



## St. Michael's School House Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119299
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 December 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Sandra Laura Bates
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<b>Registered person</b>	St. Michael's School House Trust Ltd.
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional 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](http://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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Michael's School House Nursery first opened in 1990. It is part of the St Michael's Childcare Trust Limited. The nursery operates from a Victorian house in the grounds of St Michael's School in Bracknell. Children use four main play rooms situated on the ground and first floors. There are toilets and washing facilities on both levels. A maximum of 25 children, aged from two years to under five years, may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09.00 until 11.30 and from 12.30 until 15.00 during school term times. A lunch time club is run during school term times only. Children can attend either sessional or full days. The after school club opens five days a week during school term times and sessions are from 15.15 until 18.15. The holiday club operates during school holidays and is open between 08.45 until 18.15. A maximum of 30 children, aged from four years to under eight years, may attend at any one time. All children share access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The out of school provision of this setting was not observed at this inspection.

There are currently 48 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 35 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local surrounding area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and also a number of children with English as an additional language.

There are four staff members employed to work directly with the children. All staff hold relevant early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children receive their care in clean and suitably maintained surroundings. They learn to manage their own personal hygiene needs as they use the well resourced toilet and washing facilities independently. Children clean their hands with anti-bacterial gel before snacks and meals and they understand why this is important, for instance they say 'it is to get rid of the germs'. Children begin to develop an awareness of other health and safety issues such as the possible effects of close proximity to the computer screen on their eyes, because staff talk to them about the risks.

Children are protected from risks of infection due to the settings clear policy regarding the exclusion of sick children. Staff monitor children's health carefully and take steps to exclude children who are present with infectious conditions. There are appropriate resources and records for the administration of first aid and staff have the relevant qualifications to ensure that any accidents are dealt with effectively. Clear records of the administration of any medications to a child reduce the risk of an accidental overdose. However, there is no prior written permission from parents, which is in breach of the regulation relating to this practice, even though there is reference to the need for permission in the under-pinning policy document.

Children enjoy regular energetic outdoor play that helps them develop their physical wellbeing and skills. They run and jump showing good control of their bodies and use equipment such as balls to develop skills in throwing, catching and kicking.

Children sit together at snack and lunch times to eat the healthy fresh fruit snacks provided by the setting or the packed lunches provided by their parents. Staff interact with the children in a very positive and encouraging manner at these times which helps to ensure that children are persuaded to try new tastes and textures, and to eat their meals in an appropriate order. Children clearly enjoy the social aspect of this shared time.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe and secure environment. Staff identify all potential hazards, both indoors and in the outdoor play areas, and take appropriate steps to reduce risks to children. They supervise very carefully to ensure that children stay safe as they go up and down the stairs for instance, and put in place appropriate safety features such as gates and locks. Children develop

an awareness of how to keep themselves safe. They hold on to the hand rail on the stairs without any prompting from staff, and know that they must ask before moving to a room on another level so that staff can ensure that they are properly monitored as they do so.

Children learn what to do in the event of an emergency because the setting regularly practises emergency evacuation drills. There are serviced fire appliances in place and the fire safety certificate is displayed.

Children use play materials that are in good, serviceable condition. Most of these are stored to allow children to make independent choices and children know that they can ask for items placed out of immediate reach. The range of resources and activities is such as to promote children's learning and help them to develop new skills.

Children's welfare is protected through staff's secure understanding of child protection procedures and the steps to take if they have any concerns about a child. A written policy that is shared with parents underpins the procedures and managers have ensured that procedural information available to staff is current.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children come happily into the setting and separate from their parents or carers with confidence. Staff greet the children individually as they arrive and mutual pleasure in the renewed daily relationship is apparent. Staff know their key groups very well. They monitor what children are able to do and plan effectively for their continuing development and individual needs. Children participate in a stimulating and interesting range of activities. They show sustained levels of concentration and clearly enjoy their play. Staff praise children for their efforts and achievements as they play and children show great pride when they produce a piece of craft work or point out their contributions to a colourful wall mural.

Children move freely from room to room within the setting under the close supervision of the staff. They benefit from the variety of play opportunities offered in topic related activity rooms such as the 'sticky room' and the 'reading room'.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are very motivated and attentive to the personal and developmental needs of the children. They are good role models and demonstrate respect for each other and the children. Staff's detailed knowledge of their key groups helps them to plan appropriately for the group and the individuals within it. They recognise opportunities to extend children's thinking and learning in everyday activities as well as delivering planned themes effectively.

