



## St Christophers Care Club

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY242106
<b>Inspection date</b>	31 January 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Susan Marriott
<b>Setting Address</b>	Gorham Way, Dunstable, Bedfordshire, LU5 4NJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01582 702333
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	St Christophers Care Club
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St. Christophers Care Club opened in 2001 and operates from St. Christophers Lower School in Dunstable. The setting has use of a purpose-built mobile classroom facility which contains a large play room, a kitchen and toilets. There are two fully enclosed outdoor play areas for the children, shared with the four-plus unit of the school.

The setting provides continuous wrap-around care from 07.45 to 17.30, and incorporates a breakfast club, a pre-school, lunch club, holiday play scheme and after school sessions. Children can attend for a variety of sessions. The group is open to all children attending the school or their siblings. The holiday play scheme is also open to the surrounding community. There are currently 145 children aged from three to under 11 years on roll. Of these, 38 children receive funding for early education. The club is able to support a number of children with learning

difficulties and/or disabilities and is able to provide for children who speak English as an additional language.

There are six permanent staff members who work with the children and of these, four hold relevant qualifications. The setting accesses support from the Local Authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because staff follow effective health and hygiene policies and procedures. Sick children are excluded from the provision to minimise the spread of infection and the premises are maintained in a properly clean and hygienic state. Tables are regularly sprayed with anti-bacterial spray to prevent cross-contamination. Children receive appropriate treatment in a medical emergency because many staff hold suitable first aid qualifications and the first aid box is accessible. Staff record accidents and parents usually countersign the entry. However, some reports do not contain the actual time of the accident and the current system does not protect confidentiality. This potentially compromises children's safety and the partnership with parents. Children wash their hands before snack and after visiting the toilet to prevent the spread of infection. Children can access tissues easily and a bin for disposing of the soiled article is provided nearby. Children therefore learn about germs through the daily routines because most staff remember to promote discussion about the reasons for hand washing and keeping noses clean.

Children's health and dietary needs are met because staff work well with parents. Any allergy and dietary needs are taken on admission forms and displayed in the staff kitchen area for daily reference. Children benefit from a healthy diet where all snacks are nutritious and prepared on site. Snacks include a healthy range of fruits and children have the choice of milk or water, which they mostly pour themselves. Children have access to fresh drinking water and staff respond positively to any direct requests for a drink.

Plans show that all the children enjoy daily indoor and outdoor activities, designed to enable them to develop control of their bodies and improve their physical skills through a generally appropriate level of challenge. For example, during the inspection, children enjoy climbing, running about and pedalling bikes. Outside play sessions are supported by appropriate planning which covers the six areas of learning. Well-planned and structured indoor lessons in the school hall effectively promote children's acquisition of skills in a progressive way. For example, children bend, stretch and run on the spot during a warm up exercise and staff encourage them to place their hands on their chests to feel their beating hearts. Children then enjoy an assault course, crawling under and over soft play blocks.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff give high priority to the security of the premises and the supervision of the children. They are extremely vigilant and take due notice of any unusual activity around the nursery

environment. Staff monitor visitors to the setting and the record of visitors provides space for recording the actual purpose of the visit to the premises. Relevant risk assessments are completed on a daily basis and staff complete detailed assessments for specific events. Staff record fire evacuation procedures but do not carry out drills with sufficient frequency to ensure the safety of the children. Children learn to keep themselves safe in the setting because staff give good explanations as to why, for example, the children should remove their shoes and socks for a movement lesson in the school hall.

Children are warmly welcomed and well-cared for in a pleasant, suitably safe and secure indoor and outdoor environment which is thoughtfully set out to facilitate children's choice and developing independence. The setting uses space creatively and areas are set aside for dedicated activities, reflecting the six areas of learning. Equipment and resources are safely stored and clearly labelled so that children and staff can access them easily, compensating for the restricted play space currently available in the setting. The staff put up posters and pictures to make the room attractive for children and set out the equipment enticingly before the children arrive. Bright displays of children's work enhance the environment and reinforce and consolidate topical learning. For example, a display shows characters from familiar nursery rhymes and the 'Happy Birthday board' values the special day of children and staff.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because they are protected by informed adults who understand current child protection policies and procedures in line with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The responsible person for child protection in the setting has received suitable training in this field, and is due to attend further detailed training later in the year .

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children settle quickly into the provision and enjoy themselves in this welcoming place to play and learn. For example, during the breakfast club session, there is a purposeful atmosphere and children make themselves at home. The staff give them lots of attention and cuddles and make sure that the children are always their first priority. This helps them to meet the needs of all children. Children actively participate in purposeful activities and clearly enjoy the harmonious atmosphere. Staff encourage and build children's vocabulary through constant praise and recognition. The staff team are suitably qualified and dedicated to the concept of quality childcare and education. They follow children to the activities which engages their interest and provides effective support to draw the learning from play. This promotes positive outcomes for children. The staff have an increasing knowledge of the Foundation Stage and are effectively supported by the early years school staff. As a result, children are making suitable progress towards the early learning goals. However, staff do not yet place enough emphasis on promoting some aspects of children's early literacy and mathematical development, particularly within the daily routine. Staff work well as a team to prepare toys and equipment in advance and achieve a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. The simple planning system is devised in partnership with the school early years manager and increasingly supports teaching in a manageable format. The assessment system continues to develop and increasingly supports children's progress and learning. Therefore, planning is usually based upon what children know and can do.

