

Just Learning College Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	256808
Inspection date	09 February 2007
Inspector	Denise May Smith / Anna Davies
Setting Address	Peterborough Regional College, Park Crescent, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE1 4DZ
Telephone number	01733 762 180
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Registered person	Just Learning College Nursery
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 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?

Just learning College Nursery opened in 1988. It operates from three rooms in a purpose built building in the grounds of Peterborough Regional College. It is primarily for staff and students of the college, although the pre-school is open to the public. A maximum of 72 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.30 to 17.15 term-time only. The nursery also runs a holiday club for children aged from three to seven years in the summer holidays from 08:30 until 17:15. All children share access to secure enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 73 children aged from three months to under five years on roll. Of these, 29 children receive funding for early education. Children come mainly from Peterborough, most of their parents attending the college. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 18 members of staff. Of these, 15 hold appropriate early years qualifications and three are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is generally promoted well. Staff have an appropriate knowledge of the setting's policies and procedures which meet children's physical, nutritional, and health needs. Children are protected from the potential risk of infection because the staff ensure that hygiene standards are maintained throughout the nursery. Nappy changing routines are sound and designed to prevent cross infection. Tables are cleaned prior to children eating and children routinely wash their hands at appropriate times throughout the day. Most of the staff team hold a first aid qualification supporting children's welfare and each room has access to sufficiently stocked first aid kits. However, some of the items in these kits are out-of-date. This, along with weaknesses in systems for managing medication, does not always meet children's health needs appropriately. Medication is stored and labelled appropriately throughout the nursery and systems are in place for parents to provide written permission for staff to administer this medication. However, on occasion the prescribed routine is not always consistently followed through.

Children have access to regular drinks throughout the nursery so that they remain hydrated. Snack times are organised to promote children's independence, toddlers and older children enjoying a rolling snack time supported by staff, ensuring this remains a social occasion. Children enjoy a cooked lunch which they eat in social groups with their key person who offers support as necessary. They use appropriate cutlery suitable for their age and stage of development. Procedures are in place to ensure that staff know children's individual dietary needs so that they are met effectively. Babies bottles are clearly labelled and the babies are appropriately nurtured when being fed, which helps to meet their individual needs.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities which contributes to their good health and all round development. Good use is made of the outside play areas ensuring children have access to regular fresh air throughout the day. Children run, climb, balance and learn to pedal scooters and wheeled vehicles, which are age appropriate, and offer some challenge. Indoors, alternative opportunities are provided if the weather is poor. Rooms are cleared and equipment set up so that children can develop their physical skills all year around. Good use is made of the 'Sticky Kids' tapes, children becoming puffed out due to the physical exercise.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming and well-maintained nursery. They confidently move around the play rooms and help themselves to a range of easily accessible, age-appropriate resources and activities. Children throughout the nursery make independent choices and decisions about their play and enjoy the continuous play activities planned for them.

Children are cared for in a generally safe and secure environment. Entry to the nursery is strictly monitored and a record maintained of all visitors. Systems are in place to ensure the safe collection of children and comprehensive risk assessments are undertaken to ensure the premises remain suitable. Children are cared for in groups depending on their age or stage of development, each room having their own outdoor area supporting children's play. Most risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because staff have good room awareness and explain to children basic safety precautions such as not rocking on their chairs in case they fall. However, the

laundry and kitchen contain tools and other hazardous objects and materials, which are accessible to the children. This means that staff's ability to keep children safe is sometimes compromised.

Children are kept safe from harm when on outings because staff follow comprehensive procedures. For example, parent's contact details are taken, mobile phones, and first aid packs are available to use in an emergency. Children's safety in the gardens is for the most part met. Children are supervised and staff check the area before use. However, the bolt on the side gate to the baby room garden is not sufficient to prevent access from the outside presenting a potential risk to the children.

