



The Nursery, St Peter's Church

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY242745
Inspection date	02 November 2006
Inspector	Mary Van De Peer
Setting Address	St Peter's Church, Buckland Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 0SL
Telephone number	01622 687878
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Registered person	Asset Networks Limited (Selective Learning)
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?

St Peter's Church Day Nursery is one of two nurseries run by Select Learning (Maidstone) Ltd. It opened in 2002 and operates from four main child care rooms in a converted church, in Maidstone, Kent. A maximum of 120 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:00 to 19:00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 68 children aged from three months to under five years on roll. Of these, 22 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs and can also support children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 27 staff. There are 23 staff, including the managers, who hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are three staff who are working towards a recognised qualification. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff have developed and maintain good hygiene practices. Children wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Adults use disposable gloves when handling food and when changing babies nappies. The setting also employ a housekeeper and a cleaner. This means children are at less risk from cross contamination. The majority of staff have attended a recognised first aid course. There is a first aid kit available for use in every child care area. If children have a minor accident, they are treated effectively and professionally. There is an accident record system in place, although it is complicated to use. The nursery has a strict policy on medication administration. Parents are usually requested to come in to the nursery to give it to their children. This means there is a reduced risk of children receiving medication they do not need. A clear sick policy means children have increased protection from cross infection. The nursery has a large outdoor play space. Children are able to have fresh air and exercise on a daily basis. Babies receive good attention from staff. They ensure they have lots of cuddles and play with them on the floor at their level. Physical development is good. A wide range of indoor and outdoor equipment provides children with good opportunities to improve both their gross and fine motor skills. For example there are wheeled toys, balancing, climbing and tunnelling activities. Children are also able to enjoy planting seeds and watch them grow. The availability of balls of different sizes and colours encourage children to negotiate team games. Dressing up and role play resources provide children with plenty of opportunities to use their imagination in their play.

All the children eat the food prepared and cooked on the nursery premises. Meals and snacks are healthy and varied. For example pasta, chicken, vegetables and fruit. Menus for three weeks in advance are on display for parents. Water is always available for children to drink. There is a milk kitchen located near the baby care area, especially for the preparation of babies feeds. The nursery give high priority towards meeting children nutritional needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery premises is a converted parish church and is a listed building. Therefore, there are some restrictions on what can be done within the structure. However, children's safety has not been compromised at all. Security cameras and keypads help ensure the nursery cannot be accessed by anyone not approved by staff. Safety gates mean children cannot go where they aren't properly supervised. External gates are bolted. Children benefit from child size toilets and washbasins at their height. Toys and resources are stored in low level units which children can reach easily. Nappy changing areas are kept clean and are suitable for their purpose. Each child has a placemat for mealtimes, with their photograph on it. Green ones indicate the child

has no food allergies or intolerances, red ones mean they do. This means all staff are always aware of what children must not eat. The garden area is on one level and is fully secluded. There are plans for further developments in the outdoor play facility. The adult to child ratio on outings is good. Each morning the whole nursery is risk assessed, this is recorded. If any hazards are found they are dealt with efficiently and appropriately. All medications are stored in locked cabinets. High regard is given to making sure the environment is very safe and secure for children to be cared for and play in. There is an emergency evacuation procedure in place. Staff ensure it is practised on a regular basis. They are all clear of their role if there is an emergency. The children's register records their arrival and departure times, as does the staff register. A record of any visitors to the nursery is also kept. The nursery has a child protection policy and nominated person. Some of the staff have recently attended child protection training. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the procedures which are in place. The welfare of children is being protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive at the nursery, happy and eager to join in the activities available. Babies and younger children receive special attention from staff to settle them in for the day. Parents are able to stay for as long as they wish to. This helps children feel secure. The nursery has free flow play routines. Children are able to use all the areas for their age range. For example they can choose table-top toys, like puzzles, there are different types of construction activities on the floor and the creative area is always popular. Children have made collages with autumn leaves, even babies have made hand and feet prints. Soft music is often playing in the background, this seems to have a calming effect on the atmosphere in the nursery. The walls show different displays children have completed with staff. There are also paintings and pictures children have done, using different materials, for example sponge painting, glitter and leaves. Photographs of children participating in various activities are also on show. A toy bear travels around with children and their families when they go on holiday, photographs of where he has been are also on display. These practises help increase children's self esteem and confidence. Outdoor play is an important part of the children's day. They all go out into the garden where they can run around, play together and let off steam. Some children are enjoying re-enacting the story about a Bear Hunt by looking for bears in the garden's bushes. Local trips also feature regularly, such as feeding the ducks. The babies are taken out in double buggies and join in with the fun outdoors and on visits. Good staff awareness and close, caring relationships, increase children's trust, helping them develop a strong sense of self. Good quality adult-child interactions are very supportive of early communication skills. Children are beginning to make sense of the world and express their ideas as they take part in different play experiences.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children enjoy being able to play with a range of stimulating activities related to their needs. They have access to appropriate resources, which support them in all areas of learning. The children are keen to learn, they are self-assured in their play. They listen intently to stories and can recall what was read to them. Children are able to mark-make to represent their ideas, for example in paintings and on chalkboards. Older

