know who to contact if they are concerned about a child. This is because they have direct support from the provider, receive training about child protection and follow a very detailed policy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children immediately settle enthusiastically into their club room and are extremely happy because there is such a friendly and caring atmosphere. Numbers are well established and some children also attend the holiday club at another setting run by the provider. Every child has a key worker and knows what the club offers from its detailed programme and from having their own activity choices for a whole week every so often. Every session includes 'chill out time', outside play, activity time, free play and a small meal.

Children are highly motivated, independent, interested and involved. They can use their own initiative and are creative and imaginative because the room is set out with inspiring activities from which they can freely choose. For example, some put on aprons and use paints, glitter and printing blocks to create colourful designs and many continue with their artistic efforts using jumbo chalk out in the playground to produce flowers or a picture of tonight's sunset. Staff are highly skilled at including and motivating individual children, for example, playing tennis, 'swing ball' or badminton with them, while other children group naturally to talk, listen to music or play football. Children are challenged with logic and word board games and enjoy both the construction and the dressing up options. Many are thoroughly enjoying the table snooker and the 'chatterbox corner' where they relax, unwind and talk about whatever they want to discuss. Children of all ages thoroughly enjoy playground games, such as 'chicken or hero' and tag as well as children's films.

Children's confidence and self-esteem is significantly enhanced because they are listened to and involved in all aspects of the club. Staff are interested in their day and how they are feeling about things and ask about these things as soon as children are collected or arrive. The head boy and girl roles and the club council are giving older children a sense of ownership and control over their club and they are actively contributing to this.

Children respond and interact exceedingly well together because staff are warm, patient and enthusiastic role models, moving between and helping children to make the most of their play. They teach children to be understanding and caring of one another and tactfully diffuse tensions. Rewards, such as tokens are given for particular kindness. Staff initiate conversations and show an interest in each child, creating opportunities for each one to take part and experience a varied evening. For example, some children present on the day of inspection help to prepare the snack tables and staff give help and praise to a child who is making a 'get well card' for someone who is ill.

Children acquire new skills and their enjoyment and achievements are good because they have time to spend on perfecting many of their interests. For example, children improve their racket skills and hand/eye coordination or develop their logic and vocabulary skills. Others have fun

seeing what words can be made using their calculator displays. Staff sit alongside children and are consistently supportive and interested in their efforts, but are skilled to ensure that children also have space to play and chat without adult intervention if they wish. As a result, children's social as well as physical and intellectual skills are developing very well.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children join in extremely well, take responsibility and play a productive part in the setting because staff are highly skilled at welcoming, enthusing and listening to children. For example, staff and children have fortnightly council meetings together to exchange thoughts and views. They have prepared a display advocating and illustrating to all club members how they need to take care of the equipment, use their manners, be quiet at quiet time, always be kind to others, always keep the outdoor trolley tidy and only have two children on the games consoles at any one time. Children happily observe these rules, but also have fun and mix well with friends of all ages. One child was presented with 'club member of the term' and a 10 pound voucher for kindness, sharing and thoughtfulness towards children and staff and her name was printed in the newsletter. Children's birthdays are also celebrated. Strategies like these help children to experience an outstanding sense of belonging to the club.

Children become aware of wider society and are helped to consider and value diversity because some of the games and craft activities have a multicultural emphasis. There are dolls, play figures, books, puzzles, dressing up, projects, food tasting and a world map. In addition, children are encouraged to undertake money raising ventures for others less fortunate than themselves, for example, through 'jeans for genes day'. Children's individual needs are met specifically through a weekly choices allocation. Each week one child is nominated to choose all the main activities and menus for the week from the choices sheets. This enables children's preferences to be catered for and helps them to feel really special and influential for that week.

