

Our Lady Star of the Sea Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY262167
Inspection date	16 January 2008
Inspector	Christine Tipple
Setting Address	Kenilworth Road, St Annes, Lancashire, FY8 1LB
Telephone number	01253 726 015
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Registered person	Our Lady Star of the Sea Nursery
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 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?

Our Lady Star of the Sea Nursery has been operating under a management committee since 2003. It operates from one main room in the Our Lady Star of the Sea Primary School. The children also have access to the school hall and other facilities. The nursery serves the local area. There is an enclosed area for outside play and children have access to the larger playing field and nature garden.

The nursery is registered for 20 children under five years old. Currently, there are 37 children on roll, all of whom are in receipt of nursery education funding. The nursery opens five days a week during school term time only. Sessions are from 09.00 until 15.30.

There are four staff who work with the children and all have a relevant childcare qualification. The nursery have completed the Lancashire Quality Award Scheme in Early Years and has a lead practitioner status for the area.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a clean, bright and welcoming environment where they develop a very high level of independence and understanding in relation to their personal care. The range of well-resourced facilities fully supports the positive approach to health and hygiene practices in place and minimises cross-infection in the nursery. Children are knowledgeable about the purpose and importance of washing their hands after playing outside and before meals and snacks. This is further enhanced through the range of age-appropriate information and activities provided for the children on health matters. Full details are in place for parents on the care and management of children when ill. This includes clear exclusion times before they return to nursery.

The children have snacks and hot meals offered on a daily basis and the children have the choice to bring in their own packed lunches. The snacks are a shared approach with parents and are part of the nursery's proactive attitude to healthy eating with the children. The snacks offer a selection of fruit each day and the children help set up the table and collect their plates and milk in preparation. The supportive information and range of excellent activities and discussion inform and enable the children and parents to move towards eating a balanced diet. This is reflected in the healthy selection provided for the children in their own packed lunches. The hot meals are supplied by the school and these provide a well-balanced and nutritious range which reflect the school and nursery's healthy eating programme. Details are displayed for parents on the daily menu board of the choices which are very good and provide a variety, such as vegetables, meat, rice and pasta dishes, which are enjoyed by the children. Children have a water cooler which they can access throughout the day for regular drinks. There are clear details of children's dietary requirements as discussed with parents.

Children have daily opportunities to be outside in the fresh air which they participate in with enthusiasm. They have access to a wide and varied selection of quality resources which are very effective in promoting and developing the children's physical skills. There is large equipment in place for the children to manage and practise their climbing skills and the children use a variety of sit and ride equipment and bikes. They have a range of activities that develop their balance and gross motor skills very well. The children benefit from the regular music and movement sessions which they fully participate in and enjoy. This enhances and develops their spatial awareness and ability to manoeuvre confidently around obstacles and each other. There are balls and bats and other games provided for the children to promote their physical play. The children have access to an excellent selection of smaller tools and equipment which are highly effective in supporting and developing the children's hand and eye co-ordination and other muscle skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are able to play freely in a child-orientated environment. The premises are warm and welcoming and provide a highly stimulating environment for the children. There is a large outside area which the children can access direct from the nursery. This has a range of surfaces for the children to use, including a covered area. There is an exceptional depth, range and quality of interesting and stimulating resources and equipment for the children to access on a

daily basis. The positive approach, enthusiasm and commitment of the staff ensure that these are well maintained to a high level of quality in all areas of the nursery.

Staff are highly vigilant in their approach to safety. They identify the risks and minimise these in relation to the children's ability and understanding. This enables the children to play freely and take risks in the nursery and outside due to the staff's excellent instruction and guidance with them. Children's use of the range of tools, such as scissors, staples and the computer reflect this. They all help to tidy up as all the resources are at the children's level so there is easy access and it is safe for them to take a positive level of responsibility and be independent in their tasks. Children fully participate in the evacuation procedure, which is practised with them on a regular basis. There are well-informed activities provided throughout the year where the staff discuss and practise with the children issues on keeping safe, such as how to cross the road safely and to be aware of strangers. The emergency services support this through their visits and contact with the nursery.