Sound practical skills are often exhibited by the staff team in this provision. Staff use their knowledge and experience to draw the learning content from child-led play. Children's personal, social and emotional development is very well fostered. Children enjoy the activities on offer, and concentrate and persevere well to complete tasks. Children manage their own coats capably, and make competent efforts to take their own socks and shoes off at hall time. Staff give lots of praise and say well done, which boosts children's confidence and self-esteem. Staff know when to stand back and talk children through a process. For example, how to pull their own sleeves up and wash hands, dry hands and put towels in the bin. Snack time is used to good effect as a learning time for children, following the introduction of a new routine. Children pour their own drinks and peel their own fruit. Staff sit and talk with the children and encourage them to put their peel in the bin. Children enjoy opportunities to speak and listen. Staff help the children to learn about how books work, introducing them to vocabulary such as 'title', 'author', and the 'spine' which holds the book together. A story entitled 'Fraser's Grump' is described as 'hilarious' and children are encouraged to share their experiences of being grumpy and 'fed up'. However, some opportunities for learning which arise within the daily routine are not effectively exploited. For example, staff write children's names on paper plates for rice cakes and limited use is made of name cards and labelling on wall displays.

Children enjoy a lively rhyme time and sing a wide range of songs such as 'There's a spider in my hair', 'Bob the builder' and 'Baa baa blue sheep'. They sing number rhymes too. Staff encourage the children to count on their fingers as they sing 'Five little ducks', but do not give obvious emphasis to the action, which reduces the tangible aid to learning about counting and calculation. Staff vaguely point to the 'Ten green bottles' hanging from the ceiling, but the song becomes somewhat laborious, and some children's concentration is lost as they count from ten to none. Children explore and investigate through planned activities and build using a wide range of construction apparatus. They have access to information technology and chat about their families and home life, demonstrating positive relationships with staff. Children use a good range of tools and implements to develop their finger and hand muscles and freely interpret their own ideas through a wide range of art and craft techniques.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children from the local community are warmly welcomed and included in all activities. Children develop their understanding and appreciation of others through simple activities that promote a greater awareness of the wider world. Toys, books and equipment reflect positive images. Some activities are planned to highlight festivals such as Ramadan, Diwali and Eid to increase children's awareness of other cultures. This enables the children to begin to develop a positive attitude to others. Each child and staff member is valued through the Birthday Board, highlighting their special day.

Children's individual needs are discussed with parents in detail. Any special requirements or information are discussed and consistent communication and information exchange takes place. Special needs of children are recognised and met sensitively. Children who may have learning difficulties receive appropriate intervention and referrals to suitable professionals outside the provision. Staff provide positive role models for children by being calm and polite. Staff praise

children frequently, ensuring that they develop confidence and self-esteem and understand when they have done well. Behaviour is good because staff effectively challenge instances of poor behaviour giving explanations as to why the behaviour is not acceptable. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff continue to strive to develop a positive partnership with parents to support children's progress in learning, but report variable responses from parents. There is a wealth of information which is easily accessible in the entrance hallway which includes general care and educational literature. Parents are warmly welcomed into the provision and are well-supported by staff during the settling-in process. Staff are developing ways of sharing information about the children who receive nursery education. Parents are able to see their child's records and may contribute to them. This two-way sharing benefits the child and enhances their learning. The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The manager continues to develop her knowledge and understanding of the National Standards and is well-supported in her role by the school head teacher. Together they ensure that all staff are suitably vetted, ensuring the welfare of children. The manager ensures that the day runs smoothly and is very well-organised. The composition of the staff group meets the qualification requirements. This ensures that children are cared for and taught by staff who have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of child development. However, the dual entry registration system presents the potential for confusion. The record of attendance does not accurately reflect the times of arrival and departure of staff and children and does not always accurately track movement of children from the club to school and vice versa. The operational plan does not reflect the current practice of the group. These matters may compromise the safety of children.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The established and mature staff team are genuinely dedicated to the concept of quality childcare and education and they respond positively to guidance. However, they are just beginning to develop the confidence to try their own methods in areas of work such as curriculum planning. Therefore, planning and assessment systems continue to evolve, thereby increasingly securing and progressing children's learning. Lots of continuous and recent training continues to extend staff skills and knowledge. Staff follow children to the activities which engage their interest and mostly provide effective support to draw the learning from play. This promotes increasingly positive outcomes for children. Documentation is clear and generally accessible. Staff clearly and confidently speak about their procedures to follow in the event of a range of scenarios. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

At the last inspection, four recommendations were raised to improve the child care practice. The setting was asked to ensure that Ofsted is kept informed of all relevant matters and the complaints policy includes the regulator's details. These issues have been satisfactorily addressed. The club was asked to devise a statement regarding bullying and to improve risk assessment.

The setting now completes a daily risk assessment sheet to ensure a safe environment for children and the behaviour management policy now gives clear guidance on how any instances of bullying will be handled. The measures taken have contributed to improvements in the quality and standards of the care and welfare of children. This is the first inspection of nursery education.

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

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require the provider 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that an appropriate record of accidents is maintained, including all relevant details
- ensure that fire drills are carried out with sufficient frequency to enable all staff and children to become familiar with the evacuation procedure
- review the operational plan, ensuring that it reflects the current practice of the club
- continue to review the system for registering children and staff, showing hours of attendance.

#### **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):

- ensure that all aspects of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development receive sufficient emphasis through the daily routine.

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)