

St Judes Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	143553
Inspection date	18 July 2007
Inspector	Alison Jane Williams
Setting Address	Silver Street, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO5 3BW
Telephone number	02392 821726
E-mail	
Registered person	St Judes Nursery School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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 Judes Nursery School was registered in 1990. The nursery serves families living in the city of Portsmouth and the surrounding areas. It is situated in St Judes Youth Centre in Southsea, Portsmouth and has an enclosed area for outside play. A maximum of 60 children may attend the nursery at any one time. It is open Monday to Friday 08.00 - 18.00, term time only. St Judes also operates at play scheme, which is open 08:00 - 18:00 Monday - Friday, during the summer holidays. Children can attend on a full-time or part-time basis. There are currently 133 children on roll, including 86 children who are in receipt of funding. The nursery offers appropriate support to children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and speak English as an additional language. The setting employs a qualified manager to be responsible for the day to day running of the nursery school. In addition, a further 25 members of staff work directly with the children, 17 of whom are qualified and two are working towards a relevant early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are well protected and enjoy a very clean and healthy environment as staff implement effective hygiene procedures across the setting. Children are developing good self care skills and are learning about the importance of personal hygiene through consistent daily routines. They know they must wash their hands before eating and after toileting and they talk about washing off the germs you can't see and the dirt you can. Their independence is promoted as they can reach the facilities easily and by using anti-bacterial liquid and hot air hand driers, the risk of infection is minimised. Staff have a clear understanding of the procedures to follow when recording accidents and the administration of medication. Parents are required to sign to acknowledge the entries, keeping them informed at all times. The vast majority of staff have a first aid qualification, ensuring that children will be attended to immediately and appropriately if they have an accident. Fully stocked first aid kits are stored in various areas around the nursery ensuring they are easily accessible to all age groups in an emergency. If children hurt themselves during the session they are given a special sticker to acknowledge how brave they have been and these also help to alert parents to their accident.

Detailed procedures are in place to ensure children's dietary needs and allergies are clearly recorded and displayed for staff, to ensure their individual needs are met and respected at all times when snacks are provided. Children benefit from a nutritious diet because staff have a clear understanding of healthy eating. Children are provided with a wide range of snacks, such as, kiwis, strawberries, apples, bananas and bread sticks. They talk enthusiastically about the types of food they like and which foods are good for them. Staff sit with them and have general conversations at snack time making it a really sociable occasion. Children are learning good table manners and are actively praised when they remember to say please and thank you. Fresh drinking water is available throughout the session. Although, children can not access this independently as the jug and cups are kept on a high shelf out of their reach.

Children move around the setting freely and confidently from one play area to another. They enjoy a wide range of energetic physical activities, which contribute to their good health and physical development. They have daily access to an outside play area to enjoy the benefits of fresh air and exercise. As children use apparatus, such as, climbing frames, slides, balancing beams and ladders, they develop their physical skills and balance. They have opportunities to develop their small muscle skills. For example, they use tools independently, during creative and messy activities, such as, paint brushes, glue sticks and play dough cutters and are becoming competent learners.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children feel valued and part of the group and they confidently point out their art work and photographs, which are brightly displayed throughout the setting. The nursery is set up in an extremely attractive manner, providing a warm, interesting and child centred environment. The premises are very clean and well maintained, with posters and relevant information displayed on the walls and in the entrance lobby, helping to make children and their families feel welcome. Children have their own coat pegs, with their photographs and names above, and are encouraged to hang up their coats by themselves, on arrival. They benefit from being able to independently choose activities and freely and safely make their own selections from a good range of toys,

resources and play equipment. The nursery is an extremely safe and secure environment and access to the premises is strictly monitored. The front door to the building is kept locked and visitors have to ring a bell and show their identification before being admitted. Then sign in the visitor book to maintain a record of everyone in the group, helping to ensure children's safety. Comprehensive written risk assessments and detailed health and safety policies and procedures, ensure staff are fully aware of their individual roles and responsibilities towards the safety of the children and the premises. Children are gently reminded of the rules and are learning about keeping themselves safe, through daily routines and discussion. For example, they know they must line up before going outside and what happens during a fire drill.

