

# Plaxtol Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY233507
<b>Inspection date</b>	27 June 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Susan Jennifer Scott
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<b>Registered person</b>	Sarah Jane Elinor Shewell
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Plaxtol Nursery School opened in 2001. It operates from two rooms in a village hall in Plaxtol. The nursery serves the local area.

There are currently 39 children from two years and nine months to five years on roll. This includes 29 funded children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting welcomes children with learning difficulties or disabilities.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.00 until 12.00 on Monday to Thursday and there is a lunch club on Tuesday and Thursday until 13:00. The sessions operate from 09.00 until 15.00 on Mondays and Fridays.

There are six part time staff including the manager, who work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level two or three.

The setting receives support from the Local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is outstanding.

The children are protected from infection by the good practice of staff who can refer to relevant information on infectious diseases and illnesses. Children are also protected by the training that staff have in this area and their current first aid skills. This enables staff to deal appropriately with injuries or symptoms of illness. Children's health is effectively promoted because the staff are well informed about children's health care matters and provide very good support for individuals.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well organised activities and routines. They wash their hands after using the toilet, use wipes before eating their snack and can access tissues independently. The record keeping and documentation ensures parents are informed of accidents and illness so that children's good health is promoted.

Children enjoy a choice of snacks that are healthy, such as oranges, malt loaf or dried fruits. They confidently enjoy the social and learning opportunities that are promoted by staff when they sit down for their snack and drink in small groups. This encourages children to develop healthy eating habits and their competence in social situations. Snacktimes are used to skilfully engage all children, for example, to discuss what foods they like or dislike and how some fruits are grown. Staff also use this time to encourage children to review their experiences during the session.

Children experience a good range of energetic physical activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They relish the opportunities to play outside when they choose whether they wish to engage in physical play or quietly explore the natural provision such as the area under the trees. This underpins children's understanding of how to keep healthy and to rest or be active according to their needs. Children make choices about the smaller apparatus they can use outside on a regular basis. This builds their skills and successfully encourages their active participation.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children arrive happily and settle well. They are unable to leave the premises without a suitable adult as security of the premises is very good. Children are cared for in a clean, well maintained and attractive environment. The displays of information for parents, and the examples such as the mini beasts picture show that staff nurture children's contributions, and this makes them feel valued.

The good organisation of interesting toys and equipment means children can move around safely, freely selecting from the resources on the tables and in units at child height. As a result, children organise, extend and enjoy their play. Staff organise toys and resources so that children are encouraged to improvise and use their imagination such as using a fir cone to texturise the clay they use. This ensures children are interested in the opportunities offered.

Children benefit from an excellent range of safety measures, clearly documented in risk assessment procedures; for example, sockets are covered, locks on gates and doors provide a fully secure outdoor play area. Children benefit from well established systems, such as recording visitors and monitoring access to the nursery. They develop a good awareness of safety through

secure routines, such as practising safe evacuations. This effectively increases children's awareness of safety issues.

Staff can access a good selection of child protection information as well as training so they know what action to take if they have concerns about a child in their care. This enables them to safeguard the welfare of children and to implement the written policy.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children who attend the setting are very confident and secure. Staff have been trained to use the Leuven scale of assessment and children benefit from the promotion of child centred learning as well as the attention given to their wellbeing while using the facilities. All children benefit from the carefully constructed programme which encourages their active participation and nurtures their contributions.

The organisation of the sessions is excellent, providing a good balance of individual choices, small group and whole group activities. Children are confident and readily participate in whole group times when staff gather them together and give instructions for them to follow. For example, children enjoy the challenge of hopping on the spot. There are stimulating opportunities for children to experience well thought out activities and visits in the local community. For example, they visit apple orchards and a local farm to learn about fruit growing and animal rearing.

Nursery Education:

Teaching and learning is outstanding.

Children enjoy and learn from a broad and versatile range of activities. A weekly plan of activities that covers the six areas of the curriculum offers varied opportunities for all children to play and build upon their learning successfully. Children's assessments are regular and comprehensive, covering their progress in all aspects and areas of the curriculum. The staff devise activities so that these are linked to the assessments of children, meeting individual needs through one to one, or small group activities with their keyworkers. Children make good progress because the staff evaluate and monitor their levels of engagement to review their plans constantly.

