

St Mary's Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	103727
Inspection date	27 April 2007
Inspector	Linda Patricia Coccia
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Registered person	Pauline Lorna Judd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Mary's Day Nursery opened in 1992 and operates from three rooms from the ground floor of a Hindu temple in Strood, Kent. A maximum of 50 children under eight may attend the nursery at any one time. Some of these are children who attend the breakfast and after-school club. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.45 to 18.00 for 49 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 134 children aged from one year to under ten years on roll. Of these 65 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs sixteen staff, thirteen of whom are qualified to NVQ level 3. The provider is currently completing her NVQ level 4.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Good standards of hygiene are maintained within the nursery. Staff suitably implement a range of procedures designed to safeguard children from cross infection and contamination. For example, all work surfaces are regularly cleaned with antibacterial sprays and paper towels and hand washing facilities are in each room. There are also good procedures in place to help children become aware of personal hygiene issues. Children understand why they must regularly wash their hands through gentle reminders given by staff. Nappy changing areas are screened to protect children's dignity. Children are looked after in a hygienic environment and learn about personal hygiene.

Children are offered a selection of food which is healthy and nutritious. The majority of children use a snack bar to select from a choice of food and drinks which promote a healthy diet. For example, bananas and raisins and milk and sugar free squash are some of the foods on offer. Children can help themselves to water throughout the day. Children have choices about when to eat or continue playing. Parents are required to send in packed lunches for any children who stay over the lunch period. These are stored in large chiller cabinets in the kitchen. The food preparation staff member has attended suitable food hygiene courses and her certificates are displayed. She often helps to prepare food for the children's activities such as food tasting from different cultures and preparing biscuits and cakes for the children to ice. Children get involved in food activities.

A secure outdoor play space is provided. Children have scheduled outdoor playtimes but use it as much as possible, weather permitting. Indoors the children use activities such as dancing and moving to music to ensure they get as much physical exercise as possible. Children participate in a variety of physical play activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are looked after in a suitable premises with a welcoming atmosphere. The children use three main rooms within the nursery. All of the rooms have natural light and are brightly decorated with children's work. The rooms are safe and secure. Stair gates are used where necessary as well as socket covers and other safety equipment. Well maintained equipment such as high chairs are used in the baby and toddler rooms. All children use low level equipment such as small tables and chairs and toys are stored at low level for easy access for the children. Children use equipment which is well maintained, hygienic, easily accessible and stored appropriately.

Staff use good procedures to protect children in emergencies. Fire safety equipment such as extinguishers and smoke alarms are regularly checked by the fire officer. Emergency evacuation procedures are displayed around the rooms. Children regularly practise the evacuation procedures both planned and unplanned. They cope with the drills splendidly and wait patiently in the play area until the building has been checked by staff. Children have the opportunity to keep themselves safe in an emergency.

Staff use good procedures to keep children safe from abuse and neglect. Staff complete forms for children's existing injuries and discuss these with parents. Some staff have completed

Safeguarding Children sessions whilst updating their qualifications and the provider has current information from the Local Safeguarding Children Board for their area. There are also good departure procedures in place to ensure children are collected by suitable persons. Therefore, children's well being is promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff use a variety of toys and activities to ensure babies progress in all areas of their development. They have a good understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and carry out assessments of toys and observations on children in line with it. Play plans are produced each term for each child.

Staff are caring and show good concern for children. Children and their parents are greeted at the door and welcomed onto the premises. Babies and toddlers happily settle and appear to know staff well. Children happily approach staff for comfort and cuddles. The children in the breakfast and after school clubs also appear relaxed and happy. They utilise toys and equipment from the different rooms and have access to a range of toys and games appropriate for their own age groups. Many of them like to use the computers or chill out in front of the TV depending on how long they stay. They are walked to and from school by at least two members of staff. Children like to share jokes with staff so there is plenty of laughter. All children have very good relationships with staff.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children in receipt of funded nursery education are making good progress towards the early learning goals. They learn to control their bodies through a variety of physical activities planned by staff. For example, play with balls, either just kicking them or trying to score a hoop at the basketball net helps them to achieve higher degrees of co-ordination.

Children learn about the wider world as they use information technology equipment such as computers and shop tills and calculators. Some of the four year olds are very adept at controlling the mouse and completing programmes, whilst others use play mobile phones to ring their friends and have chats.

Children also learn about being creative. They are encouraged to help themselves to the wide range of art and craft equipment available. A display of the different things children have done with paint shows that they have experienced activities such as marbling, finger painting, bubble printing and string painting.

Children's mathematical development is very impressive. Staff use a range of mathematical language with children, from thick and thin when discussing the width of pencils, to identifying shapes such as trapeziums and hexagons. One four year old could explain that a hexagon has six sides. Number work and measuring is integrated into other activities such as sand and water play.

