

# Cublington Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	140840
<b>Inspection date</b>	06 March 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Sonjia Nicholson
<b>Setting Address</b>	Village Hall, Wing Road, Cublington, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, LU7 0JB
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<b>Registered person</b>	Cublington Nursery School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional 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 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?

Cublington Nursery School was first registered in 1974 and is privately owned and managed. It operates from the Village Hall at Cublington, formerly a Victorian school house, in a rural setting in north Buckinghamshire. Children use one main room with toilet and kitchen facilities. There is a fully enclosed area for outside play.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday mornings from 09.30 until 12.00 and Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons from 12.50 until 15.20. Children attend from the immediate locality and surrounding villages. There are currently 61 children on roll between the ages of 2 to 5 years. Of these 33 three-year-olds and two four-year-olds receive funding for nursery education. The nursery has systems in place to support children with learning difficulties/disabilities and who speak English as an additional language, although none currently attend.

The owner is also the nursery manager and she employs five additional members of staff. The manager holds a level three qualification and two other members of staff hold level two/three qualifications in childcare. The nursery is a member of Pre-School Learning Alliance and also receives support from Buckinghamshire Early Years Development and Childcare Service.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children take part in an interesting outdoor session using a range of equipment, including, hoops, large blocks, planks and cones to make an obstacle course which develops their physical skills. Children feed and observe the wild birds in the garden and monitor the growth of bulbs. They have daily opportunities to play outside in the fresh air; there is access to a small enclosed paved area in which they manoeuvre ride on toys, play in the playhouse and participate in ring games with staff, such as, 'The farmer's in his den'. Children use one handed tools, such as, scissors, chinks and pencils with growing confidence; staff support children well, for example, one shows a child how to hold the scissors so he can snip the edges of his picture. Children concentrate well as they complete a threading activity using a range of beads.

Staff maintain children's good health by implementing the sickness policy in place and administering medication and basic first aid appropriately. All necessary records and parental consents relating to accidents and medication are in place; staff complete them accurately and share them with parents so they are aware of the care their child receives. The first aid box in use contains many items that are out of date which could have an impact on children's health. Children learn good personal hygiene as they wash their hands before snacktime and after going to the toilet; staff further prevent cross infection as they wipe tables before snacktime, clean the toilets between morning and afternoon sessions and change the water in the hand bowl children use to wash their hands after painting activities. Staff follow satisfactory nappy changing procedures, but these do not fully protect children or staff from infection.

Children enjoy healthy snacks of dry breakfast cereal, dried fruit and raisins with water and milk to drink; on special occasions, such as, a child's birthday they have cakes or other treats sent from home, however staff clearly remind parents to ensure items do not contain nuts or other ingredients which may harm children with allergies.

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

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean, secure environment where staff use space effectively to meet their needs, for example, they hang their coats on low level pegs in the cloakroom, use the child sized toilet and play in areas, such as, the home corner, shop and book corner which contain appropriate resources to extend their play. The setting is made welcoming and stimulating for children and parents by the many colourful posters and high quality displays of children's artwork most of which is displayed at their level. Children freely select from a very good range of toys, resources and equipment stored around the nursery; most are in tubs with both word and picture labels which mean they can easily identify what they want. Children are encouraged to tidy away the toys after use and staff have good procedures in place to ensure they remain safe and clean for children's use.

There are a number of policies and procedures in place to keep children safe, for example, staff undertake a daily risk assessment of the building and practice the fire drill regularly, which means children know what to do in an emergency. Children learn to play safely as staff take time to explain hazards to them, for example, why they must not run in the nursery and why sand from the sand tray must be swept up.

Children have protection from possible abuse and neglect as the majority of staff have completed child protection training, consequently they have a good understanding of the types and signs of abuse. Parents have access to the group's child protection policy, however staff do not currently share the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) document with them which means they are not fully aware of their role and responsibility to protect children.

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

The provision is good.

Children under three benefit from the staff's good understanding of the Birth to three matters framework; they provide appropriate activities including, painting, playdough, drawing, cutting, sticking, playing in the home corner and at the sand tray which children are eager to participate in. Children are supported by enthusiastic staff who interact appropriately in their play.

