

St Richard's School Nursery Unit

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	113733
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Inspector	Gill Moore
Setting Address	Cawley Road, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1XB
Telephone number	01243 776728
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Registered person	St Richard's School Nursery Unit
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?

St Richard's Nursery School Unit is a committee run group and opened in 1997. It operates from a purpose built building in the grounds of St Richard's Primary School and is situated in a residential area of Chichester. A maximum of 24 children may attend the unit at any one time. It is open each weekday from 08:50 to 15:30 and children attend for a variety of sessions. Children have access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area all year round.

There are currently 72 children from two to under five years on roll and of these, 55 children receive funding for nursery education. It is normal practice for children to be accepted in to the unit during the term in which they are three. Children come from a wide catchment area because of the nursery unit link with the Catholic school. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and also a number of children who speak English as an additional language. There are four staff who work directly with the children, three of whom are qualified. In addition two staff are employed on a temporary basis and are working towards an early years qualification. The group establish extremely close links with the Primary School.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted across the setting because practitioners implement effective health and hygiene procedures to ensure the risk of infection is minimised. For example, they wear disposable gloves when changing children's nappies and wipe tables using anti-bacterial spray before children sit for snacks and lunch. Practitioners have relevant first aid training and accurate records are kept relating to accidents and the administration of medication, which helps assure children's health. Children talk about how they look after their bodies recognising the need to wrap up in waterproof coats and wear Wellington boots before going outside to play in the rain. They discuss how they need to wear hats and sun cream to protect their bodies from the sun. Children follow very good personal hygiene routines after they have used the toilet and talk about why it is important to wash the germs off their hands before eating.

Children's understanding of how to look after their bodies is extended through activities and experiences linked to nursery themes. For example, they learn the importance of looking after their teeth and this is promoted through their imaginative play as they express their real and imagined experiences of visiting the dentist. Children begin to develop their understanding of the importance of eating a healthy balanced diet. Practitioners talk to children about the types of foods they eat and ask them why some foods are better for their bodies than others as they cook dinner during role-play. This is enhanced through the healthy options available at snack times. Children make selections from a range of different fruits and help themselves to drinking water or milk. Some children stay for lunch, supplied by their parents, and these times provide opportunities for children to develop social skills as practitioners sit at tables with them and talk to them about their day and home life. The outside environment includes an area where children grow vegetables and discussions during activities, such as cookery, increase children's awareness of the need for a health balanced diet.

Children have ample opportunities to develop their skills and enjoy a wide range of physical activities increasing their understanding of the benefits to maintaining a healthy lifestyle. They confidently ride bicycles, cars and scooters around the track outside helping to develop spatial awareness and show very good co-ordination and control. Children crawl through tunnels, jump across toadstools and enjoy chasing after their peers in the fantastic outside learning environment. Smaller equipment such as bats and balls enable children to practise throwing and catching. They jump across crates, helping to develop a sense of balance, and use apparatus including the parachute, climbing frames and slides, which enhances their physical development. Facilities are provided for children to rest when they become tired, either in the cosy book area or on sleep mats, which are laid down in a comfortable and secure area of the nursery.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit greatly from being able to move freely and safely between the wonderfully developed inside and outside learning environments. They show high levels of independence as they self select a wonderful array of resources and play provision suitable for their ages. Children's safety is promoted because checks on all furniture, equipment and play resources are included as part of the daily risk assessments, which helps to ensure they are clean and well-maintained. Risks and hazards are minimised, for example children do not have access to the kitchen area and plug sockets are covered, contributing to children's safety.

Children understand the need to take it in turns to climb the apparatus recognising the dangers that can be caused if too many children try to use the climbing frame at the same time. They talk through the procedures to follow if there is an emergency situation and practise regular fire drills, although procedures to record and evaluate these are not fully developed.

Children are safeguarded from harm and protected because practitioners have a very clear understanding of their role with regards to protecting children in their care. Practitioners know the different types of abuse and can recognise possible signs and symptoms that may indicate a child was at risk. Records of injuries children arrive with are maintained and effective systems are in place to ensure children are collected from nursery by adults known to practitioners. Children's safety is ensured as they arrive and leave nursery because one practitioner stands at the main entrance and another signs them in and out of the group. Visitors are requested to show identification and are never left unsupervised with children, although the procedures to record when they are present are not fully developed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children relish their time in the group because they are exceptionally well supported by practitioners who have a secure understanding of how they learn. They show extremely high levels of self assurance and thrive in the wonderful exciting and stimulating learning environment both inside and out. Younger children are extremely well supported and are confident and reassured in the group. They become competent learners self selecting scissors and cutting pictures they have drawn. Children have wonderful opportunities to be imaginative and enjoy dressing up and taking their babies for a walk. They use the computer independently, develop skills as they build train and car tracks and explore creativity using a variety of media and materials.

Interaction between practitioners and children is excellent. Children come running in and jump onto practitioner's laps for a cuddle. A successful key worker system is implemented, which enhances relationships, although all practitioners have an extremely good understanding of each child's needs, abilities and home circumstances. Every child develops at their own rate because practitioners are very skilled in the way they adapt their approach. Practitioners have regard to the Birth to three matters framework, when assessing younger children, which helps ensure effective support is provided and sufficient challenges enabling them to progress. They recognise the importance of play in a child's development and the organisation of the group and accessibility of resources enables all children to initiate their own learning. Consequently, all children play an active role in their learning and enjoy a wonderful range of first hand experiences.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children show a positive attitude towards learning, are highly motivated and fully engrossed in stimulating learning experiences across the session. They show great excitement using magnifying glasses to examine the caterpillars in the pot. Children talk about how these resources make the caterpillars appear much bigger and use very good language describing the process they go through before transforming into a butterfly. The presentation of this area and accessibility of resources, including a range of fiction and non-fiction books, helps to support children's understanding of time and the changes that take place.

