

The Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 109670
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Inspector Anne Gunston

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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 satisfactory. 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 Nursery School opened in 1962 and is privately owned. It operates from the ground floor of a residential property in Emsworth, Hampshire and it serves the local community.

There are currently 36 children on roll, this includes 30 children who are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The nursery also supports children who have English as an additional language. Children attend for a variety of sessions and it is normal practice for children to attend from the term prior to their third birthday. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday during school term time. Sessions are from 09:10 until 12:10 each day.

A total of seven staff are employed to work with the children on a full time and part time basis. Half of the staff team hold relevant early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority early years development worker.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's dietary needs are met at all times. Staff show awareness of children with particular dietary requirements, keep records of this and ensure that parents' instructions are adhered to. Children are offered a mid morning drink of milk, or water, and can bring more specialist items such as soya milk from home if necessary. Water is available to children throughout the session, though not easily accessible as it is out of their view in the hall. Children learn about healthy eating during practical cooking activities, where the benefits of the ingredients are discussed. The first aid box holds sufficient contents, accidents are recorded clearly in a manner which maintains confidentiality. Children are given appropriate protection should accidents occur. Staff have completed first aid training in the past and their knowledge is sufficient to protect children's health. However, the majority of these qualifications are now out of date, and the nursery do not ensure that a suitably qualified staff member is on site at all times. This means the nursery is failing to meet a supporting criteria relating to this National Standard.

Children have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise in the secluded nursery garden. They are encouraged to do so in all but the most extreme weather conditions, and learn that this is part of a healthy lifestyle. Children enjoy physical activity as they climb and slide, take part in energetic games with the parachute or develop their skills in cycling and riding on scooters.

The nursery have satisfactory arrangements in place should children require a change of clothing or nappy. Children's health and welfare is protected at this time, as staff use disposable aprons and gloves when necessary, and shield the child from the curiosity of others. Children are becoming independent in their personal care, and recognise their own needs in this respect. They learn to wipe their own noses, and are supported by staff who provide paper towels within reach in both rooms. However, staff do not always prompt children to wash their hands, or ensure that children can access both toilets easily. A queue for one toilet often forms so children's privacy is not respected. At snack time, all children in each room wash their hands using one bowl of water and one towel, which compromises children's health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the homely atmosphere, and receive a personal greeting from staff on arrival at nursery. Displays of children's work, colourful posters and photographs of activities done create a welcoming environment. Staff label resources and areas of the nursery, in some instances these are duplicated in other languages, to encourage children to play an active part in choosing what they would like to do.

A secure environment is provided for children. Signs are in place to prompt staff and visitors to keep the entrance door locked. Children are unable to leave the premises unobserved as keys are stored out of reach, and they are well supervised in the garden. On outings children receive additional support as parents are called in to help. The nursery have most safety equipment in place and staff pay particularly good attention to ensuring that children practise evacuation regularly. Fire prevention equipment is regularly checked and maintained. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe as staff always remind them to be careful in their play.

Staff complete visual checks on the premises and resources each day, to monitor that these are in an appropriate condition for children to use. A standard list is displayed and used as a prompt, for example, to check that the sandpit is always covered. However, these risk assessments are not thorough enough to identify all hazards and limitations. The storage of cleaning equipment and additional toys close to the second toilet often blocks children's free access to this. Low shelving, at head height, in one room poses a risk to children. The basic cleaning which takes place every day is not sufficient to ensure that all areas of the nursery remain in a hygienic, well maintained condition.

Staff have an acceptable understanding of child protection issues. They are fully aware of the signs and symptoms which may indicate a child is at risk of harm. A child protection policy is in place, staff are clear on the procedures to follow to safeguard children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff make good use of the Birth to three matters framework, enabling them to plan and adapt activities to the needs of individual children. Staff recognise when children have made progress from this onto the Foundation Stage curriculum, usually very quickly, within first term of attendance. Staff work together throughout the nursery, records of children's achievement follow the child, to ensure that development is continuous. The younger children play with a varied selection of toys, such as dolls houses, stickle bricks and dough, arranged at low level, encouraging them to be imaginative. Staff take time to listen to children, for example, to find out that Thomas the Tank Engine is a favourite topic. Children are reassured that the Thomas book will be read later, and that it would be good to have a Thomas puzzle as well. Children's self-esteem grows as they realise that their interests are important to staff, and that efforts will be made to comply with their wishes.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. A broad curriculum is planned which covers all areas of learning. Plans indicate the learning intention of each activity, resources to be used, how children will be grouped and the role of staff. The plans are openly displayed, all staff refer to them to ensure that their daily work with the children is effective.