Children are safeguarded from harm because staff have a clear understanding of their role with regards to child protection issues. They have a good understanding of the required documentation to be kept and have detailed child protection information and policies in place to secure children's well-being. Staff know how to effectively deal with child protection issues and ensure parents are made aware of their responsibilities with regards to protecting the children in their care, as part of the registration procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children under three years benefit from staff's sound understanding of Birth to three matters. Effective systems are in place to observe and monitor children's individual development and use this information to guide their planning; helping to ensure experiences offered are tailored to individual needs of young children. Younger children are developing decision making skills and are encouraged to choose resources, games and songs, helping them to become skilful communicators. They enjoy a good range of activities and experiences suitable for their ages and stages of development. For example, children aged two to three manipulate play dough, using their hands to squeeze, shape and mould the dough and enjoy soothing, calming play with sand and water. They are beginning to make connections pointing to the pictures in books and are developing their vocabulary, as they share familiar stories and interact with staff and their friends. Younger children thrive because staff have a secure knowledge of child development and recognise how they learn most effectively. Children aged under three years benefit from being with the older children, as well as having dedicated time in their individual key work group. Positive interaction between staff and children, helps them to develop a strong sense of self assurance and belonging to the group.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Children benefit from a well devised nursery education programme and staff have a secure knowledge the Foundation Stage. They get to know the children extremely well, enabling them to plan activities, which are aimed at their level of understanding, providing stimulation to hold their interest and ensure they make sound progress. Children benefit from good support and supervision, enabling them to ask questions to learn more. Their learning is extended through discussion and practical activities. Staff make good use of open-ended questions and support children in decision making, enabling them to develop good levels of self-confidence and independence. The whole staff team share the responsibility for the planning and assessment of the nursery education programme. Together they ensure all elements are fully covered and a balanced programme is provided, which covers the six areas of learning. The activities and resources are closely linked to the stepping stones, enabling children to make good progress

towards the early learning goals. The curriculum planning is detailed and activities are differentiated to ensure children's individual needs are being met. Although, the procedures to assess the impact activities and experiences have on their individual learning and progress towards the early learning goals are not secure and the written observation of what children do are not used effectively to guide planning, to ensure sufficient challenge is provided across all aspects of the curriculum.

Children are keen and eager to learn, they participate fully in the wide range of activities provided. They confidently suggest ideas and speak in group situations. For example, they bring items in from home to share with the whole group and display on the interest table. They show high levels of independence and they are encouraged to have responsibility and make choices as they select toys and resources and are actively involved in helping staff to tidy away at the end of the session. They are developing good self care skills. For example, they put on their own aprons for messy activities, wash and dry their hands and visit the toilet independently. They have a good awareness of the boundaries set and behaviour expectations within the nursery. They share and take turns well and are encouraged to negotiate this by themselves, using sand timers to help them learn to wait patiently and share things fairly.

Children have ample opportunities to practise their emergent writing skills, as they write or attempt to write their own names on their work. They can help themselves to writing materials throughout the session in a designated writing area and this is extended into the role-play area, enabling children to communicate their imagined ideas using emergent writing in different situations. They enjoy listening to stories and often predict the ending, guessing what will happen next. They are able to listen quietly and respond to questions from staff. They make good use of the book area, choosing books independently to look at individually and to share in a small group. They handle books correctly, turning the pages and holding them the right way up and when they finish they return books carefully to the shelves. They are beginning to link sounds and letters as they are introduced to phonics through the letter of the week.

