



Epsom Methodist Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	122504
Inspection date	26 February 2007
Inspector	Lindsay Ann Farenden
Setting Address	Epsom Methodist Church, Ashley Road, Epsom, Surrey, KT18 5AQ
Telephone number	01372 727915
E-mail	emcnursery@hotmail.co.uk
Registered person	The Church Council
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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?

Epsom Methodist Nursery opened in 1999. It operates from Epsom Methodist Church in Epsom, Surrey. The premises consist of a large hall, one room, kitchen, and toilets. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 09.15 to 12.15 in term time only.

There are currently 28 children aged two to under five years on roll, of these children 17 receive funding for early education. Children come from the local catchment area. The nursery supports children with special educational needs/disabilities, and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs five staff and a volunteer. Four of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery receives support from the early year's childcare partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff carry out good hygiene routines to ensure that children remain healthy. For example, children wash their hands after messy activities, after using the toilet and before snack time. Children are beginning to understand the importance of cleanness, such as the reason tables are cleaned is to wipe away any dirt.

Children enjoy snack time, which is made into a sociable event. They sit in small groups and have discussions between themselves. Children choose their own snack of fruit or raisins. This helps children develop healthy eating habits from a young age. Staff work closely with the parents to ensure children's special dietary requirements are met, when they attend the nursery. Children are encouraged to pour their own drinks, helping to develop their self help skills. Children are able to ask for drinks of water at any time to quench their thirst.

Children's health and welfare are protected because the first aid box is suitably stocked and all the staff have attended first aid training, including the use of an epipen. All accidents are recorded and parents sign to acknowledge they have been informed of the accident. Written permission to seek emergency treatment and consent to administer medication is requested from parents. Children who are ill do not attend the nursery, thus preventing the spread of infections.

Each day children have good opportunities to take part in indoor activities to develop their physical skills, such as riding bikes, taking part in obstacle courses and using balancing beams. Children climb on wooden cubes and crawl through tunnels with great confidence. They learn to control their bodies through balancing bean bags on their heads and practising throwing and catching them.

Children's hand and eye co-ordination is encouraged through a good range of activities, such as painting with brushes, threading, mark making materials, moulding play dough and cutting with scissors.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff transform the hall into a warm and welcoming child centred environment, where children can move around and play safely. All areas of the premises used by the children are clean, well lit and of an appropriate temperature for the weather conditions. Children play with a good range of quality toys and play materials. They are laid out on the floor and on child height tables, so children are able to make independent choices of what they want to play with.

Children enjoy their play in a safe environment, where staff do daily risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. There are effective security systems in place for children's arrival and departure, which includes supervision of the entrance, during children's arrival and departure times. Staff supervise children in the toilets, which are used solely by them whilst they are present. The effective employment of staff ensures that children are fully supervised at all times. This means children's safety is given high priority.

Staff carry out fire drills every half term, ensuring that all children that attend have an opportunity to practise them. This helps children become familiar with the procedures, so they learn to leave the premises quickly and safely. Fire fighting equipment, such as a fire blanket and fire extinguishers are available within the premises. However, children are not fully protected in the event of an emergency, as there are no smoke alarms in place, to enable staff to be alerted to a fire within the premises used by the nursery.

Children's welfare is well protected because all staff have attended safeguarding children training. This ensures their child protection knowledge remains up-to-date. Staff have a good awareness of the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child. Although the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation against a member of staff are not easily available within the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy, confident and enjoy their time at the nursery. This is evident as they enthusiastically join in morning circle time and eagerly play and explore the toys and activities set out for them. New children settle well as staff are sensitive to their needs and give them extra attention when required. Children benefit from the warm, close and supportive relationships they have with staff. This enables children to feel secure and very settled within the nursery.

