



## **Nursery @ Itchen College**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131604
<b>Inspection date</b>	07 October 2005
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<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 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 Nursery at Itchen College opened in 2001. It operates from a building with disabled access, within the grounds of Itchen College, in eastern Southampton. There are three play rooms for children, with adjacent office, kitchen, toilets, staff room and outside play facilities. The nursery has been set up as a partnership between the owners and Itchen College and is jointly managed by both parties.

A maximum of 47 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are

currently 65 children from 3 months to 5 years on roll, including 15 children in receipt of nursery funding. The nursery welcomes children who have special needs and also those who speak English as an additional language. The nursery is open all year round. Sessions are from Monday to Thursday from 08:00 to 17:00 and on Friday from 08:00 to 16:00. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The nursery employs 11 staff. There are 8 members of staff who have relevant early years qualifications and 3 are working towards a recognised qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's health is very effectively promoted. They are served with fruit at snack times and water or milk to drink. A packed meal is served at lunch time, and also at afternoon tea. Water is freely available for older children whenever they wish to keep them hydrated. Older babies are encouraged to develop skills and become independent at meal times through feeding themselves and being supported and encouraged by staff. Specific needs of children such as allergies and sensitivities are carefully recorded and very good systems are in place to ensure their needs are met. Children rest and sleep according to their needs. Those that need reassurance are sympathetically supported and soon respond to skilled efforts to calm them when they arrive.

Children enjoy fresh air, exercise and physical play in the garden with a variety of activities which gives older children opportunities to slide, throw and catch balls, use ride on toys and play games. This helps children to develop physical skills and to keep fit and active. Children understand that they need to wear sun protection creams and hats to protect them from the sun. Children experience the pleasure of being out doors in the rain when they put on their Wellingtons and splash in the puddles. All children benefit from soft play experiences in the nursery or at the college when they practise climbing, tumbling and balancing. Opportunities to climb and balance on rigid equipment are less frequent.

Children are cared for in a comfortable clean environment and older children learn about the need for good personal hygiene. Children's toys and equipment are clean and well maintained. Children become independent by managing their toilet needs and washing their hands as soon as they are able to with sensitive support from staff. Environmental and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures are promoted. An effective sickness policy helps to prevent cross infection and the spread of illness.

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

The provision is good.

Risks to children are minimised effectively because the setting has a high level of security. Risk assessments are carried out regularly both indoors and outside and all medicines and cleaning materials are stored safely. Children know about fire safety

procedures as they are practised regularly. First aid kits are available throughout the nursery and staff are qualified in first aid so that action can be taken to treat children in the event of an emergency.

Children are carefully supervised during the time they spend in the care of the nursery. Babies are checked frequently when they have sleeps. Older children learn to become aware of safety issues such as walking rather than running indoors which helps to prevent injury to themselves and others. They learn to take responsibility for own safety by carefully listening and looking both ways for traffic before they cross the road in the college grounds to go the book bus. Children are safe on outings because staff prepare very well and ensure they carry equipment and information to cover all eventualities.

Staff have a secure understanding of child protection procedures which helps to ensure that children's needs are met.

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

The provision is good.

Children are relaxed and happy at the nursery due to carefully considered settling in procedures and attention to individual needs. Children are confident and demonstrate a sense of belonging as they arrive, exchange greetings with staff, place their packed lunch on the trolley and choose something to play with.

Children spend their time purposefully in a variety of ways which helps them to enjoy their time at the nursery and maintain interest. They are sometimes active and sometimes restful. They enjoy books, games, music and benefit from very good resources and a wide range of accessible toys and equipment. They have frequent opportunities to enjoy sensory experiences. Babies and toddlers explore sound and texture with toys such as shakers, activity centres and natural materials. They enjoy the wall mirrors which are positioned at their level and help them to develop their growing awareness of self. All children are supported in developing language skills because staff talk and listen to them. They enjoy songs, rhymes books and stories. Younger children make good progress because staff refer to the Birth to three matters framework to ensure activities are stimulating and valuable. They make observations and notes about children's care and development which they share with parents ensuring continuity of care for the children.

### **NURSERY EDUCATION**

The quality of the teaching and learning is good. Three and four year olds are making sound progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a clear working knowledge of the Foundation stage of learning. They provide a wide range of activities and experiences, ask questions and offer praise and encouragement. Children enjoy their activities and can access many of the resources available to them. They use their imagination when they explore paint, play dough, play with small worlds and move to music. They enjoy rhymes, puzzles, books and games which help them to practise number and language skills. Staff meet together and share their ideas to make activity plans.