Children use mathematical language all the time in their play. They talk about size and position, as they build sand castles and pour water and they recognise when various containers are empty and full. They use a range of resources, such as, compare bears, scales and tapes measures, to help they develop their concepts of size, weight and measurement. They say and use numbers all the time during their play. For example, talking about the ages, how many sleeps until their birthday and how many bricks are in their towers. They count everyday objects with confidence and can recognise numbers one to nine, as they complete a wooden puzzle. They join in enthusiastically with number rhymes, such as, 'Five Little Men In A Flying Saucer' and 'Five Little Monkeys'. They are beginning to recognise and recreate simple patterns, as they use threading beads and laces and pegs and pegboards.

Children have access to a computer and are developing their skills well. They are able to choose programmes and are gaining control of the mouse, as they use an appropriate range of soft ware. They are developing an appropriate sense of time. They are able to recall past events, talk about recent activities and they are beginning to use terms, such as, today, tomorrow and this afternoon. They are extremely familiar with the daily routines and specific activities are provided to promote their memory skills, such as Kim's game. They have ample opportunities to build and design their own imaginative items with various construction sets and they make models from re-cycled materials. When children ride on buses and the Gosport ferry and talk to visiting firemen and police officers, they learn about the people, places and services in their own community and a visit from the mobile farm enables them to learn about and handle a range of small animals.

Children have opportunities to explore a range of materials as they independently access a range of different media during art and craft activities. For example, they competently select tools, mix paints, print using a variety of objects and are introduced to new techniques, such as marble painting. They take pride in their achievements and point out their artwork which is displayed on the walls. Their imagination is well fostered as they have access to a good range of role-play equipment, including dressing up clothes, providing opportunities for them to act out their real and imagined ideas with their peers. They sing many songs and nursery rhymes from memory and use a range of musical instruments, recognising simple sound patterns and recreating them confidently.

Children enjoy varied opportunities for energetic physical activity, which contributes to their good health and physical development. They have access to a range of equipment such as skittles, hoops, balls and bean bags, which help them develop their co-ordination. They run around and exert themselves and enjoy playing circle games and negotiating an obstacle course. They develop the skills needed to dress and undress themselves, putting on their own PE kits before physical activity. They freely help themselves to writing tools and materials, scissors, glue sticks, play dough cutters and knives and are able to use these tools safely and with confidence.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are confident and have good levels of self esteem because staff praise and encourage them throughout their time at the nursery. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They learn about other cultures and festivals through art and craft activities and food tasting sessions and staff involve parents in many celebrations and special events throughout the year. For example, they take part in hat making sessions, eat mince pies and enjoy the children's nativity and toy story plays at Christmas time. During the festival of Eid they have their hands painted with henna and enjoy sampling new foods. Children see many positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability displayed throughout the setting. They have access a good range of resources, such as, multi-cultural dressing up clothes, books, posters and puzzles, helping them to learn about the wider world. Clear policies and procedures are in place for equal opportunities and inclusion and these are understood and well implemented by staff. Information is obtained through discussion and registration procedures, so staff are aware of children's individual needs and requirements and can value them as individuals.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their families are well supported because clear procedures and policies are in place and implemented by the staff. The special needs co-ordinator has attended training and has a clear understanding of her role and responsibilities. She seeks outside support and advice when necessary and works with parents and other agencies, such as, speech and language therapists, health visitors and the portage service, to develop individual educational plans.

Children's behaviour is very good throughout the nursery. They work and play well together and recognise the need to share and take turns. Clear rules and boundaries are consistently implemented across the nursery by all staff, so children know exactly what is expected of them. Staff act as positive role models and are friendly and courteous in all their interaction with each other and the children. Children are given a clear explanation and reason why their behaviour is unacceptable, helping them to begin to understand right from wrong. Children are fully aware of behaviour expectations and can explain the settings 'Golden Rules'.

