

# The Early Years Nursery and The Early Years Playscheme

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Out of School 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?

The Early Years Nursery and The Early Years Playscheme opened in 1999. It operates from three self-contained rooms in Milton Keynes College, Woughton Campus, Leaden Hall, Milton Keynes. A maximum of 20 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.50 to 17.00 Monday to Thursday and 08.50 to 17.00 on a Friday.

There are currently 34 children aged from two to under eight years on roll. Of these, 25 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery serves children whose parents are registered students at the college. The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs six members of staff, including a qualified nursery manager and childcare services manager whose responsibilities involve developing the provision and teaching childcare within the college. All staff members have early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children have the opportunity to use a well equipped outside play area. This enables them to develop their fine and gross motor skills which contribute to their good health. Staff plan for outside play through the curriculum so that children are able to experience lots of different activities such as washing their bikes, chalking and musical instruments. The nursery use the outside play area as an extension of the nursery when the weather is good and this enables children to make choices about where they will play.

Children are healthy as the staff maintain high standards of hygiene and cleanliness throughout the nursery. The spread of infection is reduced by the good personal hygiene practices that children and staff follow. For example, regular hand washing and good nappy changing procedures. Children are becoming increasingly independent in their personal care, for example, they know to use tissues to wipe their nose and throw dirty tissues into the bin. The nursery safeguards and promotes children's welfare through staff's good care, knowledge and experience in first aid, sick child procedures and the administration of medication. However, not all accidents are countersigned by parents. Staff identify children's allergies and health conditions and manage them appropriately to support children's needs.

Children benefit from a variety of nutritious snacks and staff's clear understanding of individual dietary requirements. Children enjoy a social occasion while they eat and are well supported and supervised by staff who encourage good manners. They are encouraged to be independent, for example, by spreading their own topping on toast. Children bring packed lunches and parents are given guidance about healthy eating and how to keep them cool in hot weather. The nursery stores lunch boxes appropriately. Staff provide regular drinks so that children have sufficient fluids during the day.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in premises that are welcoming, secure and child-orientated. The premises are generally well decorated and children's artwork is on display in all areas, contributing to their sense of achievement. Children use the areas available to them confidently and are able to select from a wide range of good quality toys and equipment. Resources are suitable and sufficient for the age and developmental stage of children in the nursery and staff check them regularly to ensure that they remain safe and are stored appropriately.

Regular risk assessments are completed on the building and play area so that children are safe both inside and outside. Safety measures are taken to protect children such as high handles, socket covers and gates. However, staff are not always vigilant in reminding children about possible dangers. Children practise fire drills regularly and have a good understanding of what to do in an emergency. There is a safe procedure in place for children's arrival and departure from the setting.

Children are well protected because staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child. The manager has updated her training recently. Parents are aware of the role and responsibility of staff with regard to child protection as they have free access to policies.

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

The provision is good.

Children enter the setting confidently and quickly settle into a well established routine. Staff have a high regard for the wellbeing of all children, giving good levels of individual support, care and concern. Consequently, children form good relationships with the adults and other children within the group and play happily together. Staff know the children well and help them develop a sense of self-esteem with consistent praise. Children are learning to distinguish between right and wrong, for example following rules, taking turns and sharing.

Children show an interest in what they do, ask questions, use initiative and communicate well, talking to adults with confidence and involving them in their play. All children experience a good range of activities so they play with purpose. They take part in a range of opportunities to explore different textures, use resources to promote physical development and develop strong imaginations through imaginative play. The nursery ensures they have good details of each child's needs through information taken at admission and thereafter through frequent communication with parents. Staff pay close attention to the Birth to three matters framework as they plan activities so they are stimulating and appropriate for younger children. Consequently, children are busy and develop a sense of self-worth through staff knowing and meeting their individual needs.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are progressing well in all areas and they are supported by staff with a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children develop and learn effectively. Staff plan the curriculum well to promote children's learning. They evaluate focussed activities and make regular observations of children. However, they do not evaluate these observations, to help them effectively plan the next step in individual children's development.

Children are developing good social and communication skills. Their language and vocabulary is developing well and they confidently speak out in group situations and engage each other in conversation as they play. Children's learning is extended during planned and free play by the positive interaction with staff who make good use of questioning. Children take pleasure in books, are competent when handling them and show interest in listening and participating during story time. Children are beginning to develop a sense of time and place through discussing and exploring past, present and future events. For example, they discuss where they went and what they did at the week end. Children have the opportunity to explore new experiences, for example, learning about the jungle through the current topic. They select from a wide range of well planned activities and staff use a range of methods for helping the children to learn. Children learn independence through everyday routines, such as using the bathroom independently and putting on their own coats.