Children with particular special needs are included fully in the life of the setting because adults are strongly committed to inclusion and are enthusiastic about creating an atmosphere of mutual help and understanding amongst the whole group. For example, a successful buddy system means that new and young children are carefully looked after by older ones. Children are observed demonstrating real tolerance and warmth towards all others, respecting that their play preferences may be quite different. For example, some children do not want to watch a film and prefer to listen to music, while others enjoy football and team games much more than others.

Children's behaviour is exemplary because staff are calm, interested role models, teaching children by example how to behave well and consider others. Children share, treat resources well and speak nicely to everyone, following the ground rules of the club which they have partly devised themselves. Staff always speak positively and politely to children and address them using their names. They also notice and thank children enthusiastically when they adopt good manners or help others.

Children receive consistency of care in the setting because staff place utmost priority on welcoming parents and providing a flexible, friendly service. Staff are very approachable and

interested and make time to speak to parents, particularly at home time. Parents express high levels of satisfaction with the confidence and social skills which their children are gaining through being with kind older children at the club. They are pleased with the approachability of staff, the amount of outside physical play, the chance to unwind, the variety of activities and the quality of the trips organised in school holidays at the holiday club venue. Annual questionnaires seek parents' views on matters, such as opening hours, menus, environment, activities, holiday arrangements, collection arrangements and communications. Parents may formalise their views, concerns or complaints and the Ofsted poster is displayed. Frequent newsletters ensure that parents receive necessary information about the club and any changes.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is first class because staff have suitable experience, knowledge and understanding of child development. Recruitment and vetting procedures are working well because there are suitably vetted and mostly qualified staff in post and all staff complete Criminal Records Bureau checks and other references. Staff development is always on the agenda so that staff meetings, supervision, appraisals and company training plans identify ongoing training which is relevant and pushes up staff expertise. A staff file is kept on the premises and includes all required details, including contact details, which are accessible in case of emergency.

Staff improve their knowledge by attending training courses and workshops. Many staff have undertaken first aid, food hygiene, child protection, behaviour management and health and safety training. Staff deployment in the setting contributes exceedingly well to children's enjoyment and achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting, leading to a rich and varied experience for children. Staff-to-child ratios are high and staff use their time very productively, getting involved and demonstrating an excellent sense of purpose. They rotate all daily tasks and duties between them for mutual responsibility and variety and ensure that they spend as much time as possible in direct contact with children, for example, by arriving early to set up activities and by completing cleaning and washing up kitchen tasks when most children have gone home.

Staff meet and plan together regularly, striving to improve the quality of the service. The provider attends regularly to evaluate the delivery of the care. She gives support, feedback and thanks to the staff, with challenges to continue to work well as a team and ask for any training or resources which they may need. This underpins staff support to children, so that they can provide children with all the information they need, for example, the timetable of the day, where activity choices can be found in the room and what special activities are being provided.

Procedures work exceptionally well in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. For example, risk assessments, child details and consent forms provide sufficient information to enable very good care to be given and records of accidents, incidents and medication administration are available and properly kept. In addition, the daily attendance register is always accurate and up to date because staff are meticulous about checking in late arrivals and reminding parents to always sign out their child. Policies and procedures are all in one document, are available for parents to view and

are regularly reviewed and amended, so that they continue to serve their purpose well. The provider takes care to elicit frequent feedback from children and parents and keeps the parent brochure pack and newsletters informative and up to date. Staff utilise the 'outcomes for children' format to evaluate the setting's strengths and weaknesses in the five areas.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were two recommendations made at the inspection of care in April 2004. These are being satisfactorily met and support the organisation of the club for the benefit of children and partnership with parents. There is a system in place for the recording of comments, complaints and suggestions, although this has not yet been put into a format for regular use and availability to parents. Parents are reminded in newsletters from the club that they can complain direct to Ofsted or raise matters through the La Maternelle office.

Likewise, Ofsted is being informed of significant events, but a list of example occasions when this should be done has not been devised to assist staff in knowing when they should be contacting Ofsted.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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.

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 premises are secure and children are not able to leave the premises unsupervised.

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