Parents are welcomed into the group to share their knowledge, skills and interests with the children and are actively involved in fundraising and organising special events and outings. They are encouraged to take an active role in the group by joining the committee or volunteering to help during the session. Children benefit from the positive relationships staff establish with their parents and carers. They take the time to get to know the children and their family well and they share information daily at the beginning and end of the sessions. Parents receive essential information about the provision when their children enrol in the setting. They are given a detailed welcome pack which contains relevant information about the nursery and the early years curriculum. When children leave the group to start school, parents receive a book called 'All About Me', which is a personal record of their child's time at nursery which contains photographs and examples of their work. The welcome area in the lobby is used effectively to display further information and each parent receives a copy of the nursery's detailed policies and procedures. Parents are kept up-to-date through the notice board and regular newsletters. Although, the complaints procedures does not advise parents of the nursery's responsibility to respond to complaints made by them, in writing and keep a written record of any complaints they make.

The partnership with parents of children who are in receipt of funding for nursery education is good.

Parents receive detailed information about the nursery, including the group's aims and objectives and the Foundation Stage, in the welcome pack and there are good displays on the activities provided and what children learn from them linked to the six areas of learning. Parents are invited to share information about what their children knows when they first attend and staff use this information to help them complete their initial assessment. Detailed curriculum plans are displayed and newsletters include information on current topic and themes, to enable parents to gain a clear understanding of how their child learns and develops through play. They are able to speak with their child's key worker at any time about their child's development and discuss any concerns. Regular opportunities are provided for them to discuss their children's progress and to view the baseline assessment records, which are used to record their progress towards the early learning goals.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Thorough recruitment and vetting procedures, ensure children are safe and well protected. Staff complete a comprehensive induction programme and have written job descriptions, which enables them to clearly define their roles and responsibilities. However, procedures to periodically renew staff police and health checks have not yet been developed, to ensure the staff continue to remain suitable to work with children. There is a high importance placed on training and staff development, helping them to develop their skills and provide enhanced opportunities for children. Staff work well as a team and communicate effectively through informal discussion, handover books and formal meetings, helping to successfully promote good outcomes for children and ensure their safety and well-being. Children are well cared for because detailed written policies and procedures are known and implemented effectively by the staff. The nursery sessions run smoothly and the provision is well organised, enabling children move freely from one activity to another and ensuring they are fully occupied with many play and learning opportunities. All the required paperwork and documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and wellbeing are in place and have been maintained to a high standard, with a minor area identified for improvement. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of the setting is good.

The nursery manager plays an active role in the setting and together with the management team, she guides and supports the rest of the staff. The management team are extremely supportive and enthusiastic, encouraging and motivating the staff successfully. The nursery is very well organised and has a successful management team, who together share a vision of what they aim to provide for all children attending. They are committed to continuous improvement, setting clear directions for achievement and having detailed action plans in place. Staff are enthusiastic, motivated and attend many training opportunities to improve their knowledge and understanding in a variety of areas. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals because the curriculum planning is detailed and activities are differentiated to ensure their individual needs are being met. However, systems to review and evaluate routines and daily activities are not secure, to enable staff to ensure they always work well and the aims and objectives of each activity are met. Staff observe and record the children's achievements although this information is not always used to effectively enable staff to plan for the next steps in children's individual learning.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection a recommendation was made to ensure that the child protection procedures for the nursery comply with local Area Child Protection Committee procedures. Since the previous inspection the body responsible for child protection has changed to the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The nursery's detailed child protection policies and procedures have been up-dated to reflect these changes, ensuring staff have a clear understanding of the procedures to follow and the agencies to contact, if concerns were identified.

Nursery Education

The setting was asked to give consideration to further developing the system of evaluating activities to ensure the continual high level of learning experiences. Since the last inspection the nursery have tried various methods to evaluate activities and have yet to find a secure system, which enables all staff to make a valued contribution. A new system is planned and will be implemented at the start of the Autumn term.

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:

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):

- ensure the complaints procedure is up-dated to reflect changes in regulations and Ofsted's contact details
- develop procedures to confirm staff's ongoing suitability

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 a system to evaluate the daily routines and activities and ensure that the recorded observations of what children do are used to inform planning for the next steps in their individual 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