



St Michael's Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY336687
Inspection date	31 October 2006
Inspector	Jackie Nation
Setting Address	Rear of St Michael's Court, off Crocketts Lane, nr Chamberlain Walk, Smethwick, West Midlands, B66 3BX
Telephone number	01215583446
E-mail	albert.watson@cafcass.gov.uk
Registered person	Albert Nathaniel Watson
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Michael's Nursery School opened in 1993 and re-registered with a new owner in 2006. The setting operates from four rooms in a single-storey building, in Smethwick, West Midlands. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The group serves children in the local community and surrounding areas.

A maximum of 42 children aged from birth to eight years may attend the nursery at any one time. This includes a maximum of 13 children under two years. Children aged five to eight years attend before and after school during school term times. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 all year round.

There are currently 45 children on roll. Of these six receive funding for nursery education. The group supports children with disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

There are currently 13 members of staff employed at the setting, ten of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The setting receives support from the Early Years Advisor and the Sandwell local authority early years service.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Older children are able to develop independent self-care skills and an understanding of simple good health and hygiene practices. There are well-established routines in place and children know why they wash their hands and talk about removing 'germs' while using the bathroom. The nursery have joined the 'Stop the rot' campaign which is a nationwide initiative regarding the care of children's teeth. Older children are able to brush their teeth after meals and the nursery aim to reduce the sugar content in the children's daily diet. This has a positive impact on children's health and well-being. Good arrangements are in place for the safe and hygienic preparation of milk feeds for babies, with a dedicated area in the kitchen for this purpose. However, some aspects of hygiene do not effectively minimise the risk of cross infection, this is particularly in relation to sterilising dummies, nappy changing procedures and serving food at tea-time.

Children's health care needs are supported appropriately with detailed policies and procedures which work in practice, for example, if they require medication, have an accident or become unwell. The nursery obtain written consent from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment at the admission stage. A member of staff is on duty who is qualified to administer first aid and therefore respond appropriately to accidents should they occur.

Children are well nourished and their individual dietary needs are discussed with parents and information about any specific needs are recorded. Children's dietary requirements are also shared with the cook, who ensures their individual needs are met. Good arrangements are in place for the provision of nutritious and appetising food for children and they enjoy a range of fresh fruit and vegetables. Although drinks are provided at meal and snack times, drinking water however, is not accessible throughout the day to ensure children are sufficiently hydrated. Menu plans are displayed and reviewed to incorporate healthy eating. Parents are involved in this initiative and the nursery take into account their views and ideas.

Babies and young children rest and sleep according to their individual needs and routines. Daily routines and activities for older children ensures a balance of energetic play and opportunities to enjoy quiet activities such as listening to stories or drawing. Children enjoy physical exercise and develop a positive approach to this through regular opportunities to be active.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and friendly environment. Resources are accessible and mostly placed at child height to ensure children can access them safely and independently. All resources are checked on a regular basis to ensure they are safe, in good condition and clean. Good attention is given to cleaning toys used in the baby room to make them hygienic for children to use.

Children learn to keep themselves safe as staff raise their awareness of safety through discussions. For example, about being careful when using and playing with toys and how they move around the nursery to make sure children do not harm themselves or others. Children benefit from a good range of safety measures, staff are vigilant and supervise the children well. Access to the premises is monitored by staff who check identification and record details of visitors to the setting. Effective procedures are in place for the safe collection of children from the nursery, parents are asked to keep the nursery informed of any alternative arrangements. Risk assessments are in place and are regularly reviewed to ensure a safe environment is provided for children. However, the outdoor area requires some attention to ensure that potential hazards to children are minimised and the outdoor play area is safe.

Children's welfare is safeguarded. This is because staff have a good understanding of child protection and they have attended training. They understand the procedures to follow with any concerns. The child protection policy is shared with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time in nursery. They arrive happy and eager to participate in activities and play with their friends. Those who are new to the setting are helped to settle by staff who are sensitive towards their individual needs. Babies respond well to the staff's gentle responses, smiles and praise during play, routines and meal times. They benefit from routines which are consistent with their home experiences. Staff plan a range of activities for children under three years which are appropriate to their stage of development and linked to the 'Birth to three matters' framework. For example, babies have the opportunity to explore a variety of natural and man made objects as staff develop the 'treasure baskets'. Babies early development is supported as they begin to roll, crawl and attempt to stand up and take their first steps. Younger children are able to explore their senses as they play with jelly, rice, pasta and shaving foam.

Most children are self-assured in their play and confident enough to try new experiences. The setting has a key worker system in place, this ensures children's individual needs are met. Children's independence is promoted through a variety of opportunities and they move around freely accessing toys and play equipment. Staff have an understanding of the range of experiences which enable children to make progress in all areas of learning and play. Children are involved in a range of enjoyable activities, which develop their mathematical thinking, imagination, language and creative development, for example, sand and water play, role play, construction, singing, arts and crafts. Children explore the local environment, they visit local

parks, feed the ducks and older children are able to play on static equipment in a purpose-built children's playground.

All children benefit from warm relationships with staff who are interested in what they say and give them praise and encouragement. This enhances children's confidence and self-esteem. Staff respond promptly and with genuine interest to children's questions and conversations about their homes and families. This helps children feel valued and appreciated.