Fire fighting equipment is in place and evacuation procedures are displayed and practised by the children. The fire practices are evaluated to inform future risk assessments. Children are safeguarded well by staff who have a good knowledge and understanding of child protection policies and procedures. They are kept safe and secure by staff who have a commitment to training and use this knowledge to under-pin the care offered to the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle quickly when they arrive in the morning. They are happy and contented, enjoying their time spent at the nursery. They are enthusiastic and self-assured in their play as they confidently approach new experiences. Children make positive relationships with adults and other children and help themselves to the range of activities and resources available. These resources are varied, interesting and support the children's development and learning. Children enjoy group activities, for example, sharing a favourite story and singing action songs with the staff. They listen attentively to instructions and understand the routine, working together to achieve tasks such as, one child holding a box while another puts the toys in when clearing away. Children begin to develop self-esteem through the constant praise received from adults throughout the day. For example, staff praise children as they complete puzzles, try to put on their coats and their outdoor shoes before playing outside.

Children benefit from close and caring relationships with staff which increases children's sense of trust and helps them develop a strong sense of self. Adult-child interactions are supportive of communication skills and generally extend experiences. Children relate well to each other and socialise well, building up good relationships with staff and other children. They begin to distinguish between right and wrong as they learn to take turns and share resources.

Children enjoy a range of indoor and outdoor activities. This is as a result of staff's attention to planning, which for the younger children, is based on their likes and interests. Planning relates to the 'Birth to three matters' framework and 'First Steps' for the younger children and is used to assess the progress they are making. The day is balanced between adult and child-led activities allowing children to make choices and decisions and acquire new skills. Babies have lots of opportunities to explore texture and experience play through first hand experiences. They thoroughly enjoy floor painting, using their bodies to experiment with the paint. The toddlers enjoy using shaving foam to replicate snow as they drive their cars through it. One child explained that the pile of foam looked like 'a snail' as it came out of the can. Babies are encouraged to explore and choose resources for themselves. One, just mobile baby, confidently opened a cupboard and helped herself to the tea-set which she then proceeded to play with.

All children enjoy a range of physical play activities both indoors and out, all year around which develops their skills. They take part in many trips out into the local community and surrounding areas.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and they have made a generally good start on planning around the six areas of learning. Short term plans show how the activities are set out around the room. However, learning intentions are not selected which means that some staff are not clear how to carry out planned or routine activities with specific goals in mind. Staff mostly provide sufficient levels of support during activities as they play alongside and engage in

conversations with the children. However, ways in which activities can be adapted for differing abilities is not planned which results in some children not always being suitably challenged or supported. Staff make observations of the children's learning. However, staff do not effectively evaluate these observations to sufficiently plan the next steps for children which limits their progress in some aspects of their learning. Staff encourage children to behave well, for example, children are praised as they contribute to songs and are sensitively encouraged to try new foods and remember manners during mealtimes. Children with identified learning difficulties or disabilities are fully involved in the activities and staff support them appropriately to ensure that they gain the most from their experiences. Staff make good use of opportunities, for example, as children get their coats on in small groups, staff offer spontaneous singing and exercise sessions to effectively engage the children whilst they wait their turn. The environment is well organised and good use is made of the indoors and outside. The children's activities are enhanced by the availability of a range of interesting and relevant resources.

Children regularly participate in a wide range of physical activities, both inside and outside as well as at the local sports hall. For example, children complete obstacle courses, play hockey, balance on benches and move with much confidence. More able children are suitably challenged when using the equipment outside as they confidently use two wheeled scooters to negotiate space. However, more able children have limited opportunities to consider and understand the effects of exercise on their bodies because staff do not extend this knowledge following a physical activity session.

Some children are confident to introduce themselves and ask questions of others. All children sit sensibly and consistently use their manners when making requests. Older children support the younger children as they play together at being doctors and take it in turns to use the stethoscope and lie on the bed to be treated. Children are developing positive relationships with other children and adults, enabling them to be part of the setting and develop their self esteem. However, some children are not always challenged to develop their self-help and independence skills as routine activities such as putting on coats and wellington boots are sometimes very adult directed. All children play a key part in their local community. For example, a local postman, fire-fighter and librarian visit to enable children to begin to understand different roles within the community. Children have many opportunities to visit places of interest such as a railway station, park and a farm. As a result, children are beginning to understand the wider world in which they live.

