

# Manor House Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	256785
<b>Inspection date</b>	05 December 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Anna Davies
<b>Setting Address</b>	47 The Green, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE4 6RT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01733 572335
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Cheryl Wilde
<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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Manor House Nursery School is privately owned and operated. It opened in 1993, with the present owner in place since 1998. It is situated in Werrington which is to the north of Peterborough city centre and serves the local community and surrounding area's. The Nursery is registered to provide full day care for up to 48 children aged from birth to five years. The Nursery School is open five days a week from 08:00 to 18:00 all year round except for bank holidays. Children can attend morning or afternoon sessions as well as all day. All children share access to two secure enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 70 children aged between birth and five years on roll. Of these, 27 children receive funding for early education. The nursery also supports a number of two year olds in receipt of funding under a pilot project operating in the local area, funded through the Children's Strategic Partnership (CSP). The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 10 members of staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications, including the manager. One member of staff is currently working towards a qualification. Both the manager and proprietor are supernumerary. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children generally follow effective hygiene routines. For example, pre-school children wash and dry their hands using liquid soap and electric dryers and all children wash their hands after playing outside. Staff practices sometimes minimise the risk of cross-contamination. For example, hygienic nappy changing procedures are in place. However, children and staff's hygiene practices across the nursery are inconsistent. For example, toddlers wash their hands before eating lunch but not before eating snack, and staff do not wash their hands after wiping children's noses. This is not effective in preventing the spread of infection or minimising the risk of cross-contamination.

Appropriate systems are in place to promote children's good health. For example there is a clear sickness policy which is effectively implemented by staff. This protects all children's good health. Procedures for administering medication are clear and appropriately documented. Appropriate care is able to be given in the event of an accident as some staff have first aid qualifications and there are well stocked first aid boxes. This ensures that staff are able to deal with minor accidents effectively.

Children benefit from regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise. Toddlers and pre-school children share access to a very spacious garden and tarmac area. They have opportunities to climb for example on crates, to balance on planks and to enjoy nature as they collect leaves to make pretend 'bonfires'. Older children demonstrate balance and coordination as they steer their scooters down the small hill into puddles of leaves. They ably climb, slide and negotiate space as they drive their sit and ride cars. Their fine motor skills are developing through activities such as cutting their own shapes with scissors and learning to use a knife effectively to cut sausages at lunchtime. When the weather is unfavourable, children have opportunities to play ring games such as 'Hokey Cokey' and 'Sandy Girl', climb on the climbing frame situated inside or march as they play musical instruments. This ensures that their physical skills are promoted all year round. Babies have a separate garden which ensures they are able to enjoy regular opportunities for fresh air in safety. They have opportunities to swing, see-saw, throw balls and have space to develop their walking skills.

Children are appropriately nourished and are offered a generally balanced range of foods to promote their growth and development. All meals are prepared by the proprietor who holds a relevant food hygiene certificate. Menu's are displayed for parents so that they are aware of the meals being offered to their children. Children are offered a choice of fruits at snack time which encourages them to make some healthy choices. Mealtimes and snack times are social occasions with lively discussions. Children are beginning to learn about healthy eating through stimulating displays and discussions. There are appropriate systems for all children to access water throughout the day and these are generally effective.

Younger children's physical and emotional needs are well met. For example, babies are held closely when fed their milk feeds and sleep according to their individual routines which promotes

consistency of care. Staff know the babies well, for example, when providing food in appropriate quantity and consistency. All younger children are encouraged to feed themselves with appropriate sized cutlery which promotes the development of their fine physical skills.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in welcoming premises where examples of children's work and stimulating displays adorn the walls. Good sized play spaces are provided for each age range of children, with adequate space within each for children to be active, to rest and relax. Storage is generally appropriate and most is organised effectively so that children can self-select.

There is an appropriate range of equipment and resources to support all ages of children. Daily checks by staff ensure that these are safe and suitable for children to use. For example, unsafe or broken items are placed in a box so that they can be either mended or disposed of appropriately. Suitable arrangements are in place for children to rest or sleep in cots or on sleep mats with their own bedding which is regularly laundered.