Children are developing their understanding of other cultures through themes and the opportunity to play with good quality resources. The nursery use labelling well and this is done in two languages to support children who have English as an additional language. Children have every day opportunities for them to find and recognise their own names, for example, at snack time. They are beginning to write their own names and make marks using different implements, including paintbrushes and pencils. They use the writing area to make marks and recreate simple patterns such as a circle. Their work is often used for displays and consequently children feel their work is valued. Children show good imagination and use role play to practise

what they know and to extend communication skills, for example, in the shop, the home corner and the office. Children are gaining good levels of hand/eye co-ordination through activities that allow them to use tools and smaller pieces of equipment such as rolling pins and shape cutters.

Children are beginning to use mathematical concepts and staff use all opportunities to support them. Children can confidently count and recognise numerals to 10, use positional language and are developing concept of size, for example, behind, on top of, bigger and smaller. All children can identify a range of shapes such as squares, rectangles and circles. Mathematical language for calculation is not fully used within the everyday routines to extend children's learning. Children are beginning to learn about the living world through growing sunflowers and tomatoes plants. They watch caterpillars turn into butterflies and link this into the story of the Hungry Caterpillar.

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

The provision is good.

Children are developing self-esteem and a respect for others. Staff act as good role models, talking to children respectfully and ensuring all children have the same opportunities. They encourage children's independence and praise their achievements. Children are actively encouraged to make choices and take decisions regarding their activities and free play, receiving appropriate support from staff. Overall children's social, moral, cultural and spiritual development is fostered well.

Children are cared for by staff who know them well and work with parents to meet individual children's needs. Staff are skilled at settling new children and they take positive steps to ensure all children are included fully in the life of the setting. Several children attend with English as an additional language and staff work closely with the parents to help children feel secure within the setting. Children understand responsible behaviour; they know the rules of the nursery and work harmoniously with others. Staff support children to distinguish between right and wrong and they promote good behaviour through praise and encouragement. Children are encouraged to share and have respect for one another at the nursery, for example, they all help to tidy up. Children's awareness of diversity and the wider world is promoted through positive images, a good range of resources and relevant activities, for example, celebrating festivals.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the positive relationship staff develop with parents and consequently most settle well into the nursery. Parents receive information in a variety of ways, through newsletters, letters and the notice board. Staff exchange good quality information with parents about the setting's activities and their child's development on a daily basis as well as written developmental reports every half term. Parents give positive feedback about the nursery and the staff. They are happy with their children's care and achievements.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are welcomed into a well organised nursery environment with a good daily routine. The setting is brightly decorated with posters, displays and children's artwork, making it inviting and comfortable. Space is organised well to allow children to play confidently and appropriately.

Effective procedures are in place to ensure that staff are appropriately vetted and suitably qualified or have relevant experience. Staff are clear about their own roles and responsibilities and children benefit from good staff to child ratios. Children's welfare benefits from the staff's interest to update their qualifications and they regularly attend training and workshops. A wide range of policies and procedures keep children safe, secure and promote their general well-being. All required documentation on the children is kept, including parental consents. They are regularly updated to ensure children receive continuity of care.

Leadership and management is good. A strong staff team work very well together to meet the children's needs. They have regular staff meetings to share information and plan for future themes. Management have a good understanding of their role and responsibilities and support staff both professionally and personally. There are effective systems in place to monitor and evaluate the provision for nursery education. Staff have a good knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. They have clear direction and monitor teaching and learning. This means children's learning is planned for and generally extended and supported as necessary. Recording systems are in place so staff have information about children's individual achievements. However, they are not recording children's next steps in learning. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

At the last care inspection the group were asked to ensure the child protection policy included a procedure to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and to prepare and deliver activities appropriate for the children's individual needs and their stage of development.

Since the last inspection the nursery has updated their policies the child protection policy carries the necessary information. The staff ensure, through comprehensive planning, that children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of resources and activities which are appropriate for their stage of development. Staff know the children well and are consequently able to meet their individual needs and interests.

At the last nursery education inspection the group were asked to encourage children's understanding of the link between the sound and shape of letters, to extend children's skills in correct letter formation and to have written sheets for activities to show the intended learning aims for focused activities and to evaluation to ensure activities are assessed for their effectiveness.

Since the last inspection the nursery has introduced a variety of everyday activities that help to promote children's understanding of the link between sound and shape. Children are encouraged to write in different activities and also for labelling the displays. Staff now complete a detailed sheet at each focussed activity. These clearly show the learning aims and an evaluation of the activity. This information is used in future planning.

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

Since 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:

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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):

- develop staff awareness of how to help children understand about possible dangers
- ensure that parents countersign all recorded accidents.

#### 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):

- enhance the planning of the curriculum, by ensuring that the next stage of children's learning is recorded and used to guide planning
- extend opportunities for children to develop their skills in calculation.

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)