Most children chat happily to each other and adults, for example, children confidently recall when they have been poorly at home and how their parent has cared for them. Children have opportunities to be aware that print carries meaning as they independently share books in the welcoming and comfortable book corner. Children are beginning to recognise familiar words as resources and furniture is clearly labelled. All children have the opportunity to identify their first name, written on cards at meal and snack times. However, children who are not able to recognise their name are not appropriately supported and those that can are not further extended in their learning. This does not provide appropriate support or challenge for children, and does not recognise the individual next steps of their learning.

Children begin to count objects such as marks made by paintbrushes and bricks in a tower. They explore different shapes, for example, placing cutlery end to end to make a triangle. Children are beginning to count forwards and backwards as they sing songs, for example, five jolly snowmen. Children are able to extend their mathematical thinking to solve simple number problems. For example, they are able to count the required number of children to go outside and can add one more correctly.

Children are beginning to make sense of the world around them by having opportunities to investigate and explore through first hand experiences. Activities such as growing bulbs and tomato plants encourage children to look at similarities, patterns and change. Collecting leaves and watching tadpoles introduces them to nature and the changing seasons. Children take part in celebrating each others birthdays and cultural festivals through planned activities, books, topic work and role play. For example, children bring in traditional sweets from home to share with others. Children have opportunity to operate simple technology through the use of small keyboards and tape recorders.

Children have fun exploring different textures and materials using their senses. For example, as they play with mashed potato, children describe what it feels like. Children have many opportunities to use their imaginations to create and express their own ideas through a wide range of art and craft resources. Children are confident to describe what they are making, for example, 'I'm painting a big slide'. During role play, children discuss their ideas with each other, for example, they collect resources for a picnic and discuss whether they should dress up as princesses. Children participate in regular music sessions, for example, guessing which instrument made the sound, clapping out the syllables in their name and marching to different types of music.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a positive environment. Their art work is displayed well showing the children that it is valued. This helps to develop their self-esteem. They sit quietly and sensibly for appropriate lengths of times during circle and story-time. They eagerly welcome each other individually at the beginning of the day with a welcome song and listen to their friends as share how they are feeling. Children use some descriptive language to express their thoughts and feelings such as 'I feel excellent'. Throughout the three rooms children are motivated in their play and actively engaged throughout their time spent in the nursery.

Children benefit from the staff's positive attitude towards equal opportunities and respecting individual and differing needs. Staff ensure that they gather relevant information from children's parents in order to meet their needs. However, the methods used to ensure that parents who have English as an additional language are fully able to share this information are limited.

Likewise any information needed to be shared with the parents is mainly in English and not totally accessible to all. Children use a range of resources and take part in a variety of activities that promote an understanding of other cultures and the wider world. Children explore and develop an awareness of their local community. For example, they go for walks to the local park and visit the local café as part of their current theme. Procedures are in place to identify and support children who may have learning difficulties or disabilities ensuring they are well supported. Staff are knowledgeable and work closely with the skilled specialist workers and professionals ensuring that the children are fully included in the life of the setting.

Children of all ages are encouraged to behave well. Staff promote this positive behaviour by talking to the children, encouraging them to think about their actions and why is it kind and sometimes necessary to share and to take turns. Older children are provided with visual clues such as sand timers so they can see when it is their turn to play, enabling them to develop these ideas in an age appropriate way. Staff are polite to the children, and good manners are encouraged. However, some methods used in the baby room to promote good manners are not age, developmentally or indeed generally appropriate. Overall however, staff act as good role models to the children in order to develop these responses. Children are actively involved in ensuring their nursery is kept tidy and a safe place for them to play. For example, staff in the toddler room help the children organise themselves in small groups to tidy the home play, the puzzles and the dough. Staff offer lots of encouragement to the children and praise their achievements well. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are well supported as they settle into the nursery through the appropriate partnership between parents and staff. They settle confidently into the nursery supported by the induction arrangements agreed with their parents. Children and parents are made very welcome. Parents are encouraged to stay with their child for their first visit or until their child settles in, although this is not always practical as most parents are students at the college. Written information is provided for parents on a daily basis summing up the children's day. A detailed prospectus is provided on registration containing all of the nurseries policies and procedures. Menus, planning and general room information is displayed on notice boards for each room. This ensures parents have access to a variety of information. However, this is mainly written in English so not totally accessible to all.