### **Nursery Education**

Children enter confidently and part from their carers well; staff greet children individually on arrival which helps them feel welcome and settled. Children are familiar with the daily routine, for example, they sit at the table after washing their hands as they know it is snacktime and respond well at tidy up time as music plays. Children generally behave well and resolve minor disputes with little or no adult interaction. Children pour their own drinks at snacktime but staff do not always encourage their independence at other times, for example, they wipe children's noses using tissues kept on a high shelf, prepare and hand out children's snacks and put coats on with little opportunity for children to do up their own zips and buttons.

Children sit and listen attentively during circle time; they are beginning to develop a sense of the past and present as they confidently join in the conversation about the weather, days of the week and months of the year. Children speak freely during large group times and initiate conversations on an individual basis; they enjoy discussing what they have done at the weekend with staff who listen carefully and comment freely to extend their language development. Children enjoy rhyming activities and are beginning to distinguish one sound from another; they listen to known rhyming stories and most join in and recognise some rhyming words. Children link sounds to letters as they share phonic cards during circle time and individually with an adult; most know the letter names and sounds and the action that accompanies it, for example, a child says 'it's kicking king!' and uses his fingers to make the kicking action. The environment is rich in print with labels, posters and a birthday board on display. Children recognise their name as they select their name card and stick it on their drawer. There are many opportunities for children make marks freely, for example, during imaginative role play in the shop and outside using clipboards and paper, however there are few opportunities for children to practice writing their name independently, particularly on their own work.

Children express themselves freely through painting, drawing, chalking and collage making; they select from a variety of textures such as, ribbons, tissue paper, pasta and pre-cut pictures. They enjoy printing with animal shaped sponges for a purpose to make Mother's Day cards and use and paper plates, heart shaped paper and ribbons to make Mother's Day wreaths. Children involve themselves in imaginary role play in the shop and home corner; some enjoy being the customers and others the shopkeepers; this play is extended by a member of staff who introduces new vocabulary, such as, 'stock' and 'delivery'. Staff use puppets effectively to engage children at circle time and freely during the session to encourage conversation between the children. Children use a range of musical instruments to express their emotions , such as, drums,

rainmakers, bells and cymbals and to accompany known rhymes, such as, 'Mary had a little lamb'.

Children have many opportunities throughout the session to count freely, for example, they count how many children sit at the table for snacktime and then how many cups they need. Staff encourage children to make simple calculations by asking questions, such as, 'how many more?' Most children count successfully to five and some to ten and beyond. Children sing simple number rhymes, for example, 'I've got 10 fingers' which also include mathematical language, such as, 'high' and 'low'. Children develop an understanding of mathematical concepts, such as, shapes, pattern making, comparison and matching through planned activities; they recognise triangles at the collage table, make patterns with the hearts on the Mother's Day wreaths and complete number puzzles. Staff display a number frieze to 10 within the room to help children recognise numerals.

Children gain an awareness of the wider world through resources in the nursery, such as, photos of people shopping in different countries in their shop, posters of different foods in the home corner and by celebrating festivals and events. Children investigate a range of materials in the 'Exploration Tins'; these include, torches, bolts, screws and magnets which help them understand how things work. They explore malleable materials, such as, playdough using rollers, cutters and their hands to pinch, poke, and squeeze shapes. Children realise tools are used for a purpose as they use hammers and nails to join wood together following a story about 'Fix-it Duck'. Children talk confidently about personal events in their life, for example, a child whose brother is unwell and a visit to Grandma's house. They discuss and describe the weather at the weekend during circle time using appropriate language, such as, 'windy' and 'rainy' and a child remarks she saw 'a faint rainbow' which leads to a discussion about the colours of the rainbow. Children have some opportunities to access technology equipment, such as, walkie talkies, a tape recorder and computer, although these are not readily available on a regular basis.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress as staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage; most have completed training and all receive support from the Manager. The environment both inside and outside is well-planned by all staff to provide children with opportunities to take part in a wide range of activities linked to themes, such as, 'Spring'; they can move freely between activities and make choices about what they want to do. The planning tool clearly shows the learning objectives for children and the differentiation for three and four year olds, with extension activities for more able children. Staff evaluate the activities each week and make regular observations of what children can do in order to help inform future planning and plan the next steps in children's learning. Children's progress is recorded by their keyworker in their record of achievement and shared with parents informally. Staff build good relationships with children and spend lots of time talking to them, consequently children appear happy and have a positive attitude to learning. Children's behaviour is managed using appropriate strategies which help children learn right from wrong.

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

The provision is good.