Staff work together effectively, utilising the secure procedures to get to know the children and to plan for their development effectively. Children have a relaxed relationship with the staff and benefit from well organised routines and activities which are tailored to individual needs and promote their choices. Staff carefully observe and assess their development. They are skilled at using stepping stones of the Foundation Stage to identify children's development and to construct individual play plans to enable all children to flourish. They ask challenging questions such as 'Do you think we may have one too many?' when making legs for the starfish out of clay, and suggest solutions for children to use.

Whole group times are used to skilfully engage all children and encourage them to participate, discussing their experiences and ideas. For example, children discuss which foods are to be served at snacktime and use a story sac to prompt descriptions about their theme of the sea. Staff skilfully use questioning to enable children to build their speaking and communication skills. This successfully builds children's confidence and self esteem as they articulate and discuss their play. They enjoy listening to stories when they share books with staff and use

books for enjoyment and reference with their friends. This results in children becoming enthusiastic users of books during the sessions.

A stimulating range of equipment develops children's mathematical thinking. For example, challenging games and varied puzzles support children's learning effectively. Children explore shapes and patterns when they draw shapes and they are stimulated by the opportunity to discover items in different boxes which they count and add up. Children are making good progress developing their understanding of nature through well planned topic work linked to the environment and use technical equipment to explore and investigate. For instance, they enthusiastically examine toy insects on the light box or with magnifiers.

Children enjoy frequent exercise outside as well as interesting activities that require fine motor skills such as using pencils to write their names, enabling them to practise and make good progress in tasks requiring dexterity. They pour their drinks with great care and have fun cutting paper, card and tissue using scissors without fear of failure. Children's creative and imaginative development is encouraged through activities such as painting, singing and moving to music. Staff are skilled at promoting participation in movement, music and singing activities which children clearly enjoy; for example, all children relish the opportunity to play varied instruments to a piece of music.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are highly valued as individuals. They develop a positive attitude to others and gain a good understanding about the local community and wider world through celebrating festivals, tasting food from a variety of cultures and having access to a good range of opportunities and play resources showing positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability.

The individual needs of all children who attend are acknowledged and successfully met. The nursery has developed very effective arrangements to care for children with learning difficulties and disabilities, gathering expertise from varied specialists, such as the speech and language therapist and following the advice given. As a consequence, children feel secure and enjoy their experiences as they are all included.

Children's behaviour is very good and they play together harmoniously because the staff are enthusiastic role models and encourage children to learn to take turns and share. This means that children feel very secure and conflicts are rare. For example, they learn to understand right and wrong through consistent boundaries, calm explanations, clear instructions and positive expectations from staff. Children enjoy responsibility for choosing snack foods and outdoor play items. The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Children benefit from parents' involvement in their learning as their play plans are shared with parents who can, and do, contribute towards these. This results in positive support from parents for their children's learning. For example, there are story sacs and books which children can take home to share and discuss with family members. Parents are given information on the planned activities and routines, receiving good information on the Foundation Stage curriculum through newsletters, workshop type events, consultations, and termly family events. These all enable staff and parents to work together to help children thrive.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children benefit from good organisation which maintains secure systems to support and value them. Systems for induction training, policies and procedures are well thought through and effective in keeping children healthy, safeguarding their welfare and effectively promoting their learning.

Staff are able to update their knowledge and skills through regular training. They ensure methods of working with all children are appropriate. They have investigated and use programmes such as write dance and use this to support children's development and learning effectively. As a result, outcomes to promote children's welfare, care and learning are constantly developing. There are policies and procedures in place to meet the National Standards. Consequently, children benefit from a staff team that have a secure understanding of good practice. The required documentation is frequently updated and reviewed, as well as being available to parents.

Management and Leadership is outstanding.

The manager has a clear vision for the setting with a commitment to the development and achievement of all children which is indicated by the exceedingly good provision they have made to ensure children engage in all the learning opportunities offered. The manager and staff promote the integration of care and nursery education to successfully enhance children's learning. They continually review and monitor the provision in a systematic, thorough manner. All staff are encouraged to evaluate the curriculum to identify strengths and areas for improvement which are carefully implemented after discussion and review. Observations and evaluations are regularly used to monitor the effect of changes and assess the effect on the children.

Equality of opportunity is effectively promoted and discrimination tackled so that all children make good progress. The manager and staff share a commitment to promoting an inclusive environment in which every child matters and have been trained to achieve this. The nursery promotes quality assurance through the good use of questionnaires, addressing all the suggestions indicated by parents.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection of care there was one recommendation made which was to make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint. Children and parents now benefit from a clear and well structured complaints procedure and all the records have been provided ready for use if needed.

## **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 can be seen 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**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

#### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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)