Children expand their knowledge and develop new skills in all areas of early learning. They try new experiences happily and confidently with the support of the staff. They concentrate well in many activities and are eager and willing to achieve.

Children count confidently to ten and most can count well beyond this. Staff use numbers to mark displays such as the weather chart. Children recognise numbers, including multiples, with ease and know how to order them to create the date and year for instance. They talk about shapes and sizes as they make Christmas crafts and understand more and less as they fill containers in the sand tray. They make comparisons between bigger and smaller when making play dough balls.

Children have lots of opportunities to be creative both in arts and crafts, music and singing. For instance, children play their parts and join in singing and making rhythmic movements as they rehearse for a Christmas show for parents. They explore the properties of various materials such as dough and clay while talking about what their efforts represent.

Children make good use of their opportunities to play energetically outside. They run, jump and hop with a good level of control and use of space. They use a range of equipment to develop skills such as throwing, catching and kicking balls. Many use pens and pencils, shape cutters and rolling pins, with careful and dexterous control.

Children develop an understanding of the wider world in a variety of ways. They learn about other countries and cultures as they compare their own homes with those of other nations. They talk about the immediate neighbourhood and the people and animals observed each day. Staff introduce activities linked to ethnic festivals and various religions, and ensure that children are presented with resources that offer positive images of social diversity. Children discuss the weather and some have a good grasp of how weather systems such as thunder develop.

Children use materials to mark make in all areas of the setting. Good use of labelling helps children to link letters to names and resources. Many children identify letters in puzzles for example and some print their names on art work unassisted. Children are articulate and confidently contribute to discussions both in groups and between individuals. They enjoy story times and listen attentively.

Children begin to understand the impact of their behaviour on others. They take turns patiently and are polite and helpful to both the staff and their peers. They enjoy taking responsibility for small tasks such as passing the fruit plate around at snack time. Children move around the setting with confidence and assurance. They become independent and are able to manage many of the day to day routines such as tidying up and putting on their own aprons for instance.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are recognised and catered for effectively. They begin to learn about the wider world and the varied cultures within it as they look at the different homes of people around the world, igloos and tents for instance, and compare these to their own. They are presented with materials that reflect positive images of social diversity and celebrate a variety of religious and cultural festivals. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported. Staff take the trouble to acquire new skills such as learning basic Makaton signing in order to communicate more effectively with children. Staff clearly relish the challenges that such work presents and value the close rapport developed with parents.

Children behave very well. They are polite and helpful to each other and to staff. They use appropriate language as they play and move around the setting. Staff are good role models. They are respectful of each other and the children. Children receive lots of positive reinforcement in the form of praise and rewards when they demonstrate good behaviour or perform a kindness for someone. Staff indicate their displeasure if children demonstrate any unwanted behaviour by pointing out its effect on others. For instance they say 'that makes me sad', and help children to understand and modify their behaviour.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents receive detailed initial information about the setting. Information about the children is shared on a daily basis through discussion and on a regular basis through parents' meetings. Parents know that they are welcome to speak to staff at any time. The setting actively encourages parental participation in the life of the nursery and ensures that parents have regular information about the current and planned themes. Parental feedback is very positive.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management is good. Managers ensure that staff have the information they need to perform their roles well. There are clear lines for reporting or cascading information and staff know their individual roles and responsibilities. Staff are well informed and express satisfaction with the manner in which they are led and managed.

More than the required ratio of staff hold relevant qualifications for their roles. Regular staff appraisals identify individual needs and skills. Managers recognise any omissions from mandatory requirements and take immediate steps to rectify.

Staff organise the space and resources well to ensure that children have a wide and varied experience. They manage the rather complex layout of the premises with care so that ratios are always met and children stay safe and well supervised.

There is a comprehensive prospectus and a full range of policies and procedures that underpin the service. However, these lack current detail in some respects, for instance the complaints policy has reference to a prior manager and the child protection policy does not reflect current procedures and referral contacts. Most of the regulatory documentation is in place and appropriately maintained, with the exception of the requirement to have in place prior written permission from parents before administering any medication to a child.

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

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the setting were asked to review the practice of staff working on their own with groups of children behind closed doors. This has been addressed and now all doors to work/play rooms remain open throughout each session. Children spend some early parts of the day in their allocated base room, but then move freely from room to room unhindered.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action 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.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### **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 there is prior written permission from parents for the administration of any medication to a child
- up date the policies and procedures, and prospectus for parents, in line with current guidance, practice and staffing situations.

#### **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):

- continue to maximise and develop ways to extend children's thinking and learning through every day routines and experiences

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)