Children's safety is generally promoted as the setting takes some positive steps to minimise risks to children. For example, radiator covers and socket covers are in place, stair gates prevent children leaving their designated areas unsupervised and all doors to the premises are kept locked to prevent unauthorised access. Some risk assessments and checks are in place. However, the garden shed is full of logs and accessible to children and hazardous items in the nappy changing area are within reach of children as they are being changed which does not ensure their safety. Although the provider took immediate action to rectify these situations, this means that risk assessments are not always effective in identifying all potential risks to children's safety. Children practise regular fire drills and these are both recorded and analysed to ensure that the procedures remain effective and protect children in the event of a fire. Children learn to keep themselves safe as staff make good use of spontaneous opportunities to promote their awareness. For example, they are reminded to blow the gravy as it is warm and shown how to use scissors safely. Younger children's safety is promoted. For example, they are checked regularly as they sleep and are reminded not to put crayons in their mouth.

Children welfare is well safeguarded as staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities towards protecting children in their care. They are fully aware of the systems in place for recording concerns and have a good knowledge of the signs and symptoms of abuse. They are confident about procedures within the nursery and how to make contact with the relevant authorities should the need arise. This ensures that children are well protected.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in rooms according to their age and stage of development which ensures that their individual needs are suitably met. They generally settle well and form sound relationships with staff. Babies are cared for by consistent staff who understand how very young children learn. As a result they provide a good range of open-ended activities that allow babies to explore and investigate without requiring a finished product for example, during activities such as playing in leaves, exploring pasta, pieces of material, gloop and play dough. All younger children are able to self-select toys of their choosing from a good range of easily accessible resources. This enables them to further their own play ideas and interests. For example, children are developing their curiosity as they explore cause and effect toys such as

the aqua mat and 'push and go' toys. A suitable range of planned activities are offered in the toddler room such as free painting with cotton reels, making animal handprints, collage pictures, exploring pasta shapes in the sand and trips out to the local lake to feed the swans. However, some activities are not always stimulating for children as they are left out for long periods and presented to them in an unimaginative and uninspiring way. For example, stickle bricks are simply placed on the floor, or train track laid out for most of the morning which does not ensure that they are well used. As a result, some children particularly those who are a little less settled, spend periods of time disengaged because they are uninterested in the activities available.

Some staff have good knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and use this when planning and supporting activities. For example, toddlers are encouraged to march with musical instruments to promote their creativity and babies language development is promoted as staff repeat their babbles and further 'conversation' by asking simple questions. There are many opportunities to share stories together. For example, children enjoy 'Peace at last' as they snuggle with staff on the rocking chair. This promotes their language development and appreciation and enjoyment of books. Regular observations are made on the children and this information is generally used to inform the planning. Some staff are aware of and promote, younger children's next steps of learning but this is not consistent which does not always ensure that children make progress in their play, learning and development.

#### Nursery Education:

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and generally use this effectively to ensure that children make suitable progress towards the early learning goals. Long term plans outline the topics for the year and all staff contribute ideas. Weekly plans show a good range of activities and experiences which take account of the topic, children's interests and the areas of learning. This ensures that activities are meaningful to children and are balanced to cover all areas of learning. Key activity sheets are detailed and outline general learning intentions and some adaptation for different ages and abilities of children. Generally regular observations are made on the children and there is a new system in place to use this information to identify children's next steps of learning. However, this is not yet in place for all children to ensure that they all make good progress in their learning. Some activities are supported well by staff. For example, as children excitedly wrap up boxes to help Father Christmas, staff give time for discussion of ideas. Some good use of props further promote children's enjoyment of activities such as song time where they select a picture card according to their choice of song. Some opportunities are offered to challenge and extend children's learning. For example, open questions such as 'What can we use instead of sellotape to stick it up?' allow children time to problem solve and think through ideas. A suitable range of resources are available for self-selection. However, these are not displayed or organised in an inviting way for children. Consequently, children do not routinely access them to further their own play ideas. This results in children spending periods of time disengaged when key activities have finished.

Children are motivated to learn through key activities offered by staff and they persevere at these. Children enjoy sharing books that they have brought in from home as they are read to their friends which boosts their self-esteem. They work well together as they push each other on the swing and join hands in a circle to sing 'Farmers in his den'. Children show consideration for others as they tell staff 'we need to save some for our friends' at lunchtime. Trips out into the locality enable children to feel a sense of community. For example, they attend the local school Christmas concert and enjoy outings to the library. However, opportunities to promote

children's independence are missed during daily routines and spontaneous activities such as setting the table, serving their own food and drinks and being able to reach their own coats.