Children are encouraged to be independent in self care such as taking themselves to the toilet and pouring their own drinks. Both three and four year olds love to role play and happily talk about their experiences as they become doctors and nurses or play mums and dads in the home corner. Children act out different roles.

Children also like books. They regularly take themselves into the comfortable book corner to look at books and read each other stories. One four year old particularly likes a story about a robot. After making up the story from the pictures, she explained that the robot was a good and happy robot because he was smiling but the other robot wasn't nice because his eyebrows were all pointy when he frowned. Children are becoming good talkers and listeners.

Staff are caring and professional and have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage. Children's starting points are recorded and their Key workers identify their children's next steps. These are then incorporated into the weekly and termly plans to ensure children are challenged sufficiently to allow them to progress. Most of the planning shows differentiation for the highest and lowest achievers. The observations that the staff carry out on the children are well written and well maintained. Staff use challenging language with children which encourages them both in their expressive and mathematical abilities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children from a variety of different cultures attend the nursery. Staff promote equality through discussion with the children and through the provision of a meaningful range of images and toys. Activity plans include children learning about different festivals. Photographic evidence shows the children visiting the upstairs temple for a Diwali celebration. Children learn about the wider world.

There are also a variety of procedures in place to enable children with learning difficulties and disabilities to be cared for. The provision has a fully trained SENCO who liaises with parents and other health professionals as the need arises. Children's individual needs are met.

A variety of good behaviour management strategies are used by staff to help children understand about their behaviour. These range from discussing behaviour with the children to giving them time out after repeated warnings. Distraction is used with the babies and toddlers. Children receive lots of praise from staff and stickers are also awarded when children are kind to each other or volunteer to help staff. Children build good self esteem and play within well defined boundaries. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff work closely with parents. A wealth of written information is displayed on parent notice boards in the entrance area. Parents help staff complete Child Record forms and keep staff updated to any changes such as telephone numbers. Plenty of verbal information is relayed to parents by staff at the end of the day. Children benefit from continuity of care.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Those parents who are in receipt of nursery funding for their children reported that they had received information about the foundation stage. However a couple of parents reported that this was when their child first joined the baby room and they were unsure where the information was now. All the parents interviewed reported that they receive twice yearly reports on their children's progress and are aware that they can discuss their child with their key worker whenever they want. They also knew they could access their child's records at any time. Parents stated that they are not encouraged to become involved with their children's learning at home although they would welcome the opportunity. They are all very happy with the progress their children are making. Children benefit from their parents awareness of their progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provider has a good variety of procedures in place to ensure staff working with children are suitable to do so. There are suitable procedure in place dealing with all staffing issues such as recruitment and discipline. All staff have been vetted. Most of them have been with the provider for a number of years. Children are looked after by suitable persons who are experienced in childcare.

The provider displays her Registration certificate in the entrance hall. She has all regulatory paperwork in place, which is well maintained. However the attendance records need some minor adjustments to make them conform to requirements. The provider's operational plan is made up of a variety of policies which are accessible to parents. Staff hold relevant qualifications and are regularly involved in the running procedures of the nursery. All records are confidential to parents and stored appropriately in secure cabinets. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is good.

The provider gives strong leadership to the nursery. Her hands on approach ensures she sees every aspect of the provision which ensures the implementation of her policies and procedures by staff. Her aim is to provide a good experience for children.

Toys and equipment are suitably provided, regularly reviewed and replaced periodically. Regular written risk assessments are carried out on the premises.

The provider welcomes staff input into procedures and encourages staff to work as a team. She knows all her staff well. She relies greatly on her management team, made up of her room supervisors, who have many years experience between them.

Recently the whole nursery has undergone major changes to ensure children experience self selection. This was due to a management team review of current practice. They implemented the changes to keep in line with current childcare issues. Appropriate monitoring systems are in place to ensure staff are adhering to procedures and ensuring the Foundation Stage is delivered appropriately. The provider maintains a strong learning environment for children.

Improvements since the last inspection

The provider has followed recommendations made at the last inspection to improve procedures at the nursery.

Under National Standard 9, the owner has provided more activities and resources to promote equality of opportunity for children, especially in the area of disability. Under National Standard 11, she has provided a named person responsible for behaviour management issues. Under National Standard 12, she has arranged for parents to receive regular information about their children's progress which now includes both verbal and written reports.

Under National Standard 2, she has reviewed her lost and uncollected child policies to ensure that procedures are clear to staff. However, under National Standard 2, although changes have been made to the attendance record, these are not sufficient and this improvement remains as a recommendation for this inspection.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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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 children's arrival and departure times are recorded

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):

- review when the parents of children in receipt of nursery education funding receive written information about the Foundation Stage
- investigate ways to encourage parents to become more involved in their children's learning

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