

# Stonewell Cottage Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	220109
<b>Inspection date</b>	08 June 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Andrea Ewer
<b>Setting Address</b>	14 Church Hill, Moulton, Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN3 7SW
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<b>Registered person</b>	Vicki Fowkes
<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?

Stone Well Cottage Day Nursery was registered in 1993. The nursery operates from a converted cottage in the Moulton area of Northamptonshire. Children are grouped according to their age in six rooms. Children share access to an outdoor area to the front of the premises. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 18:00 each weekday, all year round and children attend for a variety of sessions.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 38 children from three months up to five years old. There are currently 60 children on roll, 20 of whom receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children who have special educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

A total of 11 core staff work directly with the children, of whom, all hold relevant child care qualifications. The nursery is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance, and is currently being assessed for accreditation by the National Day Nursery Association. The nursery receives support from a local authority advisory teacher and 'Birth to three matters' advisor.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Good attention is given to maintaining children's good health. The premises are well-organised, clean and tidy and staff carry out regular hygiene routines that effectively prevent the spread of infection. Staff wear disposable gloves and aprons for changing nappies, changing mats are cleaned after each use and tables are cleaned before and after meals. Children learn simple good hygiene practices as part of everyday routines and older children become increasingly independent in their personal care. They readily wash their hands at appropriate times during the day and understand they must use soap to wash the germs away. Posters and photographs of children remind them of the importance of hand washing. Children's welfare is safeguarded because sufficient staff hold a current first aid qualification and well stocked first aid equipment is readily accessible in the event of minor accidents or illness. Records that support staff to maintain children's good health are in place, such as, written consent to seek emergency medical treatment or advice and accident and medicine records. Records relating to children's health are shared with parents and ensure their good health is not compromised.

Children enjoy nutritious meals and snacks that are freshly prepared on the premises and contribute to their healthy growth and development. For example, they have fresh fruit daily with their snack and pasta bolognese followed by yoghurts for lunch. Children have regular access to fresh drinking water which older children help themselves to. Children who have special dietary needs are well catered for. Alternative meals are provided and seating arrangements ensure they are not able to access other children's food.

Children benefit from regular fresh air and have very good opportunities to develop their physical skills as they actively participate in a range of activities both indoors and outside. They walk carefully along the balance beams, move in various ways around the obstacle course, push or ride on wheeled toys and jump vigorously on the trampoline. This helps to develop their large muscles and improve control of their bodies. Children also enthusiastically join music and movement sessions indoors which helps to develop co-ordination.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in bright and stimulating premises where they feel at home. Attractive displays of their art work and the many photographs of children throughout the premises help them feel a strong sense of belonging. Rooms, furniture and equipment are all well-organised and allow children to access the extensive range of good quality resources independently. Children enjoy playing outdoors where creative use is made of space. They roll balls down tubes fixed to the wall and draw on the chalk board attached to the wall.

Active steps are taken to minimise hazards and prevent accidents. Annual risk assessments are carried out with action taken clearly identified. Safety gates are fitted in the area for children under two years to prevent them leaving their designated area unsupervised, smoke alarms are fitted throughout the premises and all visitor's sign in and out of the nursery. Staff are vigilant about children's safety and ensure furniture, equipment and resources are safe as they set out and tidy away rooms each day. Children's safety is further promoted because staff are deployed effectively and they supervise children well.

Children are well protected from harm or neglect because staff have secure knowledge of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and the correct procedure to follow if they are concerned a child may be being harmed. The designated person regularly attends training to ensure the nursery procedures comply with current guidelines and information about the role of the nursery in protecting children from harm is displayed on the parents' notice board.

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

The provision is good.

Children are settled and secure in the nursery. They share warm, relaxed relationships with staff who interact positively with them throughout the day. Children under three years make good progress because well thought out records based on the 'Birth to three matters' framework are well maintained. Staff make regular observations of children and include photographs and samples of their art activities to show their progress. The next steps for each child's development is clearly identified and the information is used to plan future activities. This successfully contributes to helping children move on to the next stage in their development.

Children purposefully engage in the stimulating range of both planned and self-initiated activities that promote their physical, intellectual, social and emotional development and helps them to make good progress. Children under three years move around with increasing confidence as they start to crawl and walk in the well laid out rooms. They develop their language and communication skills as staff talk to them consistently and respond to their sounds and they enthusiastically join in simple action songs and rhymes. Children explore man made and natural materials with interest as they engage in heuristic play and enjoy a variety of craft activities where staff support them to develop their creative skills. They use their imagination well as they happily dress up in hats and look at themselves in the mirror and mould shapes in the sand.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals because staff plan and provide a stimulating range of activities around the six areas of learning and clear learning outcomes are identified. Staff have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn which enables them to effectively extend children's learning during both planned and spontaneous activities. Children's learning is further promoted because staff skilfully integrate the learning outcomes into all areas of play and regularly revisit topics. Children's progress records are very well maintained and used effectively to both inform planning and show how activities will be adapted to meet the needs of all children. Evaluation is used effectively to identify when children's learning has been successful and how activities could be developed to further extend their learning.