Children learn about the wider world as they celebrate festivals and take part in planned activities, such as, making vegetable stir fry to eat for Chinese New Year. There are ample resources to support children's learning, for example, a festival board with a calendar of significant world festivals and pictures to accompany it, dolls with differing skin tones, posters, books, puzzles and dressing-up clothes for boys/girls and depicting the jobs people do, such

as, a policeman. Children take part in community events, such as, making a scarecrow for the summer fete and singing at a Christmas church service. They enjoy walks in the locality where they feed the ducks at the pond and visit the allotments; this gives them a sense of belonging and an understanding of where they live. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children who speak English as an additional language are welcome and staff work closely with their parents to help them settle, for example, they learn simple words, such as, "hello" and numbers to five in Portuguese, display labels around the room and celebrate the festival of Lent, Latin style, by hitting the Piñata full of sweets; these activities benefit all the children in the nursery. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator has a good understanding of how to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; she has close links to a local playgroup for children with special needs and the group is currently involved in a speech/language/literacy pilot scheme with the local authority. Children generally behave well; they are familiar with the daily routine and respond well to the music played at tidy up time and enjoy the frequent praise staff offer. They learn good manners at snacktime as staff remind them to say 'please' and 'thank you'.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive verbal information about the Foundation Stage and have access to the weekly planning sheets and their child's record of achievement which clearly show the stepping stones in children's learning. New parents have a Welcome Pack including all the necessary information required to help their child settle and staff complete an Initial Meeting Form, which includes space for parents to share information about what their child can do at home; this helps staff gain an understanding of children's individual needs and achievements. There is a notice board in the kitchen and staff produce regular newsletters detailing topics and social events to keep parents informed about what is going on.

Children benefit from the friendly relationships staff create with parents; they freely exchange information at the beginning and end of the session to ensure children receive appropriate care. Parents have positive views of the nursery and particularly like the structure of the sessions and approachable staff. Parents have access to all the group's policies, including the complaints policy which explains how they can raise a complaint, however this needs updating to reflect changes to regulations.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

All aspects of the provision are well-organised. Staff work well together as a team and have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities, consequently, sessions run smoothly. Children benefit from the key worker system in place and the high staff ratios; they receive good levels of support, for example, each day a member of staff "floats" between activities and oversees their free play. There are procedures in place to ensure the suitability of new staff so only appropriate adults care for the children. All regulatory documents are in place; staff complete them accurately and store them confidentially to maintain children's identity.

Leadership and Management of the nursery education are good. The Registered Person values her staff and encourages them to develop professionally by sending them on courses and organising in-house training. As a result, all staff are familiar with the Foundation Stage and implement this knowledge effectively into the programme of planned activities. Staff evaluate activities both verbally and in written form and make regular observations of children's progress

which helps them plan future activities. The Registered Person has clear aims for the Nursery Education provision through a long term plan and is very aware of the group's strengths and weaknesses. The nursery is involved in a Quality Assurance scheme with the local authority to improve their practice. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

At the last inspection it was recommended that a record of visitors was maintained and full details of the procedure to be followed in the event of a complaint are made available to parents. Staff now ask visitors to sign the visitors log in the register; this means they are fully aware of who is on the premises in the event of an emergency and that children are protected from unknown adults. Parents can now access the Complaints policy which includes Ofsted contact details, however regulations have changed since the last inspection so this policy needs updating once again; this has been raised as a recommendation during this inspection.

Three key issues were raised to improve the quality of Nursery Education at the last inspection;

Indicate clearly on plans how areas of learning are being covered to ensure a balanced programme for children.

Continue to develop observational recordings, clearly linking them to the stepping stones to enable children's progress to be easily identified.

Extend the present system of evaluating the overall provision to ensure activities are being managed effectively to deliver desired learning intentions.

Since the last inspection staff have implemented an action plan to address these issues. They have re-designed the planning sheets to clearly show all areas of learning, as a result, children now access a balanced curriculum and staff can easily see which areas of learning are being covered at a particular time. Staff have built in more time during the session to make observations of the children; these are used to monitor progress and inform future planning. Staff now assess how successful activities have been and complete a detailed evaluation to demonstrate how children's learning intentions have been met.

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

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that have 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):

- improve current nappy changing procedures to prevent cross-infection and ensure contents of the first aid box meet current guidelines
- update the complaints policy in order to meet new regulations

### **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 further opportunities for children to access technology equipment on a regular basis and write their name independently on their own work
- encourage children's independence further by allowing them to select their own snacks, put their coats on and wipe their own noses.

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)