Children are developing their competencies generally well across the four aspects of communication, speaking and listening, reading and writing. Children speak confidently as they describe how they are patting the play dough down with spoons to make cakes. They are learning to link sounds and letters together as they sound out individual letters in notices on the door and discuss the sound that the first letter of their name makes. Children are beginning to understand that print carries meaning as they read aloud, the letters they have written for Father Christmas. Children have access to a good range of books and have a comfy area to enjoy and appreciate these, some using the opportunity to mimic the staff as they sit and share stories with their friends. They mark-make for a variety of purposes such as labelling presents and making notes on pads of paper. This promotes the development of emergent writing.

Children's number skills are developing as they count the cubes in their tower and the number of boys and girls in the group. They have opportunities to problem solve and develop their calculation skills as they use an abacus to discuss whether there are more or less boys or girls in the group that day. As children construct with cubes, they discuss how to 'turn the corner' which develops their sense of shape. Children are generally able to explore and investigate their environment as they collect leaves together in the garden, observing that they have fallen down because it is Autumn and the wind is blowing. They enjoy making patterns with pegs and boards and cubes. Children construct with small bricks to create their own models and learn how to assemble and attach wrapping paper to boxes with glue or sticky tape. Children use a satisfactory range of resources to promote their interest in information technology such as compact disc players, electronic stories and a musical key board. They celebrate a suitable range of festivals with meaningful activities so that they begin to understand about their own and other's cultures and beliefs.

Children generally have opportunities to be freely creative during art and craft activities. For example, they draw their own pictures of 'The Bear Hunt' and use luminous paint to freely experiment with colour and textures using wooden spoons and their hands. Children are learning an appreciation of music as they listen to songs on the compact disc player and are learning Christmas songs for their forthcoming party. They use their imagination to create play ideas such as creating a pretend 'bonfire' in the garden, eagerly describing to visitors what they are doing. They move resources such as boxes to follow through with ideas such as creating a shop and are able to think through and justify their ideas to others for example, 'if the nursery is having a Santa's grotto, then he must need a chimney!'

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff generally know children well and treat children with equal concern. For example, staff ensure that children receive equal amounts of fruit at snack time and enable all children who wish to, to join in with activities. Staff work with parents to provide appropriate support to children with English as an additional language and staff make use of opportunities to further promote their sense of security and language development. Staff value children's contributions. For example, they put models they have made, on the side, work is displayed and some children are encouraged to share their drawings with other staff. These practices help to promote children's self-esteem and feelings of self-worth. The setting obtains a range of information from parents so that they are able to provide care according to their individual needs with regards to their health, dietary requirements or their daily routines if very young. This benefits

the children and ensures consistency of care. Children are learning about diversity through meaningful activities that celebrate a range of festivals. Positive images around the nursery, for example, key items and areas labelled in different languages, encourages children to have a positive attitude about similarities and differences in people.

There are appropriate systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, although, as a listed building the nursery is unable to cater for wheelchair users. The setting works with staff and outside agencies as necessary, to support children and ensure that their individual needs are suitably met.

Children generally behave well. Most behaviour is handled appropriately by staff. For example, some staff give clear explanations to children about expected behaviour such as finishing a mouth full of food before talking and waiting for friends to be served their food before beginning to eat. There are some positive strategies for encouraging good behaviour such as star charts for kind or helpful behaviour. For example, children eagerly await to see if their tidying up has enabled them to place a star on their chart. Staff praise children for following instructions such as getting their coat on and sitting patiently at the table. These strategies boost self-esteem and encourage good behaviour. Children are encouraged to use manners and have consideration of others feelings for example, by apologising after accidents. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents receive information about the nursery in a written prospectus. This includes information on the flexible settling in process which allows children to make a smooth transition into nursery life. Parents receive information on a daily basis about their children's day through written and verbal means. For example, all children under the age of three have information books or sheets detailing their sleep, nappy changes and food intake. There are some opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning and progress. For example, they are asked to detail which nursery rhymes their children sing at home and are able to view the observations made on their children. The setting has a clear understanding of recording complaints made by parents and the Ofsted poster is displayed so that parents are aware of how to make contact if they are unsatisfied by the response to their complaint by the provider. All staff and the proprietor take time to speak to parents which provides opportunities for parents to give feedback on the provision.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is satisfactory. Parents are informed about the Foundation Stage through the prospectus and a 'Welcome to pre-school' information pack. The setting also loans out a Foundation Stage pack to ensure that parents are aware of the provision of nursery education for their children. Parents have some opportunities to be involved in their children's learning. For example, they are able to share observations about what their children can do at home and can view their children's observations. However, although generally identified by staff, children's individual next steps of learning are not shared with parents to enable them to know or share in their children's progress and further these areas of learning at home. Planning is clearly displayed for parents and opportunities for daily discussions with staff ensure that parents are aware of the activities offered to their children.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