The staff have clear and detailed information in relation to safeguarding the children in their care. This approach ensures the children's ongoing welfare and safety is paramount in all that they do in the nursery. Staff have attended ongoing training to keep their themselves fully informed and up to date in their knowledge and skills on child protection issues.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are enthusiastic and eager to participate in the excellent range of opportunities provided which are highly successful in promoting a child-led approach to the children's ongoing learning. There is a clear and focused emphasis on the children's growing independence in their ability and skill to make choices and decisions in what they do.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are motivated and interested in what is going on around them. This is due to the exceptional and inspiring range of quality resources and equipment in place. These are very effective in stimulating the children, which enables them to make very good progress. The teaching by the staff is both challenging and supportive and provides a well-matched approach to the children's interests and needs. The staff's expert knowledge of the Foundation Stage and the early learning goals and the methods used with the children provide a full understanding of how young children learn and progress. The relationships established are excellent; this is reflected in the children being engrossed in their activities and experiences. The staff are skilled in how they support, challenge and extend the children in all that they participate in. The staff regularly observe their key children and record and evaluate their ongoing progress in their individual files. These are detailed and provide a variety of very good evidence of what the children have attained and cover all areas of the curriculum. This enables staff to plan effectively and knowledgeably for each child's next steps of their learning and ongoing progress.

The interactions with the children are highly effective. The staff use positive techniques which provide information on what the children know and how to move them forward. Language development and the children learning new words and meaning are very much part of what is provided on a daily basis. The range of materials and resources offered in all areas of the nursery are very effective in enabling all the children to make marks and for some children to be independent and confident in writing their names. The wonderful story sacks and letter bags

are highly effective resources which support the children's language, letter and word recognition skills. Books are very well used and accessed independently by the children. They enjoy participating in story time and the use of the excellent props provided enhances this for the children and this is extended further as they listen to their favourite stories on tape. Books are also used as a sources of reference by the children to find out about the wider world in which they live.

The children have numbers displayed all around them and use these throughout their play. They problem-solve as part of their daily routines, such as when baking, sequencing and matching games. Children use mathematical language, such as adding and taking away, which enables them to assess whether there are too many or not enough resources at an activity. This is also enhanced through to use rhymes and songs, which extends this for the children. There is a broad and rich selection of resources that interest the children to participate and enjoy mathematical activities. Children are very curious about the environment and show positive levels of concentration in examining the insects and animals and their habitats. Children enjoy being outside and use these areas to discover and explore and to have direct experiences. They enjoy completing the weather chart, seeing the changing of the seasons, such as designing a wall chart about frost. Children are very competent in using the computer and the inter-active whiteboard, where they create and design their own pictures with a range of colours which they print off. This creative use of technology promotes and greatly enhances other learning opportunities across the curriculum for the children.

Children thoroughly enjoy the creative activities and they freely access a wonderful range of materials, which includes natural resources which they use to develop and create their own ideas and develop their skills, such as a making and designing a robot from a variety of resources. Children self-select and use the tools in place to cut, fix together and shape as they want. The access to paint and other malleable materials further develops their knowledge of shape and colour. The excellent range of role play and small world activities stimulates the children's imagination very effectively and enables them to express themselves with confidence. They enjoy music and there is a rich selection of instruments for them to use.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs are well respected and supported, which provides an environment where children are confident and have a strong sense of self. There is a positive and well informed approach to diversity and this is reflected in the ongoing access for the children to the wonderful resources, displays and range of information provided, of which some are in dual languages. Children are involved throughout the year with a range of celebrations which include other cultures, and parents bring in additional contributions. The nursery take part in sponsored activities which provide the children with a greater insight and understanding of how other children live in the world. Children have opportunities to go on local outings in their community and for visitors to come into the nursery, such as the dentist and emergency services. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave very well and are confident in their awareness of right and wrong. The routines and well managed surroundings help the children to become independent. There is a positive emphasis on the children taking responsibility for their actions and to negotiate between themselves to resolve their conflicts. The nursery and the children work to the golden rules which are about the importance of being kind, taking turns and sharing. Staff are excellent role models for the children in their attitude; they are calm and sensitive to the children's varied