children are becoming competent at writing letters of their own names. Children are learning to use their imagination. They make sense of the world around them in role play, the outdoor area and local community. Children make connections in their learning as they freely explore sand and other textures. They are able to observe the changes in nature with the different seasons. Children work well together, for example, using the computer and taking turns and negotiating what to click on with the mouse to move the game on. They are also gaining confidence in using numbers in their play. They respond to challenges and are extending their knowledge and understanding of different instructions in activities and daily routines. There are a few occasions when staff are not appropriately promoting independence, for example toilet times and snack times. Their physical skills are developing and improving through a wide variety of experiences. When children join the pre-school, staff find out about children's skills and interests. They build on this information effectively to help children achieve as much as they can. However, a flexible approach to planning means children are able to learn at their own pace. They use effective systems to observe, monitor and record children's achievements and to plan experiences that help children take the next step in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed at the nursery. Staff ensure they have useful information and relevant knowledge of each child's capabilities and needs. Children's behaviour is good. Staff give good support to younger children. They have appropriate expectations and set consistent boundaries for all the children. This helps them learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Children are learning to understand right and wrong. They respond to guidance and show a caring attitude towards each other. Children are developing a positive attitude to others and gain a good understanding about the wider world and community through looking at festivals, such as wedding ceremonies in other cultures. They have access to a good range of play resources which reflect appropriate images of culture, gender and disability. The setting has effective arrangements to care for children with special educational needs. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff have built up very good relationships with parents. This contributes significantly to children's well-being in the nursery. Staff actively seek parents' views about their children's needs and interests. Staff ensure that all parents know how their children are progressing. Daily written information on children's development in each of the early learning goals is given to parents. Children benefit from parents' involvement in their learning. Information on the Foundation Stage and Birth to three matters framework is available through communications, such as newsletters, daily chats and detailed notice boards. This helps staff and parents work together to help children make progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The nursery has their Ofsted Registration Certificate clearly displayed. The provider ensures that the staff are suitable to work with the children through an effective and robust recruitment, vetting and probation procedure. Staff are regularly supervised. Annual appraisals help ensure

their professional and personal development needs are met. Child care training is regularly undertaken by staff, for example Birth to three matters. The nursery's operational plan is constantly reviewed and adjusted to meet the changing needs of the children, their parents and staff. All senior staff managers are qualified to NVQ Level three. Almost all other staff have relevant childcare qualifications to Level two or three and a current paediatric first aid course certificate. Photographs of staff with the qualifications they have attained are displayed. Children's and staff's individual records are stored confidentially in a secure filing cabinet. All Children Act Regulations are met. The required paperwork and documentation is in place. Management and nursery staff work well together and are committed to making sure the welfare needs and well-being of children are met.

The leadership and management is good. The aims and objectives of the nursery are very clearly stated in the operational plan. The owner has experience, enthusiasm and commitment. This helps to motivate staff. She is always looking for effective ways to develop and improve the nursery in all areas. This subsequently improves the care and learning experiences for children. The staff are also committed to continuous improvement and development of the nursery. They regularly reflect, monitor and improve the quality of their care and education as they have recently participated in a quality assurance scheme. Effective planning systems mean that all the children have consistent daily routines and challenges in their play. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The provider has followed the previous recommendations to improve the provision.

The first recommendation was for the nursery to consider producing a student pack, particularly with regard to the care of babies. The owner and nursery manager have now produced a pack for students. Every student receives a copy. Particular regard is given to their role when working with babies. This system helps to ensure the care provided to babies and older children remains consistent.

The second recommendation was for the setting to ensure all accidents are recorded appropriately. All the required details of any accidents are recorded. Parents sign entries and information is kept in children's folders. The system used is quite detailed and another review for an easier method is being considered. Any accidents children have are appropriately recorded and shared with parents.

A third recommendation was for the nursery to ensure behaviour management procedures are implemented by all staff. A member of staff responsible for co-ordinating Behaviour Management within the nursery has now been appointed. She attends any relevant training and feeds back to other staff. The Managing Behaviour policy has been recently reviewed and updated. All children are treated equally and their individual needs are being met.

The fourth recommendation stated that potential hazards in the garden were made safe. The areas of the outdoor play space used by the children have been made safe and any equipment not able to be used safely is stored in an area isolated from the children. Plans are at the

development stage, which will provide a safer and more appropriate play area, suitable for babies and toddlers.

Another recommendation was to ensure procedures for a named deputy are in place for emergency situations. The nursery has appointed a qualified and experienced deputy manager. Additional qualified staff are also currently being recruited. This means that children are cared for by qualified and experienced adults.

The last recommendation was for staff's file to include local child protection details and contacts. The nursery has provided safeguarding children flowcharts for staff to read and refer to. The nursery manager is the point of contact for all staff and she has attended recent local training on child protection procedures. Children's well-being and safety is given high priority by all staff.

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 complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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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):

- review accident recording system

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):

- ensure children's independence is consistently promoted.

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