



Nightingales Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 123175 |
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| Inspector | Catherine Greenwood |
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| Registered person | St. Francis Xavier Sixth Form College |
| 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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?

Nightingales Day Nursery is a private day nursery, which opened in 1994 to provide care for the children of the staff of St Francis Xavier College and the local community. The nursery is located in a residential area of South London and has easy access to buses and underground stations. The children attending the nursery come from different social backgrounds with some cultural diversity.

The premises consists of three classrooms, office, staff kitchen and toilets in a converted house in the grounds of St Francis Xavier College. There is easy access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery is open from 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday for 51 weeks a year. A maximum of 20 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 32 children aged 10

months to under five years on roll. Of these, five receive funding for early education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disability and also supports children who speak

English as an additional language.

The nursery employs six full time members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. In addition there is a part time cook. The nursery also offers work placements for students undertaking training in childcare.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from having healthy meals which the cook prepares within the college and transports to the nursery. Children say they like the food and that the vegetables make them big and strong. Details of children's individual dietary needs are clearly displayed in the rooms, for example, in relation likes and dislikes and those who are only allowed organic meat. These children are provided with alternative meals. Babies under one year are protected from the risk of allergic reaction, because the nursery provides a separate menu which includes food that parents identify their children have already tried. Children are provided with healthy snacks, which mainly include fresh fruit and toast. They are given milk to drink twice a day and have water with their lunch. There are jugs of water and named cups in the rooms if children want a drink at other times. Staff hold young babies on their laps to feed them at snack time and older babies are encouraged to feed themselves. Older children wash and dry their own hands. This means they develop good personal independence.

Children are protected from the risk of cross infection because there are illness and hygiene policies in place. Staff follow good hygiene practice, for example when changing nappies, and ensure that babies have their own flannels each day which are clearly labelled. All children, including young babies, learn about oral hygiene as they brush their teeth after lunch. Staff sterilise the toothbrushes daily. Four of the staff hold first qualifications, although only two of the certificates are available on the premises for inspection. Staff work three different shifts and there are no systems in place to ensure that there is a member of staff on the premises and on outings at all times who hold a current first aid certificate. This means that children are at risk in the event of an accident.

Children have access to a small enclosed outdoor play area. They say they like playing football and mummies and daddies when playing outside. Toddlers and older children enjoy using the outside play space, for example to roll and jump between hoops, play cricket and use the bikes and climbing equipment. In addition children show great enthusiasm as they take part in weekly 'Fit and Fun' sessions, with an external member of staff, where they learn a variety of physical skills. Consequently, children show good control of their own movements and an awareness of space.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children's safety is at risk because most of the staff do not have a secure knowledge and understanding of the child protection procedures. The premises is located within a house in the grounds of a college. There are good security systems in place to ensure that children cannot leave the premises unsupervised, for example, parents and visitors have to use an intercom system at the entrance gate. Children benefit from moving around the small premises and regularly join up together for mealtimes and some other activities. Children are kept safe in the event of a fire, because they take part in regular fire drills, and the manager has attended additional training to update her knowledge of fire safety. As a result, each room has a whistle available to alert children when there is a fire or a drill being carried out. Staff ensure children are kept safe when they are using the stairs. They supervise them at all times and help very young children to learn to come down the stairs backwards. However, the setting has not completed a full risk assessment of the premises and there are dangerous plants and containers of water in the garden which are accessible to children. This puts children's safety at risk.

There are two cots available in the baby room as well as floor mats for children over the age of one year. Children have to sleep in the same room in which they play and there are no screens to enable them to sleep quietly without disturbance. There is a very limited amount of play equipment which is accessible to babies and toddlers, and most of it is currently stored in cupboards. This means that younger children do not have sufficient opportunities to choose their own resources and are not provided with an accessible and stimulating environment. Some play equipment which is made available to babies on the floor is not developmentally appropriate and therefore does not meet their individual needs.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

Overall, children are happy and settled. They benefit from the calm atmosphere and small size of the nursery, enjoy playing together and form good friendships with each other. Children concentrate well and enjoy large group story times. They also show great interest in looking at books independently and handle them carefully. Staff have a caring approach, interact well with the children and join in their play. However, not all staff are observant of how to adapt the daily routine and use spontaneous opportunities to extend activities, according to the interest that children show. Although babies do not have a wide range of accessible play equipment, they have planned sensory experiences, such as handling cooked jelly and playing with shredded paper.

Children in the toddler room take part in some planned activities such as washing dolls, shape painting with sponges, string painting and water play. However, none of the staff have had an opportunity to develop a knowledge and understanding of the Birth to three matters guidance and this is reflected in the planning and assessment records for the toddler room, where the staff are inappropriately using the guidance for the Foundation Stage Curriculum for planning activities and children's learning. This means that younger children are being given unrealistic targets for their personal development and are therefore unable to make progress at their own pace. Activities and equipment are not presented to the children in an attractive and thoughtful

way, and there is very little accessible play equipment in the younger children's rooms. Most of the play equipment in the toddler room is currently stored in cupboards. This means that younger children do not have sufficient opportunities to choose their own resources and are not provided with an accessible and stimulating environment. Staff working with children aged two to three years do not have a secure knowledge of child development and their expectations of young children's learning are unrealistic and inappropriate.

