

The Old School House Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	314743
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Inspector	Diane Lynn Turner
Setting Address	The Old School House, King Street, Sancton, York, East Riding, YO43 4QP
Telephone number	01430 828 154
E-mail	sally@nursery.karoo.co.uk
Registered person	Sally Minns
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?

The Old School House Day Nursery is a privately owned provision, which has been registered since August 2000. It is located in the village of Sancton on the outskirts of Market Weighton and operates from a single storey building, which was once the local village school. The accommodation comprises of two children's play rooms, a baby sleep room, toilet facilities, an office and a kitchen. The nursery is registered for 39 children overall with 15 children aged between three months and two years of age being cared for in one room, and eight, two to three- year-olds and 16 three to five-year-olds in the adjoining room. There is an enclosed area provided for outdoor play, which has all weather surface and a separate area for gardening activities.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday all year round, with the exception of one week at Christmas and all Bank Holidays. Times of opening are between 07.45 and 18.15 and parents may choose either full or part time sessions. There are currently 102 children on roll, including 29 who are in receipt of nursery education funding. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

There are 17 members of staff, including the nursery owner/manager, an administrator, cook, cleaner and gardener. The majority of staff hold a relevant childcare qualification to Level 3 or 2 or are working towards achieving this. In addition, one member of staff is also currently working towards an Early years foundation degree. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association and achieved an Investors in People Award in February 2002. Staff receive support from the Local Authority developmental workers and the nursery is currently working towards a recognised quality assurance award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are kept healthy and thrive because they are cared for in an environment where staff follow very good procedures and practices in their daily routines. For example, they clean potties immediately after use, have an effective cleaning programme for toys and resources and clean the tables thoroughly before and after meals are served. They wear tabards, and disposable gloves and aprons when changing nappies, ensure children have their own bedding, and that the cots are cleaned regularly. All of which, effectively help to prevent the risk of cross infection.

Clear information about the nursery's policy for the care of sick children and the administration of medication is detailed in the prospectus. This means that the risk of infection is minimised because parents are made fully aware of when their child should not attend and the procedure staff will follow if their child becomes ill whilst at the nursery. Children are well cared for in the event of an accident. All staff are qualified in first aid and they take prompt action when accidents occur. There is a written policy detailing the procedure to be followed if a child requires hospital treatment and all accidents are clearly recorded and shared with parents. In addition, if a child sustains a bump to the head, staff monitor them at regular intervals and include this in the record.

Children are actively encouraged and supported by staff in learning to follow good routines in their personal care. For example, good support is provided during potty training when staff use lots of praise to acknowledge success. They use wipes to clean babies and toddler's hands before they are fed so they begin to learn good routines from an early age and they ensure the older children wash their hands before eating and after toileting. They remind them to use soap and to put their used paper towel in the bin and they ensure they clean their teeth after lunch. They do not, however, explain to the children why it is important to follow these good routines to help them stay healthy.

Children benefit from a healthy, balanced diet. They enjoy varied, nutritious meals and snacks, which comply with all special dietary requirements to ensure they remain healthy, and very good systems are in place to ensure children are served the correct food. Food is freshly prepared on site and good attention is paid to ensuring children receive the recommended daily five portions of fruit and vegetables. Babies are fed according to their individual routines and staff work closely with parents during the weaning stage when new foods are introduced. Drinking water is made readily available in all areas. For example, the older children are able to help themselves to their individual water bottles throughout the session, as and when they become thirsty.

High priority is given to fostering children's physical development and to ensuring they have access to fresh air. Babies are taken out in pushchairs and the toddlers and older children have

daily access to the very inviting outdoor area. They clearly relish being outside and this is very evident as the older ones eagerly put on their coats and find their wellingtons when they know it is time to go out. Staff effectively help the youngest children to develop their skills as they encourage them to use equipment, such as the tunnel, small climbing frame and slide. All children are able to rest according to their needs. For example, staff follow the youngest children's sleep patterns as discussed with their parents and the older ones are able to sit quietly as and when they want, both indoors and outside.

The three and four-year-olds are developing very good physical skills. They move around confidently and with very good control, and learn to move well in a variety of ways. For example, they carefully negotiate a pathway as they run and chase each other and work cooperatively as they use the parachute. They show good balancing skills as they walk along the stepping stones and show good spatial awareness as they use various equipment to hide behind as they play games of hide and seek. They also have regular opportunities to enjoy movement and music activities, including sessions, which are led by other professionals, such as a musician and drama specialist.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very safe, secure, welcoming and well-organised environment. The outdoor area has both all-weather and safety surface with bright, colourful markings. Both play rooms have colourful displays, interest tables and mobiles, which prominently feature the children's own work, including an 'art gallery' showing the older children's drawings and paintings. This shows their efforts are valued and appreciated and provides them with a rich and stimulating environment in which to learn. There are very effective systems in place to ensure the premises are kept secure and children well protected. Parents and visitors are only admitted by staff and the identification of visitors is checked thoroughly and their presence recorded. If children are collected by someone other than their parent or carer, parents inform staff of this and a password system is used.

Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised very effectively. Staff are vigilant and use thorough risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. For example, they carry out daily checks on all areas and regular checks are carried out and recorded on sleeping babies. They have a good understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits. For example, they provide valuable opportunities for both the younger and older children to play together in the outdoor area but are mindful of keeping the younger ones safe. In order to achieve this they ensure the younger ones wear a high visibility tabard at this time so staff can easily identify them and keep a close eye on them.

Staff effectively raise children's awareness of keeping themselves safe. For example, they help them to understand that it is important to tidy the toys away after use to prevent trips and falls and they regularly practice the emergency evacuation procedures with them so they know what to do in the event of a fire. They encourage them to learn about road safety as they use associated equipment in the outdoor area and often arrange for professionals, such as a police officer and fire fighters to visit the nursery to talk to the children about their role and related safety aspects.

Children use a very good range of well maintained toys and resources both indoors and outside. These are all appropriate to their age and stage of development and are well organised in child-height furniture to encourage independent access. Resources are used well by the staff

to support the children's play and learning. For example, babies are able to observe themselves in low level mirrors and explore manufactured toys and natural items contained in the treasure baskets. The range of resources is reviewed and added to on a regular basis, when children have good opportunities to voice their opinions as to what should be purchased. For example, the older children have recently helped to choose new books for their room.

Children are well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of the nursery's policies and procedures in regard to protecting children from possible abuse. They demonstrate a good understanding of the possible indicators of abuse and are fully aware of their responsibilities and know to report any concerns to the designated member of staff. They are all booked on a course in the near future to update their knowledge in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

All children arrive very happy and eager to participate because they are cared for in an environment that is very much a home from home. There are very good settling in procedures with pre-placement visits and staff giving babies time to play with soft toys in the sleep room so they feel comfortable in their surroundings before they use the room to sleep. Children develop excellent relationships with the staff who are genuinely pleased to see them each day. This is evident, when on arrival, babies hold their arms out to staff and smile at them in recognition. Children have a very relaxing start to the day. They go straight to their own room and it is a joy to observe the two to five-year-olds having their breakfast. They are not rushed in the least to finish eating and they show absolute delight as they choose their own topping and spread this on their toast. When everyone has finished eating they eagerly ask if they can help staff to wash and dry the plates.

Babies and children under two-years-old make very good progress because they benefit from routines, which are consistent with their experiences at home and they take part in an excellent range of age appropriate activities, which are meticulously planned using the 'Birth to three matters' framework. These include excellent opportunities to experience a range of textures as they explore wet pasta, cereal, paint and 'gloop'. Photographs show them fully immersed in exploring paint with their hands and feet and showing surprise and awe as they play with soapy water and bubbles. They respond to colours and sounds of manufactured toys with delight and have excellent support to develop their early communication skills as the staff enthusiastically respond to their sounds during play. Music plays an important part throughout the nursery. A range of background music is played, soothing sounds are played to help babies fall asleep and staff enthusiastically lead singing time when the babies listen with interest and the toddlers make very good attempts to join in with a variety of songs and action rhymes.

Children between the ages of two and three-years-old are extremely confident in their surroundings. They play very happily together and with adults, as they delight in using resources such as small world toys, imaginative resources and the outdoor equipment. They benefit greatly from the very good range of interesting activities, which staff plan for them using their excellent knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. These help them to make sense of the world and express their ideas very effectively. For example, they explore the texture and properties of 'gloop', dough and sand and learn descriptive words as they discover the different materials in the feely bags, often showing great surprise at what they find. They learn to follow the daily routines, such as finding their name on arrival and they enthusiastically join in with

role play activities, such as playing in the shop. They benefit greatly from the family environment as they mix freely with the older children and follow their example.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and this is evident in the planning of activities. These clearly show how all the six areas of learning are covered and how the activities relate to the stepping stones. The intended learning outcome for children is detailed and most focused activities are well planned and presented. Detailed assessment records are in place to chart children's progress towards the early learning goals and staff use photographs, examples of their work and written observations of children's responses to activities to support their findings.