Staff manage children's behaviour well by creating an environment that sets, explains and maintains clear and consistent limits. Children play well together, they are learning to share and have respect for each others feelings. Staff intervene appropriately with positive strategies when behaviour issues arise, these are usually related to sharing or taking turns. Children are well behaved and willingly help tidy away toys when requested.

Nursery Education:

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff are developing their knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and training is being arranged to develop this further. The systems in place for planning, evaluation and assessment has only recently been implemented and has therefore not been in place long enough to have had a full impact. The setting is aware of the areas for further development in their delivery of the educational programme. For example, to develop plans to ensure all areas of learning are explored, learning intentions are identified and there are clear links to the stepping stones and to develop effective assessment procedures to demonstrate progress for individual children ensuring that they clearly reflect children's differing abilities and inform the next steps in planning. The setting work with the early years advisors to address these areas for improvement.

Staff with responsibility for special needs have a sound knowledge of the procedures and recognise the importance of establishing good relationships with parents and other professionals. This ensures children with special needs are included in all aspects of play and make good progress. Good consideration has been given to sources of support for children with English as an additional language.

The early years room is organised effectively to create specific play areas, this includes an area where children enjoy looking at books, they practise their 'mark making skills' in the writing area and play imaginatively in the role play area. Good emphasis is placed on children's personal, social and emotional development for example, with activities such as 'All about me' and by being able to make choices about activities.

Children's communication skills are developing well. Staff encourage children to express themselves, join in discussions and listen to each other. They sing confidently, listen attentively to their favourite stories and visit the local library on a regular basis. Children are sociable and readily engage their peers, staff and visitors in conversation.

Children are encouraged to show an interest in numbers and are supported in developing the skills needed for counting. Staff use a varied range of resources, games and everyday activities

to develop children's mathematical skills. For example, recognising shapes and patterns, puzzles, matching games, action rhymes, card games and a range of suitable computer programmes.

Children have opportunities to be creative and express themselves; they enjoy painting, mixing colours and playing in the sand and water. They use a suitable range of tools and varied media for art and craft work, for example when they make masks or make collages. Children have good opportunities to develop their understanding of their own culture and the wider world through planned activities and first-hand experiences such as the Caribbean culture day. Children become aware of various festivals and celebrations; they make Diva lamps, Eid cards, visit a local temple and explore local shops. This helps to contribute to children's social and cultural awareness and helps them to make sense of the world around them.

Children show an awareness of the technology around them and use the computer with increasing skill and confidence. Children use their imagination as they take part in role play and music and movement sessions. They develop their awareness of space and others around them as they play outside, peddle bikes, balance and throw and catch balls. Children learn about their natural environment as they talk about the changes in the weather and plant seeds and watch them grow.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals and this helps them develop a positive sense of self. All children are welcomed into the setting and staff know the children well. They are aware of their individual needs and preferences and this helps children feel secure and settled.

Children's behaviour is good and staff aim to help children understand and differentiate between what is right and wrong. Staff talk calmly to children, give gentle reminders and suitable explanations. All staff have recently completed training for 'positive behaviour management' and this helps staff to use appropriate strategies and reward good behaviour in a positive and consistent manner. These strategies promote children's self-esteem and confidence. Staff encourage children to play alongside each other, be caring, be happy and consider their actions. A written statement on behaviour management, which includes a reference to bullying is shared with parents and significant incidents are recorded. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Comprehensive information is gathered at the admission stage, this includes details of children's specific needs, care needs and parents preferences. The setting operate an 'open door' policy and parents are encouraged to join in nursery trips and events which take place in the nursery, such as parties and culture days. The 'parents forum' gives parents the opportunity to work alongside the management team with regard to future developments, revising policies and be involved in day to day events at the nursery. Parents of younger children are provided with written daily feedback on their child's care and routine. Parents evenings are arranged for discussing children progress and attainment. Parents are aware of the current topic. Planning information is displayed in each room. Parents have access to good quality information about the provision. This includes a parents handbook, the aims of the setting, information about the policies and procedures, the Foundation Stage

and birth to three matters guidance. This effective partnership contributes to the children's well-being within the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled and benefit from being cared for in their individual base rooms with their peer group. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities, effective induction procedures ensure new staff are clear about the aims of the setting and the policies and procedures. Good recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are cared for by suitable staff. Staff work well as a team, they are deployed appropriately and qualification levels are fully met.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. This contributes to children making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. The management team regularly evaluate practice issues and they actively support on-going professional development. They are clear about their aims and objectives and are fully committed to improve the quality of care and education for all children and improve the outcomes for children. The Manager and Operations Manager have day-to-day responsibility for the nursery. Frequent discussions with staff, regular supervision and staff meetings assist with monitoring and evaluating the quality of care and education and outcomes for children. Policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and information is shared with staff and parents. This assists in the efficient management of the provision. The manager and staff have worked effectively with the local authority early years team who continue to provide support and guidance. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

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

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- improve hygiene arrangements in the setting, with particular reference to nappy changing, sterilising dummies and serving food at tea-time
- ensure that hazards to children are minimised, this is with particular reference to the outside play area
- ensure drinking water is available to children at all times.

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):

- develop the use of effective assessments to demonstrate progress for individual children ensuring that they clearly reflect children's differing abilities and inform the next steps in planning
- develop and extend staff knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage
- develop planning to ensure all areas of learning are explored, learning intentions are identified and there are clear links to the stepping stones.

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