Children are highly confident learners particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. They have excellent opportunities to make choices throughout the day including whether to play indoors or outside, which room to play in and which activity to join. They play extremely well together and understand the rules for getting along including sharing and taking turns. For example, children put the pieces of a floor puzzle together, each taking their turn and talking about 'how hot the dragon's fire is'. Children actively seek out others to share experiences, such as deciding together that they will go outside to play. This helps to develop children's self-confidence and subsequently they become independent. Children are developing their early reading, writing and communication skills. They regularly sit in the cosy book corner where they look at books for enjoyment and participate in the book sharing scheme where they

borrow books to read at home. Children start to link letters to sounds as they bring in items from home starting with a particular letter and enthusiastically join the sounds lotto game where they identify and match the sound to the corresponding pictures. Children have many opportunities for mark making. Some children form the letters of their name correctly and younger children happily draw pictures of their family. This helps children understand that print carries meaning. Children speak with confidence both in small and large groups to share their news, to describe and generally during conversation.

Children are making very good progress in mathematics. They count spontaneously during everyday practical activities and use mathematical language with confidence such as more than, under, over and through. They gain an understanding of volume and capacity whilst filling containers in the sand and water, sort glass beads carefully into groups and work out which items will fit through the plastic tube. Displays show numbers in everyday situations, such as clocks, tape measures, money and shopping receipts which helps children understand how numbers are used in daily life. Children are gaining an excellent understanding of the world. They take travelling bear on holiday with them and identify on maps of the world and Great Britain where they have been although they have fewer opportunities to learn about the cultures and beliefs of others. Children use a range of resources that helps them to gain an understanding of how things work and living things. They look for insects with magnifying glasses and torches, have fun building a wormery and observe the goldfish. Children use the tape recorder independently to listen to stories and use simple computer programmes confidently to play number games and match colours which helps them to develop control of the mouse.

Children have many opportunities to express themselves creatively. They use their imagination well as they act out real life situations. They put people in the cars as they drive them around the track, stopping occasionally to put petrol in and take on roles in the home corner. Children explore using their senses as they play in the wet sand, bark chips and soil and create models using a variety of recycled materials.

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

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs are fostered. Children feel highly valued in the child centred environment where their individual needs are met well and they are all fully included. Children feel secure because staff pay high regard to the partnership with parents which ensures they receive consistent care. The use of daily diaries which includes photographs, support staff and parents to share information about children. The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Parents receive information about the Foundation Stage, policies, routines and activities, which helps them to understand what and how their children learn. They have very good opportunities to become involved in their children's learning through the book sharing scheme and regular meetings where they share information about their children's progress. Parents are also able to make their own contributions by recording their observations of their children's achievements on the board of achievement.

Children are extremely well behaved. They understand what is expected of them, respond very well to the frequent praise, encouragement and warm caring support from staff. Children have many opportunities to make choices and spend their time purposefully involved in stimulating activities that meet their play and development needs. The behaviour management policy is in place although it does not include a statement on bullying and there is no named designated person responsible for behaviour management.

Children have regular access to a wide range of toys and activities that helps them appreciate diversity. Images of people who reflect the children attending the nursery and people of other races, religions, cultures and abilities are fully integrated in displays and resources throughout the nursery. Children play with dolls of various colours, learn to communicate using Makaton sign language and talk about other parts of England and other countries they have visited on their holidays. This positively fosters children's self-esteem.

Good attention is given to children who have learning difficulties because staff implement the special educational needs code of practice confidently. Staff work closely with parents and the local authority Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator to ensure the care provided supports children to reach their full potential.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management is good. Children benefit from strong leadership where the high expectations and clear aims effectively promote the good standards of care and nursery education. Rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures ensure all staff are suitable to have regular contact with young children. Potential staff are interviewed and relevant checks carried out, including criminal records bureau and proof of qualifications. High regard is given to meeting the on-going training needs of staff. All staff hold an early years qualification and some are working towards higher levels. This ensures staff are up-to-date with current practice and contributes significantly to the high standards provided.

Senior managers regularly review their own practice and act on their findings as a means of monitoring and evaluating children's progress. This contributes successfully to children receiving consistently good quality care and nursery education. There is not, however, a named deputy who can take charge in the absence of the manager or registered person.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Comprehensive policies and procedures that underpin the practice in all areas of the nursery are implemented consistently by motivated staff who work well as a team and effective systems are in place to make sure information is shared. Children's records are well maintained and shared with parents regularly which ensures appropriate care is given. Regular team meetings are used to plan the curriculum and discuss any issues relating to specific children. Children are grouped according to their age and overall, space and resources are organised effectively throughout the nursery to ensure children's safety and well-being are promoted.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

The last care inspection recommended that the nursery ensure the written complaints procedure includes the address and telephone number of the regulator and that written records of medicines given to children are signed by parents. Both recommendations have been addressed satisfactorily and contribute effectively to ensuring children's well-being is safeguarded.

The last nursery education inspection recommended that the nursery improve short term planning alongside the assessments of children's development and develop staff knowledge of the special educational needs code of practice. Children's records now more clearly show progress through the stepping stones and this helps staff plan for the next steps in children's learning. Information from these records is used to plan for children's individual learning and short term planning includes clear learning intentions. This ensures staff have a clear

understanding of each child's progress and enables them to provide a wide range of activities to help them achieve their potential. Nursery staff now work more closely with parents, the local authority special educational needs co-ordinator and other outside agencies to ensure appropriate action is taken when staff are concerned that children may have learning difficulties. A member of staff has special responsibility for these children and many related training events are attended. This ensures that children who have or may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are effectively supported to reach their full potential.

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

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints that required Ofsted or the provider to take any action. 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 there is a named deputy who can take charge in the absence of the manager or Registered Person
- ensure the behaviour management policy includes the procedure for dealing with bullying and that there is a designated person with responsibility for behaviour management who has the skills to support other staff.

#### **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 the opportunities for children to learn about the cultures and beliefs of others.

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)