Staff pay good attention to providing lots of opportunities for children to see print in their environment. For example, resources and displays are labelled and the helper of the day is displayed. They use resources very well to support children's learning and use open-ended questions effectively to promote their thinking. They do not, however, always make effective use of everyday routines to encourage children to use number for a purpose. Children's behaviour is managed extremely well. Staff adopt a consistent and calm approach and encourage children to take on responsibility, for example, helping at meal times.

Both the three and four-year-olds are very confident. They seek out their friends to share their experiences, their concentration is developing well and they persevere and readily help one another to complete tasks, such as more complex jigsaw puzzles. They behave extremely well and show concern if someone is upset. They are very confident to approach visitors and take pride in the nursery, enthusiastically relating previous experiences as they look at photographs and watch themselves on a DVD. They are very aware of their own needs and help themselves to a drink when they are thirsty and many can put on their own coat. They do not, however, fully understand why they need to wash their hands before eating and after toileting to help them stay healthy, as staff do not explain the reasons for this.

All children enjoy listening to stories. They sit quietly when staff read to them and they access books independently in the book corner, when they hold these correctly and relate what is happening in the picture. They know print carries meaning. For example, they self-register on arrival when they find their name card and put it in the correct basket to show they are present, and they use mark making for a purpose very confidently as they make their own books, write shopping lists, patients notes as they pretend to be a doctor and messages as they answer the phone. They are beginning to recognise letter sounds. For example, they correctly identify the letters in their name and draw pictures of objects beginning with the letter of the week. They clearly explain what they are doing during activities, particularly as they draw very detailed pictures of events they have experienced, such as a wedding. Most four-year-olds can write their own name and they do so independently to identify their own work, and the three-year-olds are making very good attempts to do this, making good use of their name card to copy from if they are unsure.

Children's mathematical knowledge is developing well. They confidently and correctly group and count items of a particular colour as they use resources, such as small bears and show an understanding of simple calculation as they correctly identify how many they have left when one is taken away. They have opportunities to learn about weight and measure as they take part in baking activities, show good spatial awareness as they turn pieces of jigsaw around to fit and they can correctly sequence the days of the week. They demonstrate that they can

recognise various numerals as they play with the magnetic numbers but they do not always use their counting skills for a purpose, for example, during everyday routines.

Both the three and four-year-olds demonstrate very good imagination as they access the role play area and act out both real and imagined situations. For example, they buy and sell items in their shop when they show a good understanding of the purpose of money and equipment, such as the till. They dress up as doctors and nurses and use stethoscopes to listen to each others' heart beating and prescribe medicine for the various ailments they diagnose. Displays of their artwork show their creative development is good. These include, examples of printing using wellingtons, potato print flowers, detailed drawings and the use of collage materials, such as tissue paper to recreate spring blossom.

Children are fascinated by nature and show a keen interest in how things work. For example, photographs show them fully immersed in planting onions with the nursery gardener as part of their 'sow, grow and eat' project and they are keen to see how much their beans have grown. They show an interest in the weather and are fascinated as their snowman melts. They understand how to operate the group's computer and use equipment, such as telephones during role play with understanding. They show very good design and making skills as they use various construction materials to build models of buildings and vehicles and become fully immersed as they recreate their ideas using recyclable materials. For example, using cardboard boxes to make a speed boat. Their physical skills are developing very well. They use balance equipment confidently in the outside area and show good fine motor skills as they use malleable materials, such as dough. They use scissors with good control as they cut along lines and use cutlery correctly at meal times.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are warmly welcomed into the nursery. They are highly valued as individuals and staff meet their needs extremely well. This is because they go to great lengths to find out as much as they can about each child before the placement begins. For example, they have discussion with parents and gather very valuable information on the admissions forms, which are tailored to each age group. These include information about feeding and sleeping routines for babies and interests, likes, dislikes and fears for the toddlers and older children. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are very welcome to attend and staff work very closely with parents and other professionals to ensure children's particular needs are met and that they are fully included.

Children are extremely well behaved and a calm atmosphere is evident throughout the nursery. Staff are excellent role models for the children to follow as they demonstrate a very calm and patient approach and are respectful of each other and the children. They support the youngest ones extremely well in sharing and turn taking and have high expectations and set consistent boundaries for the three to five-year-olds. This helps children to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. As a result, they help each other to complete activities, such as jigsaws and are keen to help and take on responsibility. For example, they take the role of helper very seriously at lunch time and keenly ask on arrival if it is their turn to undertake this. They are very polite when addressing visitors and show a real sense of belonging as they proudly share their achievements.