Staff have a good awareness of experiences and activities that younger children need. Some staff have attended training on the Birth to three matters framework and link it to planning, to ensure younger children's learning opportunities are met. Children enjoy being creative, exploring the feel of play dough, exploring colours and creating pictures that are unique to them, as they freely paint at the easels. Children like doing activities together, such as making various marks with chalks on a flip chart and when playing with cars, train sets and small world toys. A good range of construction resources are provided, which require children to join them together, such as duplo and stickle bricks. This helps them to develop their hand control. Children actively join in with action songs, moving their bodies to express words.

Nursery Education

Children enjoy playing together and some have built up strong friendships with each other. They readily ask each other for support whilst doing activities, such as asking friends to draw a circle with glue for them. Children understand the need to share and take turns, as they wait their turn to talk at circle time when playing group games. Children are developing good self help skills, as staff encourage them to put their coats on and some children confidently put on

aprons before painting activities themselves. Children happily take part in tidying up in small groups with constant staff support.

Children are beginning to learn that letters have meaning, as they find their own names and put them in the register, when they arrive. Staff emphasise the first letter phonetically to some children who require help them find their name. Children are keen to name the sound of the letters of the alphabet as they play, such as using letters cutters with the play dough. Children hold books the correct way up and turn pages in sequence to look at pictures and re-enact stories which they know. Children avidly listen to stories in a large group and confidently respond to questions about text and pictures.

Children access a wealth of writing materials and use marks readily to represent their ideas. Many children hold pencils effectively to form recognisable letters. Some of the more able children are able to write their own names and draw recognisable pictures. Staff encourage children to write for a variety of purposes, such as writing their names on their art work.

Children enjoy circle time, with a member of staff using a soft toy as a prop to help them discuss what they did at home at the weekend. This supports children of all abilities to speak in a large group and boosts their self-esteem.

Children are inquisitive when playing with calculators and programmable toys, by pressing buttons and discovering out how they work. This helps children to learn to operate simple equipment. Children learn about a sense of time as staff discuss and ask them questions about the date, day of the week and the weather. A range of puzzles are placed out for children and staff offer good support, making suggestions as to how they can match up pieces with shapes and colours. Children enthusiastically build large constructions using large foam bricks, carefully balancing them on top of each other to prevent it falling down. Children get pleasure in exploring different objects in feely bags. Children are learning about people who help us in the community. For example, fire officers visited the nursery with a fire engine and showed children how the water hoses worked. Children go on occasional outings, such as the local farm, where they are able to see and touch real animals. They are helped to acknowledge and accept differences, through playing with resources that reflect positive images of diversity.

Children are able to count reliably to at least 10 and some more able children are able to recognise numbers. Counting and early calculation skills are encouraged by staff throughout the session. For example, children are encouraged to count how many girls/boys there are in the group and how many children are left, as they go into the hall in small groups after story time. Children learn about shapes, as they make triangles and squares using straws. They enjoy playing games that involve them counting the dots or naming the number on a large dice and then counting plastic bears to represent the dice number. This provides an excellent fun way for children to develop their mathematical thinking.

Children's creative experiences are enhanced as they explore colours and textures through a very wide range of experiences, for example, making paint prints with Wellington boots, making models from recyclables, icing biscuits, using whisks, mixing cornflour, playing with shaving foam, sand and water play. Children enthusiastically access the craft materials themselves, using glue, glitter in sand, paper strips and using scissors to cut out their own paper in order