Children show good levels of interest in the activities set up by staff for their arrival, they settle well to puzzles and chatter with friends. Most children are very secure and part from their parents confidently. Staff show complete understanding of the child's feelings, and reassure any distressed children well with a hug and distraction. Children feel secure when they look at the book purchased with them in mind, and are supported in waving to parents out of the window. Children's behaviour is very good; they co-operate well when staff ask for their involvement in the routine. Children are keen to be chosen to ring the bell at tidy up time and enthusiastically share with staff and each other in packing away. In general, children concentrate well. They are completely involved and have a great deal of fun when the routine is flexible, resources easily accessible and free play is encouraged. At other times, some children are reluctant as staff ask them to move to another group, or complete an activity which is not of their choosing. They make initial decisions, but then change their minds when they become aware of other, more attractive options.

Children concentrate well on stories read to them, particularly when in large group situations. Staff are on hand to support younger children and help them gain enjoyment from imaginative stories such as 'Giraffes Can't Dance'. Children are making good use of the book corner, following recent changes to the organisation of resources. Children use this area spontaneously during

role play, selecting books to read as they pretend to be 'dogs', and using writing materials to keep records in a diary. Children's spoken language is well developed. They speak up confidently to talk about things they have brought from home. Children learn to wait for each other to finish speaking by use of prompt cards for 'taking turns' and 'good listening'. Staff always stress that this behaviour is expected at all times, and does not relate to the adult led activities only. Children are learning to link sounds; they join in enthusiastically with the Bumpus Rumpus story. They are making good progress with writing skills, many children can write their name clearly, although they are not always encouraged to label their own work. Children learn to recognise simple and complex words which are displayed throughout the nursery, for example, directing them to the fire exit or garden. They take ownership of their own labelled chair.

Children's mathematical development is secure. They are confident in recognising shapes, which are used innovatively in the daily routine. For example, children hold 3-D shapes of a circle and square, and know that this means it is their turn to speak at registration time. Children show developing knowledge of addition and subtraction, and can quickly identify that four children are playing in the home corner, so must wait until there is a vacancy. Many opportunities exist for children to recognise numbers on posters around the nursery. The deployment of staff occasionally means that incidental opportunities for introducing calculation are not used. For example, at snack time one table of children is well supported by staff, who ask them to decide if enough milk is available for those sitting down. Other tables are not manned at this time.

Children show a great deal of curiosity about the world around them. They are encouraged to use the garden every day and make full use of this, for example, to grow tomato plants and observe insects. Children spontaneously find snails, woodlice and ladybirds as they enjoy free time in the garden, and rush inside to observe these using magnifying glasses. They talk about how many legs a ladybird has, and how it wiggles and tickles. Resources are easily accessible to children at this time, as the day's topic of mini beasts is well planned and equipped. Children learn about their local community when they take walks to the nearby shore, or watch boats pass by and enjoy visits from the fire service. They are capable when using programmable toys, such as calculators, microwaves and mobile phones in their play. Children are able to design and build, using construction toys or junk modelling.

Children have good spatial awareness. When in the classrooms they move carefully to avoid others and move imaginatively, skipping down the room or crawling as they pretend to be a dog. In the garden children climb and balance on outdoor equipment and cycle confidently in the relatively confined space available to them. Children are supported well by staff, who give clear instruction on completing a three point turn to avoid the safety matting. Children's small muscle control is developing well through use of planned activities. They use tongs carefully to lift and count fir cones from a basket. Children have good pencil control and are able to use equipment such as scissors, glue sticks and the sellotape dispenser well.

Children use many interesting materials to create pictures and models. They are able to create their own designs, often with paints, during free play, which happens for the majority of each morning. In planned activities children use a wider range of materials creatively and imaginatively. They enjoy string painting, mix colours together, describe the shapes they have made as 'blobs' or 'crocodiles', and then use their hands to create swirls of colour. Children use their imagination well in role play, using all indoor and outdoor areas of the nursery premises. They are encouraged to express themselves during songs and using musical instruments, and practise story telling using the puppet theatre.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The nursery is effective in meeting children's individual needs and seeks detailed information from parents as children prepare to attend. All children benefit from the staff's secure knowledge of their character, their likes or dislikes, and family background. Staff always remember to discuss their work in detail with children, and treat children's comforters with care so each child feels important and valued. Children who have English as an additional language are well supported. The staff learn key words and maintain close communication with parents, ensuring children are fully involved in all nursery activities. The nursery have a positive attitude towards the care of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A member of staff has specific responsibility for this, has attended relevant training and has developed a good network of support with other professionals.