Children have excellent opportunities to learn about the wider world and their local environment through a range of purposeful activities. For example, they learn about festivals from around

the world, such as the Chinese New Year when as part of their celebrations they learn about symbols and Chinese writing. Resources, such as books, jigsaws, musical resources and dolls also help to raise their awareness of diversity very effectively and are all in regular use. They learn about their own community very effectively. For example, teachers from the schools that the nursery serves visit to meet the children before they join the reception classes, and at Christmas the children perform their nativity play in the village church. They have excellent opportunities to learn about the care of living things through gardening activities when they take great joy in nurturing their plants and through visits to a children's farm. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

All children benefit greatly from the outstanding partnership with parents and carers. Staff make parents feel extremely welcome and give the highest regard to their input as the primary carers of the children. Parents receive a wealth of information about the service via the extremely well presented prospectus, newsletters and the nursery's excellent website. Staff give high priority to sharing important information about the children's care and the activities that they have been involved in each day. For example, they make themselves readily available to talk to the parents, photographs are displayed and they provide detailed daily diaries for the youngest children. Parents are consulted every step of the way when staff consider making changes to daily routines, such as how snack time is presented and their comments are valued and taken on board. Staff understand that parents want to know their children are kept safe whilst in their care and keep them regularly informed through innovative ideas, such as providing them with a written report of the fire drills they carry out, so parents are aware of the time taken to evacuate the building.

Parents have excellent opportunities to be involved in the children's learning. For example, they are provided with clear information about the Foundation Stage and how their child is progressing and developing. They are fully informed about forthcoming events and information about the current topic is displayed and also available on the website so parents can encourage their child to bring in objects relating to this. The website also includes links to other sites so parents can access information, such as ideas to support their child's communication, language and literacy development. The three and four-year-olds also take home books to share with their parents and all children have the opportunity to take the nursery bear home with them or on holiday. Parents clearly enjoy adding the bear's experience to his adventure book and this contains many extremely detailed and immaculately presented accounts. Parents are very keen to express their satisfaction with the service. This is evident when parents seek out the inspector to share their experiences and state they have the highest regard for the nursery, the staff and the care provided.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care needs are met extremely well and the leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The premises are very well-organised, with indoor and outdoor space laid out well to maximise play opportunities for the children. Activities are very well-planned and presented overall, however, on occasion whole group activities for the three and four-year-olds do not sustain their interest effectively. For example, during a baking activity a large group of children shared one mixing bowl, which resulted in them spending a lot of time waiting for their turn.

Children benefit from high levels of qualified and experienced staff, many of whom have been at the nursery for a number of years. They are all very enthusiastic, work very well together as

a team and demonstrate they are committed to providing high quality care. Their performance is monitored very effectively through regular appraisals and they are all keen to further their professional development and improve their practice through training. They reflect, monitor and improve the quality of the care and education through evaluating activities, staff meetings, and by working towards a recognised quality assurance award. Robust systems are in place for the recruitment and vetting of any new staff, who do not begin their employment until all the necessary checks have been undertaken and they then undergo an effective induction process. This means that children are well protected.

Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place, which cover all areas, including those to be followed in an emergency, such as a child being lost. These are consistently implemented by staff, which ensures the service operates smoothly and efficiently. All legally required documentation which contributes to the children's health, safety and well-being is in place. This is well organised and stored securely to ensure confidentiality.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that staff consider establishing a system to record observational checks on sleeping children, continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of child protection, and develop the system for recording medicines administered to children. Staff now check sleeping children every 15 minutes and record this on a daily sheet, they have reviewed and updated the nursery's child protection policy and they are all booked on a safeguarding children course in the near future. Medication records now detail the requested time for medication to be administered and the actual time given. This is shared with, and signed by parents on collection, so they are fully aware of any differences and the reasons for this, which means that any further doses are safely administered. The improvements made have added significantly to the safety and well-being of the children.

At the last education inspection it was recommended that staff increase the use of spontaneous activities to develop children's mathematical development and provide more opportunities for them to use writing for a purpose. Staff now sometimes encourage the children to count the steps as they go outside and to count the number of children present. The opportunities for children to use writing for a purpose have improved greatly. For example, note books and clipboards are provided in the role play area, which children use to write a shopping list, patient notes as they play doctors and phone messages. They also now have regular opportunities to make their own books.

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 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.

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 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):

- develop children's understanding of the importance of following good hygiene practices, particularly why they need to wash their hands.

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):

- provide more opportunities for children to use counting for a purpose during everyday routines
- improve the organisation of some whole group activities, such as baking to ensure children's interest is sustained and they are able to take a full and active part.

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