needs and they make time to listen and support them. Staff work with a range of inventive resources that support the children in understanding their feelings and how to express themselves in a secure way, to build on their self-esteem and confidence. This ensures the children are settled and have a true sense of belonging. The lovely relationships the children have with the staff provide a nurturing approach where there is positive praise and encouragement and where the children's achievements are rewarded and highly valued.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents are actively involved with their children's learning and care throughout their time at the nursery. There are excellent links with home through the children's individual diaries and the daily opportunities for parents to speak with the staff. These provide a valuable insight for the staff to enable them to respond effectively to the needs of each child in promoting an holistic approach to their ongoing care and learning, and to fully support their settling in. Staff provide a wide range of quality information for parents which includes comprehensive details of the range of activities and learning opportunities their children receive. There is a weekly lending service provided which enables parents to have books, games and activities to share with their children at home.

Policies and procedures play an important part in the nursery's approach with parents in promoting the high standards in place for their children's welfare and safety. Highly effective communication by the staff is the key to the nursery's success and the parents' comments support this. The children's development files are excellent, well presented and detailed, which keeps parents fully informed of their children's ongoing progress; this links effectively with the written reports issued each term. Parents also stated what a 'wonderful environment their children come to at the nursery' and the 'professionalism and commitment' of the staff is reflected in their children's progress and daily enjoyment.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are happy and positively engaged in all areas of their excellent care and learning opportunities. The nursery provides a well organised and highly efficient approach to all aspects of the nursery provision. This is reflected in the staff's ongoing commitment to providing an excellent quality service which is very effective in promoting the children's safety and overall well-being. The key worker system works extremely well to ensure the children's individual developmental needs are identified and individual support and challenges are provided which are fully shared with parents. There are comprehensive policies and procedures in place which are reviewed and kept up to date. This enhances and promotes the outstanding knowledge and expertise in place to maintain and continue the high quality of care and education offered by the nursery.

Staff recruitment and selection procedures are robust and clear, which ensures staff working with the children are suitable to do so. This is supported with a detailed induction programme which provides staff, students and volunteers with full details of the operational requirements of the nursery and the high expectations and requirements of working with the children. Staff have very good opportunities to attend training through the school inset sessions and other outside courses, which demonstrates the staff's commitment to continue to develop their wide range of skills and knowledge in all areas of childcare and education. The detailed and informed records and other related documentation is well presented and regularly reviewed to ensure information remains current. Information is stored securely and is effective in maintaining confidentiality.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The staff and management work exceptionally well together as a team with a shared approach to providing a high quality service where both the parents and children are happy and enjoy their time at nursery. Regular staff meetings enable all staff to contribute to the ongoing development of the nursery provision, to share their skills and ideas. Staff have ongoing appraisals which are reviewed on a half yearly basis. This provides very good information on their individual self-development and training needs. There is excellent evidence provided by staff which shows clearly the nursery's approach to reflective practice where they clearly identify their strengths and the areas which need to improve. This is supported with a clear action plan on how these can be taken forward. The transition into school for the children from the nursery is very well managed and the links with the relevant staff ensure the children enter the next stages of their learning confident and positive. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last care report recommended that the nursery develop their child protection policy statement to ensure it covered allegations made against staff members or volunteers. It also asked that they review the information and recording in relation to the staff induction process and provide details of the regulator in the nursery complaints procedure.

The nursery have an informed detailed policy on child protection which includes procedures in relation to allegations made against staff or volunteers. This is effective in promoting the needs of the children in all areas of their safety and welfare at the nursery.

The induction programme for new staff is well documented and provides information which ensures staff are fully informed on all aspects of the nursery's care and education provision. This is a shared approach with the manager, who continues to monitor staff throughout the year through the nursery appraisal scheme.

The complaints procedure has clear details for management and staff to follow and all the relevant contact information of the regulator is recorded, displayed and shared with parents.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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