Children are motivated and interested in what they do, for example they eagerly find and stick their name cards on the board at registration, they respond in chorus when they are asked “what is the weather like today?” and “ what day was it yesterday”? They take part in stories in the book bus and are highly involved when the story is brought alive with the use of props such as a large furry spider. They engage in imaginative play when they use the trains, track and explore the dolls house. They enjoy painting, cooking, growing a variety of plants such as sunflowers and radishes. They also enjoy construction, working with a variety of resources such as plastic interlocking bricks and wooden blocks. They explore music, dancing and movement and malleable materials such as sparkly black play dough and water with glitter. Children have opportunities to explore role play in the home corner but this is not always used in the most effective way to promote and extend learning.

Children are confident speakers and listeners. They practise and develop skills as they take part in conversations with staff and other children. Their vocabulary is extended through talking about a range of topics at circle time. Children learn about number through rhymes, games and practical activities such as counting how many children there are when they gather to go to the book bus, counting and matching the numerals in a number puzzle, and counting how many cups of flour are needed when they make play dough. They explore space and shape as they build with large blocks and work with shape puzzles. They practise reading and writing skills when they identify their coat pegs, make marks, draw and label their work.

Written assessments and records show children’s achievements and are clearly linked to the areas of learning. This information is used to inform future planning to build on what individual children already know and can do.

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

The provision is good.

Children behave very well, they enjoy playing together and older children develop a sense of responsibility by helping to tidy away before meal times. Younger children are supported with sharing and taking turns which helps them to work harmoniously with others. Children and staff use discussion at circle time to consider positive codes of behaviour which gives children responsibility and understanding. Children are helped to develop a positive attitude to difference when they explore their different families and homes in topics. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are valued as individuals and are often independent in selecting their own resources from those set out and also from storage. Children are happy and settled in the homely environment. They play together well, enjoy each others company and are at ease with the staff. Children with special needs are welcomed and can be effectively supported as staff are qualified in this area. They also have established links with other agencies for support and further expertise.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are warmly welcomed into the setting to help settle children and provide information about home routines, allergies, likes and dislikes. This is used to help children to feel at ease and minimise disruption to

routines. There is a clear complaints procedure which is made available to parents. Children enjoy attending.

Parents are given information about activities and topics and offered suggestions which helps them to take an active role in their children's learning. They are given comprehensive information about how the setting runs, policy packs and regular newsletters. This helps to ensure continuity for children between the setting and the home.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The provision meets the range of needs of the children who attend. Space and resources are very well organised with different base rooms for different age groups. Areas are used for different activities, for example sand and water play, role play, comfortable book areas and storage which is mostly child accessible to maximise opportunities available to children to self select.

Policies and procedures are clearly set out, shared with all staff and made available to parents which contributes to children's well being in the nursery. All the required documentation is in place and there are effective recruitment, induction procedures and training for new staff. There is a rigorous system to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Staff are clear about their responsibilities through written job descriptions, appraisal and effective support. They are encouraged to share their ideas and take an active role in their professional development. Staff are valued and turnover is low which helps children to feel settled. Children can be treated in the event of an emergency because permissions have been obtained from parents to cover medical treatment or advice.

The leadership and management are good. The management and staff teams work together and are committed to continuing to develop, reflect upon and improve education and care. This is achieved through evaluation, training, working with the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, local schools and the Pre-school learning alliance.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the setting was asked to further develop the programme for physical development. Staff have since attended training and have developed more soft play opportunities and purchased bats, balls and hoops. This has led to an enhancement of children's physical skills. They are currently in the process of obtaining more equipment to progress this further.

They were asked to review the use of planning documents to ensure that the intended learning for children at different stages of development is clear. They now have plans linked to the areas of learning and the individual record of achievements show children make good progress and are offered sufficient challenge.

They were asked to improve procedures relating to food hygiene, such as safe storage and reheating and now have a fridge thermometer which is checked daily and a probe to check the temperature of re-heated food. Parents are informed that packed lunches cannot be stored in a fridge and advised to ensure lunches are safe to be stored.

They were asked to ensure that new and existing staff and parents have ready access to all relevant information and that documentation is up to date. This has been achieved. There is now a policy folder for staff, volunteers and parents and documentation is all up to date and frequently reviewed.

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

Since the last inspection Ofsted has received two complaints.

In November 2004 there was a complaint relating to National Standard 7 – Health. As a result the provider undertook an internal investigation and reported back to Ofsted. Ofsted did not take any action.

In October 2005 there was a complaint relating to National Standard 3 – Care, learning and play and also National Standard 7 - Health. An inspector visited and a recommendation was set to improve an aspect of hygiene which has since been addressed.

The provision remains qualified for registration.

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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):

- develop the opportunities for children to practise a broader range of climbing and balancing skills.

#### **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 the role play to extend the variety of learning experiences

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