Children behave very well. Staff manage the rare incidences of unwanted behaviour calmly and quietly. Children are quickly taken to one side and the incident is discussed, if necessary with the 'victim' present. Children learn the impact of their behaviour on others. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour. They expect a 'please' and 'thank you' and reward children with praise when this is heard. Staff are good role models, they speak politely to each other and children at all times. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents have made informed choices about using the nursery, and have selected it for the intimate atmosphere and individual attention which is given to each child. They are very comfortable in speaking to any member of staff, and know that they can approach the owner, managers or keyworkers with any concerns. There are good systems in place to exchange information. Daily discussion is friendly and relaxed; a quiet area would be provided for discussion of a more confidential nature. Parents are very clear about the Foundation Stage curriculum. Colourful and informative displays of photographs in the reception area provide parents with clear guidance on activities children have done. These show parents how each activity links to a specific area of learning, such as, photographs of children constructing with blocks relate to children's physical development. Parents value the opportunity to be involved in their child's learning and know that they can speak to staff for a full review of their child's progress at any time. Parents are invited to share their skills during nursery sessions and are encouraged to send in items from home relating to topics children are covering at nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The team of staff work well together. There have been few changes to the team in recent years, and the ratio of adult to children is high, so children are provided with a consistent level of care. The nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care. There are satisfactory arrangements in place to recruit staff who fit into the existing team, and show willingness to obtain relevant skills and qualifications. However, the nursery take up basic references only on new staff; this is a Criminal Records Bureau check. This system does not adequately ensure that staff are suitable for their role.

Leadership and management of nursery education provision is good. The two managers work closely with the local authority development workers, and are committed to updating their skills to ensure their practice is up to date. There has been good progress on recommendations made at the last inspection of care and education. Managers take complete responsibility for

planning the broad curriculum and involve all staff in its implementation. Staff are encouraged to offer suggestions for activities, and their contribution towards each child's assessment records is valued by the managers. Observations of children's progress are completed by all staff as an ongoing activity. These are used to plan, informally, future activities to ensure children make progress in all areas of learning.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection of educational provision, the nursery were asked to develop their planning records to include details of how children would be grouped, what they would do and learn, and the role of the adult. The records needed to be sufficiently detailed to show how activities support children's progress towards the early learning goals. The nursery were also asked to develop methods of assessment to identify what children had achieved and needed to learn next. The assessments should show how the information gained would be used to inform planning for individual children. Improvements were needed in the information which was shared with parents, to ensure they were aware of the child's progress and were encouraged to share their observations of children at home.

Children's individual progress is clearly recorded by staff who make worthwhile observations on children throughout the morning. This information is then passed to the managers. The whole staff team meet briefly to discuss children's achievements each day. Each activity is thoroughly planned and assessed for its general effectiveness. However, the plans do not yet show how activities will be adapted for individual children; this remains an area for improvement. Managers complete a more formal assessment of children's progress and use these records in their discussions with parents.

The last inspection of care provided for children identified that staff needed to improve their knowledge of child protection issues. The records relating to day care activities required updating, with particular reference to the child protection policy, complaints procedure and system of daily registration. The contents of the first aid box and hand drying practice required improvement. Both managers have done advanced child protection training and arranged that the majority of staff complete basic training on this subject. The nursery is working closely with the local authority development workers to gradually update all policies and documentation which supports its operation. A register of children and staff is taken each day, and children's presence is also cross checked by collecting their individual name tags as they arrive. The nursery now check the contents of the first aid box periodically to ensure items are sufficient, and remain in date. Although the nursery have created visual reminders in the toilet area, and installed hand towels, children frequently forget to wash their hands.

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 at least one member of staff with a valid first aid qualification is on site at all times
- ensure children are consistently encouraged to learn about personal hygiene during the daily routine and that children's developing need for privacy in use of the toilet is respected
- improve procedures for vetting staff
- complete thorough risk assessments and improve cleaning routines to ensure a safe, a well maintained environment

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):

- continue to develop records to indicate how information gained from assessments is used to help children move to the next stage in their learning
- review the organisation of resources and daily routine to further promote children's independence, creativity and willingness to concentrate on activities of their choosing.

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