

The Nursery School Brookland

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 127052 |
| Inspection date | 12 June 2007 |
| Inspector | Jenny Kane |
| Setting Address | The Church Rooms, High Street, Brookland, Romney Marsh, Kent, TN29 9SZ |
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| Registered person | Maxine Mills |
| 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?

Brookland Nursery School has been registered since 1987. It is a privately owned group, which operates from The Old Church Rooms in the village of Brookland. There is access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery at any one time. It is open Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 15:00 during term time. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group serves the local area and surrounding area.

There are currently 42 children on roll aged from two to five years. Of these, 30 children receive funding for early education. The group currently supports children with additional needs.

Including the owner/manger there are six staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years childcare qualifications. The group receives support from the Local Authority Early Years advisory teacher.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean and comfortable premises, maintained to a good standard. Staff actively promote the health of the children by ensuring high standards of hygiene and cleanliness. For example, they have a rota for cleaning, clear up as they go and they readily share tasks. First aid supplies are available and the majority of the staff hold current first aid certificates and therefore they can act appropriately if an accident occurs. Children are developing an understanding of personal hygiene through good care routines, such as, washing their hands before they eat their snacks. Older children are independent when using the bathroom and are able to manage by themselves.

All snacks take account of the children's individual dietary or medical requirements. Children gain an understanding of healthy eating as staff provide a range of fruit at snack time. They queue up, serve themselves from the snack table and pour their own drinks. Children bring packed lunches, which are stored suitably until it is time to eat. They sit together at tables at lunchtime, choosing where they sit. Staff eat their lunch with the children and this encourages good social interaction. Some children bring a toothbrush and toothpaste to clean their teeth after meals.

Children regularly enjoy a wide range of activities, which contribute to their health and develop their physical skills. They use the nursery garden in most weathers and go for walks around the village. From the garden children have many opportunities to look at the nature. For example, horses and sheep graze nearby and a heron visits often. In hot weather, staff erect a gazebo to protect children from the sun. They also ensure that children wear sun cream and hats and provide plenty of drinking water. After strenuous activity, the children rest and sit quietly on cushions in the book corner.

There is a good amount of play equipment available to develop children's large motor skills. They move about the garden confidently riding bikes and cars showing good control and awareness of where other children are. Children enjoy bouncing on the trampoline waiting until it is their turn. They jump from the low tree stumps, bounce around on space hoppers and balance on the wooden cubes. When using the climbing frame they show good co-ordination moving hand to hand along the ladder, climbing up and sliding down. They enjoy playing in the wooden playhouse where they make up games using the props. In the music gazebo, they have fun bashing the wind chimes and bells to make various sounds. When playtime is over children automatically help to clear away the toys and equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in an environment that is welcoming and has plenty of available space. Staff carry out daily risk assessments and check all areas both indoors and the garden before use to ensure safety. This allows children to move about freely and confidently. Staff pay good attention to the children's safety for example reminding them not to run and supervising when using the steps to the garden. Fire safety is good, exits are clear, an evacuation plan is in place and drills carried out regularly. The front door remains locked with visitors gaining access by ringing the doorbell. This ensures only welcomed visitors enter the setting.

Toys and resources are clean, well maintained and conform to safety standards. Children make choices for themselves and freely select what they play with from the toys that are stored in boxes, cupboards and shelves. Staff give thought to the organisation of the resources, the layout of the room and displays of work help to make a stimulating play area.

The manager has a good knowledge of child protection issues and understands her role. She has written procedures in place, which she shares with parents to keep them informed of the setting's responsibilities. However, staff have not yet accessed the latest safeguarding children training and the policy needs updating. Staff are clear about promoting children's safety and welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children show enthusiasm and imagination during play and are eager to suggest ideas and ask questions. For example, at circle time children discuss caterpillars and their habitat. One child goes round showing a caterpillar in a container. Children are excited and readily describe it and ask when it will become a butterfly. One child tells the group that it has to go to sleep in its cocoon first. The theme of mini beasts continues throughout the day with children making butterflies on sticks during craft, looking at models and drawing butterflies and the story is about the hungry caterpillar.

Children are interested and partake enthusiastically because the staff give thought and attention to the organisation of activities. They encourage children to choose what they play with and discover things for themselves. Children move about, form small groups during play, and obviously enjoy each other's company. They work well together sharing and taking turns. When playing with the railway they find if they cooperate and share the rails, they can make a longer track. Several more children join in the game. One child gathers up all the trucks and counts them before sharing them out.