Assessment reports for babies are very comprehensive and clearly show how each child is making developmental progress. However, some play equipment which is made available to babies on the floor is not age appropriate and therefore does not meet their individual needs. In addition, some creative activities in the baby room are very adult directed and do not enable children to get the most from the experience, for example, when sticking collage on pre-cut Christmas trees. Children are taken on annual outings to places such as farms. Staff take babies into the outside play area most days in good weather. They also take them on local outings to the nearby common. However, these trips are not on a regular basis, which means that babies do not have sufficient opportunities to experience their local environment.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children enjoy learning and are supported by staff who know them well and are interested in their development. They make generally sound progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Long, medium and short term planning is displayed and clearly identifies objectives for each area of learning. Practitioners have an adequate understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum; however, written observations of children's learning are infrequent and are not used to link the next steps in children's learning to future planning. This means that they do not reach their full potential or have sufficient challenge in all areas of learning. Children participate with enthusiasm in a range of activities planned to address a wide curriculum; however, staff do not always use opportunities to extend learning for older or more able children. For example, children are given pre-cut Christmas tree shapes to paint and decorate. Differently coloured glitter is available, but this is insufficient to enable children to make independent choices about their learning.

Children are confident to talk during circle time and able to recall recent events. Sound questioning by interested practitioners encourages participation by all group members and new vocabulary is effectively introduced. Although children know a number of rhymes and songs and eagerly choose their favourites they become restless when the session is overly long. Children usually listen attentively to stories and are keen to chant familiar refrains. Those who find concentration more difficult are seated close to the member of staff. This ensures their inclusion in the session. Early reading skills are fostered through an awareness

of print in the environment, alphabet charts and a range of story books which children handle with care. Practitioners do not always differentiate learning objectives, however, for younger and older children within the pre-school group and as a consequence, some activities are mismatched to children's stages of development. Children demonstrate an understanding of mathematical concepts. They confidently use mathematical vocabulary in their play and talk about the size and shape of objects they see around them or in picture books. They are encouraged to count up to ten items, although some can operate within twenty. Practitioners

rely on structured mathematical tasks which focus on the recognition and formation of numbers and do not provide sufficient challenge to develop children's skill in calculation and problem solving.

Children demonstrate skill in controlling a mouse and enjoy learning positional language, when engaged in computer games. They enjoy working individually with a member of staff, who responds to their particular needs. Children benefit from the French lesson they receive each Tuesday and the twice weekly sport session taught by a 'Fit and Fun' tutor, paid for by parents. They happily sing action rhymes and greet one another in French; maintaining excellent concentration throughout. The sports coaching enables children to learn the basic skills of cricket, tennis and rounder's, which they confidently practise during free play in the outdoor area. Skilled practitioners respond to children's requests to join their games. Some children display considerable co-ordination and gross motor development which exceeds their chronological age. Success in physical development further impacts on children's confidence and self-esteem. Good teaching is not consistent across all areas of learning, however, as children lack opportunities for investigation and exploration and to express themselves through drama and dance. For instance, the small sand tray containing unimaginative equipment does not fully foster a child's natural curiosity and children soon lose interest during independent time. Limited resources for model making hinder imaginative and co-operative play; however children demonstrate excellent levels of perseverance and concentration when engaged individually with construction and small world toys. Although staff do their best to provide children with adequate space to move around, the current arrangement of furniture and resources in the pre-school group does not enable staff to see what children are doing at all times and offer support when needed. In addition, creative activities are often organised so that all the children take part at the same time and are set up on the floor. This means that children cannot independently choose when to do a creative activity, or sit comfortably.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled within the nursery and separate easily from parents each morning. The relaxed relationships between parents and staff positively impacts on children's well-being. Parents are confident that staff value their children and meet their needs. Children learn to value the needs and opinions of others from practitioners who demonstrate sound strategies for managing behaviour, for example, they are asked to demonstrate how well they can stand and to remain seated whilst eating. Children speak respectfully to staff and one another, because they in turn are afforded respect. A quiet atmosphere pervades the nursery, enabling younger or more sensitive children to develop confidence and self-esteem. Practitioners do not always, however, fully understand how to adapt activities, such as large group story times, to meet the needs of all children which, at times, has a negative impact on areas of their learning and prevents some members from making a positive contribution to their group. Older children's knowledge and understanding of their environment is fostered through regular group visits within the local area. They discuss their journey to nursery, travel on public transport to the market and walk to the park. Once a year, the whole nursery makes a joint visit to a farm. This helps children confirm their identity as part of the larger group.