There are robust procedures in place when employing staff to ensure that those working with the children are suitable to do so. Staff are generally well deployed across the nursery and most understand how children learn and follow this through with the provision of stimulating activities

and effective support. Regular staff appraisals ensure that training needs are identified and performance generally monitored. Registers show clearly, children and staffs times of arrival and departure which ensures that ratios are maintained to offer appropriate support for all children. Resources are generally organised well to promote independence, particularly in the younger children's rooms. This requires review in the pre-school room to ensure that the way resources are stored, encourages them to self-select. Available space is generally used well. For example, there are designated areas for messy play, carpeted areas for floor and quieter activities. The outdoor provision further extends the range of activities available to all children. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

There are a good range of policies and procedures in place which generally effectively underpin practice and promote positive outcomes for children. However, there are weaknesses in the consistency of health and hygiene practices and risk assessments require review to ensure that they are fully effective in minimising risks to children.

The leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. The proprietor and manager demonstrate commitment to further improving the quality of nursery education provision for children. For example, they are aware of some areas that they wish to develop. The management team support staffs personal development, encouraging staff to attend training workshops and to feed back information to other staff which benefits the children. There are some effective systems in place to monitor and promote the quality of teaching and learning. For example, the manager is involved with planning and regular meetings are held between staff and management to discuss strengths and areas for development.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to ensure that the staff register records their exact hours of arrival and departure and that the child protection policy makes reference to the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer. Accurately recorded and maintained registers of staff attendance are now in place and the child protection policy contains the detail required to ensure children's safety. The provider was asked to review the use of the lounge area and the organisation of lunchtimes. The lounge is now used effectively for the toddlers and lunchtimes are a social occasion with lots of opportunities for discussion between staff and children which promotes their learning. The provider was also asked to ensure that when employing new staff, procedures are in place to ensure that staff are mentally and physically fit. The provider now requires all new staff to complete a detailed medical form which is then used to assess their suitability. Lastly, the provider agreed to consider how staffs knowledge and understanding of children under two can be developed. Staff caring for children under the age of two years have now attended 'Birth to three matters' training which promotes the outcomes for children of this age.

At the last inspection of nursery education the provider agreed to provide children with opportunities to explore health and bodily awareness. Reminders for children to follow good hygiene routines are now displayed in the bathroom and displays and activities promote healthy eating. These all enable children to become aware of and have regard for, their own health. The provider was also asked to develop parents involvement so that they are given opportunities to share what they know about their child and can participate in their development. Parents now have some opportunities to share what they know about their children, both verbally and in writing and verbal discussions with staff enable them some opportunities to share in their children's development. Further recommendations have been raised at this inspection with



regard to sharing information about children's next steps of learning so that they can further share in their children's progress.

Overall, satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection which generally promotes positive outcomes for children.

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

Since 1 April 2004, there has been one complaint made to Ofsted. On 30 July 2007 concerns were raised about the lack of supervision, ratios, visitors to the setting and the safety of radiators. These concerns relate to National Standard 2: Organisation, 1: Suitable person and 6: Safety. Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit on 31 July 2007 to discuss the concerns and to observe practice and review relevant records. Although there was no evidence to suggest a breach of the Standards relating to the concerns raised, the provider was found not to be meeting National Standard 6 due to uncovered plug sockets and trailing wires. The provider was asked to take action to ensure this Standard was met. A response to this action was received confirming that appropriate measures have now been taken to ensure children's safety. Ofsted was satisfied that by taking these steps the provider met the National Standards and remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### **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 that good hygiene practices are consistently promoted
- improve the system of risk assessments to ensure that all potential risks to children's safety are identified and actioned
- ensure that activities presented to the toddlers are always stimulating and meaningful to them. Further develop the use of observations to plan the next steps for the younger children's play, learning and development.

#### **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):

- ensure that daily routines and spontaneous opportunities are used effectively to encourage children's independence
- review the organisation of resources in the indoor and outdoor environment to enable children to make more effective use of their ability to self-select toys and resources to further their own play interests
- share children's individual next steps of learning with parents so that they know about their child's progress
- continue to develop the planning and assessment to identify children's next steps of learning and use this information to inform planning and to ensure that children make good progress in their learning.

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