The partnership with the parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory.

Parents are provided with adequate information about the Foundation Stage and written reports at the end of term show the progress that their child is making. However, systems for ensuring that all parents, specifically those whom do not speak English as their first language, have access to suitable information are not always effective. This results in some parents not being fully aware of the education that their child receives. Planning is displayed on a notice board and regular newsletters detail activities and events planned. The setting has an open-door policy which enables parents to spend time in the setting with their child. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning by bringing in topic-related items from home and helping their children to access library books which they may take home to share together.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well cared for in a nursery which has overall good organisation. Staff are well deployed in order to support children's needs and the nursery is designed and set out to

encourage children to make choices in their play. They routinely access resources and help to pack away promoting their independence. Indoor and outdoor space is laid out to maximise play opportunities. Staff have a sound knowledge of child development and are committed to continual improvement as they attend many relevant courses. Staff are well qualified and have undertaken appropriate checks. Good staff induction procedures ensure that the nursery policies and procedures are known and mostly applied to practice.

Staff work well together as a team and all are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Documentation which contributes to the health, safety and wellbeing of children is in place. Policies and procedures are clear and updated in line with recent legislation. Overall, the needs of the children are met.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory.

The management team is supportive of staff. There are clear lines of communication between staff and

the management team, for example, a weekly nursery bulletin ensures that all staff are included in the sharing of relevant information. Regular meetings and discussions with staff contribute to systems for the evaluation and monitoring of the educational provision. However, these systems are not always effective in identifying weaknesses in children's learning. This means that children are not always able to meet their full potential.

Regular appraisals helpfully identify individual strengths, weaknesses and training needs. This helps staff to identify and undertake training in the Foundation Stage to ensure they have up-to-date skills. The staff and management team are committed to improving the educational provision for all children. Actions plans are used effectively to implement some improvements in the setting.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the management of the nursery agreed to, consider how the organisation of sessions could be reviewed to ensure the physical needs of older children can be met more appropriately. This area of development is now judged as a key strength. Older children go outside twice a day for at least 40 minutes. If the weather is bad and they cannot play outside, staff organise an indoor physical activity such as using the trampoline or build an obstacle course. When the activity is finished children will still then go outside for some fresh air. By taking this action the outcomes for the children being cared for have been improved.

At the last nursery education inspection the management agreed to, consider improving the arrangement of the book corner, in order that children access it independently and also develop children's access to musical instruments. The book corner now has two settees, one full size and one child size, which is welcoming for children to rest and relax. A wide variety of books are now accessible in low-level holders and a low-level storage unit. A library system, where parents are encouraged to choose books with their children to share together at home has been introduced and has much improved the provision and access to books in the pre-school room.

A designated music area has been introduced with a wide variety of accessible instruments available for the children. Posters on the wall, with labelling, further reinforces the names of the instruments. Again by introducing this area children's learning has been enhanced.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 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 systems for maintaining appropriate first aid equipment and managing medication are effective
- ensure that proper precautions are followed to prevent accidents and remove hazards with particular regard to the laundry, kitchen and garden gate
- ensure that methods used to teach babies appropriate manners at snack time are age appropriate
- develop partnership with parents to meet the needs of children, with particular regard to those who speak English as an additional language, which ensures that they are fully informed about the setting and involved in their child's care and learning. (this also applies to Nursery education)

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):

- develop planning to ensure that it clearly shows how the learning intentions are linked to the activities and how they can be adapted for differing abilities. Ensure assessments are effective in showing what a child can do and how they inform the next steps for children
- develop more effective systems for evaluating and monitoring the educational provision so that weaknesses in children's learning are quickly identified and improved.

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