Younger children receive plenty of attention and encouragement from staff who enthusiastically join in their play. Birth to three matters is developing within the nursery and staff have a good understanding of the four components. However, there is limited written information and displays available for the parents about the framework. All children, particularly the under threes benefit from having a key worker who liaises with their parents. This supports their emotional well-being.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress across all the areas of learning. They are achieving well because staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones. Staff are all involved with the planning of the curriculum which is based on themes and termly topics. Plans show clearly what the activity is, what it will achieve and how it links to the early learning goals. Children concentrate well and are motivated by staff who make their learning fun.

Children have positive and friendly relationships communicating clearly with adults and peers. They listen well during stories, answer to their names at register and initiate conversations during group time. There are many opportunities for independence with children taking themselves to the toilet, serving their own drinks and choosing what they play with. Children are beginning to identify written words through labelled areas, equipment, coat pegs and named

trays. They have plenty of mark making equipment available during activities and role-play. Some children manage to write their names on cards that they are making for Fathers day.

Children use their imagination in the home corner, dressing up area and in the outdoor playhouse where they have an assortment of props. They all enjoy moving about during music and movement pretending to be spacecraft and making rocket noises. Children's fine motor skills are developing well with the use of small tools such as brushes and scissors during craft, and games and puzzles with small pieces. There is good discussion of number, shape and size during daily routines such as register where some children manage to count up to twenty-three when counting the number of children present. Others incorporate mathematics during play in the garden where the cars and bikes are numbered. They find the written number signs from one to ten where they park their vehicles.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The nursery fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children are happy and settled because they have developed secure relationships with the staff. The manager discusses the children's backgrounds with parents, to ensure the group meets any specific or individual needs. Staff work to the policy of inclusion and have a good understanding of equality issues. Some staff have undertaken training in the subject and this ensures they are confident in their ability to provide care for children with a range of abilities.

Children gain a knowledge and understanding of the wider world through a variety of topics and celebrations. They have equal access to range of play materials, which reflect diversity and positive images. Children have many opportunities to discover their local environment and nature during walks around the village. For example, they recently went to watch the blacksmith shoeing horses. There are good opportunities for children to use information and communication technology to support their learning. They use the computer in small groups and are confident selecting the programmes. Children enjoy finding out about how things work when playing with cameras, binoculars, magnets, mirrors and torches.

Staff use appropriate and consistent strategies that encourage positive behaviour and as a result, children's behaviour is good. They play cooperatively, wait their turns and show a caring attitude to other children. Parents discuss how to manage children's unwanted behaviour with the staff and work together to deal with any issues as they arise, which ensures consistent care.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the friendly yet professional partnerships that have developed between the staff and their parents. Parents talk openly to staff and key workers sharing relevant information about their children, which means they are fully involved in their care. The manager is keen to find out parents views and is readily available at any time during the session to speak to parents.

Parents of children receiving funding for education receive clear information in the prospectus about the Foundation Stage curriculum and the six areas of learning. Staff regularly carry out observations and assess children's progress. They make notes during activities, which they later transfer into children's individual development folders. Although these folders are available for parents to look at at any time, they do not ask to see them on a regular basis. The manager is keen to share her knowledge and to involve parents further with their children's education and learning. Parents attend consultations and social events. They state they are happy with the service and make positive comments that reflect their satisfaction.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

All mandatory information and records relating to children are in place and appropriately maintained. They are confidential and readily available to parents. Written policies and prospectus are clear about the service the nursery offers and reflects practice. Parents have access to these along with other written information. However, some of the procedures lack detail, for example complaints and child protection. The staff organise the activities and resources effectively ensuring children receive appropriate care and attention. The day is flexible and well-planned, allowing activities to flow so that children enjoy a mix of small and large group time as well as free play and individual attention.

Leadership and management are good. The owner takes a very active role in managing the nursery and has a good relationship with her staff working alongside them and leading by example. As a result, staff are confident to make suggestions, voice ideas and share tasks. Both the deputies are qualified, experienced and very capable of taking responsibility in the manager's absence. Staff demonstrate a good commitment to continued improvement and self-development. They partake in regular staff meetings, in-house discussion and attend external training. Staff are keen to share their learning and experiences with their colleagues. This ensures they are able to identify their strengths and areas for improvement, both individually and as a team. All staff are involved in the planning, monitoring and evaluating the curriculum in order to promote the children's care and learning. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last care inspection the provider has taken account of the recommendations. A staff induction programme is now in place, a key worker system has been developed and policies have been updated.

The points for consideration have been acknowledged and the curriculum has been improved by the development of some areas. The opportunities for children to understand that number counting links in with written marks and the reorganisation of story time has helped children's mathematical and literary development. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world has been enhanced by opportunities to celebrate festivals and partake in a variety of topics.

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):

- find ways to inform the parents about the Birth to three matters framework
- update existing child protection and complaints procedures

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):

- consider ways of further sharing written information about the six areas of learning and children's development folders with the parents

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