to create their own designs. Children enjoy moulding clay to make their own models and bear caves. Children discover different colours and patterns when printing and notice changes when the paint is mixed together. They use their imaginations very well using first hand experiences, such as buttering bread and making a birthday cake using play foods. Children explore the sounds they make as they play with different cultural musical instruments, with some children moving their bodies to the rhythm of the music they have made. Children enjoy taking part in action songs and moving their bodies with great expression, as they pretend to be different animals.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff obtain written and verbal information from the parents to find out children's skills, interests and abilities and use this as a starting point to help children make progress. Children are motivated by a good range of stimulating resources and activities, which support their learning in all areas of the Foundation Stage. Staff interact well with the children and support their learning and thinking through explanations and asking effective questions. Staff have an understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning and planning is linked to the early learning goals. Staff use their observations of children to complete developmental profiles on each child, but do not use what they know about their achievements to identify the next steps of learning for each individual child.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The partnership with parents is good. The nursery prospectus provides parents with information on the curriculum and the early learning goals. A notice board of the activities provided for children is displayed in the entrance hall at the end of the session. Children are encouraged to take their art work out of their boxes at the end of the session, to show and discuss it with their parents. Regular newsletters keep parents informed of forthcoming events and topics. This enables parents and carers to be fully informed of the activities taking place. Parents are welcome to help out in the nursery and visit at any time to observe how their child learns through play. Parents are invited to an open morning to discuss their child's developmental profiles and view the scrap books of their child's work. Children are encouraged to take books home each day. This helps to encourage their interest in books outside of the nursery.

The registration certificate and public liability insurance is displayed for parents to view. Parents are made aware of how to make a complaint, as the policy is displayed for them to view and is included in the prospectus, along with other policies.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are welcomed into the nursery. The designated special educational needs worker has attended training in this area and works closely with parents and outside agencies to ensure children receive appropriate support. When appropriate each child has written individual targets to help them make progress.

Children are learning about other cultures that may be different from their own. For example, they are shown various Chinese clothes, saris and artefacts from Malaysia. Children enjoyed making a dragon at Chinese New Year. All children are encouraged to play with all the resources and activities regardless of gender. Children develop positive images of others and each other through a good range of play resources reflecting positive images of culture, disability and

gender. These are fully integrated into everyday play. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave well and benefit from lots of praise and encouragement from staff for their efforts and achievements. They enjoy a stimulating environment, which enables them to be busy and occupied at all times, which helps prevent children presenting with any challenging behaviour.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children play in an environment that is well laid out and organised and the good use of space maximises children's play opportunities. Children's own work is displayed on the walls, which shows staff value their contributions and efforts. High staff ratios are maintained and they show a clear understanding of their role in supporting children.

Children are kept safe through recruitment procedures that ensure staff undergo checks to determine their suitability to work with children. For example, applicants are not employed until they have had a criminal record check. New staff undertake an appropriate induction programme to ensure they are aware of the procedures, children's safety and routines in the nursery.

Most documentation is in place and well maintained. Staff attend regular training to update their first aid and safeguarding children knowledge, although there is no formal appraisal system in place. Regular staff meetings are held to discuss activity planning, children's progress and evaluation of the service provided. This ensures the service provided for the children is constantly being improved.

Leadership and management is good. The manager is a good role model, who ensures staff have an awareness of the Foundation Stage curriculum and are able to provide a wide range of planned activities. She attends regular training to keep up to date with changing practices to improve the quality of education for children. This enables children to make good progress. The manager works directly with the staff team, so is able to observe their performance and monitor the quality of teaching provided.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Recommendations were made at the last inspection.

Since the last inspection children's safety has improved as fire drills now take place on a regular basis and are recorded. Children now have drinking water available to them at all times, which they can ask for during each session and children are provided with fruit at snack times. This ensures children's health needs are met.

Key issues were made at the last education inspection.

Since the last inspection staff have provided children with a further range of play resources and activities, which help them to learn and value diversity. Staff have put in systems to develop children's independence skills, such as taking their bowl and cup back to the table, when they have finished their snack. Equipment has been obtained to improve the programme for children's physical development. A further range of programmable toys is now provided for children to learn how to use simple equipment during each session. Visitors, such as fire officers, are now invited to the nursery, which provides children opportunities to learn about people beyond the nursery. Staff now actively encourage children to explore creative materials to express their own ideas in their art work. Observations of activities that children participate in are now carried out on each child, to enhance staff's knowledge of their developmental progress.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the 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 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 fire safety by ensuring that smoke detectors which conform to BS EN safety standards are provided and kept in working order
- ensure that procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff are easily available at all times

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 staff's observations of children's achievements to identify the next step of learning for each individual child

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