Children make excellent relationships with staff and their peers. They demonstrate care and concern for one another and for living things. A worm found in the playground was carefully returned to a plant pot where it would be happier. Good organisation of resources enables children to tidy up at the end of a session. They know where resources belong and can independently return equipment to named boxes and drawers. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children learn about other cultures and enjoy celebrating festivals through creative projects, cookery and events. Scrapbooks of photographs enable parents and visitors to share in the cultural life of the nursery. Menus reflect a multi-cultural world, and so children are able to develop a positive attitude to regional foods as they share familiar and new dishes. Children enjoy learning about the Christmas story by practising a Nativity performance for parents. They choose from a range of Christmas story books, attractively displayed at an appropriate height. Children do not, however, have sufficient access to resources that reflect non-stereotypical images of gender, disability and ethnicity.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. A comprehensive and attractive induction pack is given to all new children and their parents. Parents are invited to discuss and contribute to planning menus for children. A wide range of information concerning health, family learning and local events is available to them in the entrance porch; this promotes a sense of belonging for parents and children. Regular newsletters give parents the information they need concerning nursery events and topic planning. Parents know what their children have achieved during the session as practitioners give daily feedback on collection. Quarterly written reports, which detail children's progress across the six areas of learning, are sent to parents. They attend a parents' evening to discuss the report and are generally satisfied with the quality of education their children receive. Children benefit from positive partnerships between home and nursery; for example, the parent of a child celebrating a birthday sends cake for the nursery to share.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

There is limited space available for children's play. Younger children who are located on the ground floor do not benefit from being able to use the garden throughout the day for additional activities, and move freely between both areas. Staff in the toddler room have received insufficient training to ensure they have adequate knowledge and understanding of how children learn and develop. As a result, provision for this age range of children is inadequate. In addition, overall staff have insufficient knowledge and understanding of procedures for referring child protection concerns. This means children are at risk. Staff records are kept within the college and are not available for inspection at all times. This means that there is no system in place on the premises to show that staff are suitable to work with children. Lunch is served very early, which impacts on time available to children to extend their learning and derive satisfaction from all the activities on offer.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Children's personal and learning needs are generally met, although the manager's insecure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum has a negative impact on assessment and planning for next steps in children's learning. Daily planning sheets provide for evaluation of adult-led activities; however, such assessments do not necessarily promote adaptation and extension to meet specific needs. The manager delegates

daily planning of activities and experiences, to promote learning for children across the curriculum, to a practitioner who has received appropriate training. The manager is therefore unable to adequately monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment for funded children. Older and more able children are not always provided with activities that offer sufficient pace and challenge. They enjoy responsibility; however, opportunities for them to develop independence and make choices in their learning are not fully maximised. Although mark-making tools and notebooks are available in the office role play area, for instance, routine tasks in writing and mathematics hinder children's development.

The manager understands her role in providing an appropriate environment that fosters children's learning. Regular staff appraisal assists staff to identify their training needs. The manager is proactive in seeking to improve staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage through in house and external training. She has been less successful with other areas of staff development. She is supported by the management of the college. All necessary documentation is in place, although the complaints procedure does not include current address and telephone number for Ofsted. In addition there are no systems in place to ensure that there is a member of staff with a first aid qualification on the premises and on outings at all times. The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider agreed to ensure children's food is served at a safe temperature, toys and equipment are easily accessible to the younger children, and obtain written permission from parents before administering medication to children and keep a written record, signed by parents, of medicines given to children. The cook now uses a temperature probe for all food and records the details before serving to the children, and staff now keep appropriate records for medicine administration. This means that children's health and safety has been improved. However, there is a very limited amount of play equipment which is accessible to babies and toddlers, as most of it is currently stored in cupboards. This means that younger children do not have sufficient opportunities to choose their own resources and are not provided with an accessible and stimulating environment.

At the last education inspection the provider agreed to ensure the environment is organised to enable children to explore creative activities including spontaneous painting and role play freely, provide parents with up to date information of the Early Learning Goals and the impact it has on their children's education in the nursery and develop the current system for recording children's progress by ensuring it is evaluative and has examples of the children's achievements. The carpet has been removed from the pre-school group and lino fitted which means children that although the main play area is small, they have increased space for creative activities. However, there are insufficient creative resources for the number of children present, and activities are often carried out on the floor as a large group instead of on small tables. This means that children have to take turns to use the glue and paint, and therefore their creativity is restricted through having to wait. The nursery holds an annual parents evening, to help them understand the Early learning Goals. Parents have access to displayed information about the Foundation Stage Curriculum, for example in relation to planned activities and the objectives for children's learning. Staff keep a few examples of children's work. However, written observations of children's progress do not include the next step for their individual learning or

link to planning. There is some photographic evidence although this is not currently well organised.

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. Since the last inspection 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 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure staff working with children aged two to three years improve their knowledge of child development
- improve outcomes for children under three years by implementing a suitable approach to planning and assessment, such as, the Birth to three matters framework
- make a wider range of age appropriate play equipment easily accessible to the children at all times in order to meet their individual needs and create a stimulating environment
- complete a full risk assessment of the premises and make dangerous plants and containers of water in the garden inaccessible to children
- improve all staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures
- ensure all documentation is available on the premises for inspection at all times and update the Ofsted details on the complaints procedure

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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):

- improve the opportunities for children to select their own play equipment and ensure there are sufficient resources available for children to develop their creativity and imagination
- increase the written observations of children's progress, identify the next step for their individual learning and link to future planning

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