Children make good progress in their individual learning because practitioners are highly effective in the way they question children encouraging them to think through their own ideas and solve their own problems. Children talk through their ideas with their peers and agree decisions as they work out how best to piece the track together. They self select cellotape and suggest attaching another sheet of paper to the one they have painted because their paper is not long enough to fit the whole of their portrait on. Excellent use of routines, group activities and children's initiated play is made to support children's individual development. Practitioners use these opportunities to introduce and practise new skills, directed by the children, and then move them on to the next stage in their learning.

The system for planning is secure and clear links can be seen between the activities and experiences offered and the information gained from observations of children's progress. Practitioner's observe and assess children's individual progress towards the early learning goals, although the procedures to update children's assessment records are not fully developed. This information is then used to help plan and identify next steps for development. Individual targets are set and regular meetings and discussions ensures all practitioners are aware of these, enabling them to boost children's learning.

Children's early reading and writing skills are well developed. They independently access a wide range of writing tools and materials and practise emergent writing in a variety of situations. For example, children decide to write letters to their friends and post them in the nursery post box. They form recognisable letters and talk confidently about the sounds they make. Younger children are supported as they use their name card to help write their names on their paintings and children notice print and letters displayed around the room, in books and on jigsaw puzzle pieces. Older children's understanding of sounds and letters is enhanced as they are gently introduced to 'Jolly Phonics' before they transfer to school in fun and meaningful ways. Children excitedly join in with songs and action rhymes. They delight in using the story sack to tell the story 'Peace at last' and giggle as the teddy bear starts to snore.

Children's imagination is extremely well fostered and practitioners are very effective in supporting their imagined ideas, for example when playing in the role-play area. They express their imagination in a variety of different role-play settings, including the hairdressing salon and the doctors surgery. Children have wonderful opportunities to be creative and use their senses. They freely access a wide range of materials and textures making colleges and building models from recycled materials. Children explore paint, for example using marbles and straws, and have access to wide range of media such as sand, dough and water across the sessions. They enjoy opportunities to play in snow during the winter months and decorate ice sheets using leaves and berries watching to see what happens to their creations as the ice begins to melt.

Children's understanding of mathematical concepts are extremely well developed as they freely access resources to sort, match and compare. They use mathematical language everyday in their play, for example when exploring weight and measure in the water tray. Children develop an understanding of number and recognise numerals on the bicycles outside, on the fence, in jigsaw puzzles and on the cards displaying telephone numbers in the role-play area. They use sand timers, for example to help them negotiate turns when wanting to use the same piece of equipment, which helps develop their concept of time. Children develop spatial awareness by using picture symbols to illustrate how many children can play in a specific area. They count the number of children already playing and work out if there is enough space for them to join in.

Practitioners use an exciting and varied range of teaching methods, which captures children's attention. They link activities to themes. For example, children cook and eat porridge, make costumes and puppets and build houses from different media as they explore the fairytales of Goldilocks and The Three little Pigs. The presentation and accessibility of resources, both inside and out, provides children with ample opportunities to extend their own ideas, explore and be curious and become confident and autonomous learners.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children show high levels of confidence and self-esteem building excellent relationships with practitioners and their peers. They are highly valued as individuals and practitioners value and acknowledge all children's abilities, faith and family and home circumstances. The nursery promotes a fully inclusive environment where all children are provided with the support, encouragement and challenge to achieve their individual potential. Effective systems are in place to ensure those children with learning difficulties and English as an additional language receive a high level of support. Practitioners work extremely closely with parents and other agencies to ensure children's individual needs are fully met. Children are extremely well behaved and are very kind and considerate towards one another and this ethos is very much promoted throughout the nursery. They show high levels of self assurance and belonging helping younger children with tasks, such as putting on painting aprons, and working together as they pack away resources.

Children learn about religion and say a prayer at the end of sessions thanking God for a lovely day. They become aware of their own and other religions through stories and practical experiences increasing their awareness of a range of cultures, special events and religious festivals. For example, children dress up in Chinese costume, make a dragon and eat noodles using chopsticks as part of their Chinese New Year celebrations. They cut pumpkins and make lanterns at Halloween and make bonnets when celebrating Easter. Children's own religion and beliefs are discussed and these celebrations are incorporated into the planning, which ensures that every child's culture and beliefs are valued and shared. Children gain a sense of community as they form strong links with the local school and church and produce presentations of painted flowers to be displayed for everyone in the community to see. They learn to respect one another and their elders talking about how they will grow up and how their bodies will change using picture cards in a group discussion. Children's understanding of society and the wider world is fully promoted, for example through the physical environment, discussions and stories and the use of a wide range of resources reflecting a diversity of culture, gender, age and disability. Consequently, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children benefit enormously because secure links are established between home and the nursery. Induction and registration procedures are flexible to suit the individual needs of children and their parents. Open sessions are provided where new parents and children come into the group and spend time playing getting to know the practitioners. In addition a number of settling in visits provide opportunities for parents to share information about their child, their individual needs and family circumstances. Parents receive detailed information about the nursery through a variety of ways including a detailed welcome pack. This includes information about the policies and the curriculum helping parents to recognise how their child learns through play.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good. Parents are well informed about topics and experiences their child is involved in through regular newsletters and information displayed on the notice board. They are actively encouraged to support

children's learning in the home, for example by making use of the library service the nursery operate and borrowing story sacks to share stories with their child. Information about children's individual achievements is discussed informally on a daily basis. Parents are invited to look at their child's assessment records at any time and a meeting takes place during the last term before they transfer to school. Practitioners discuss their child's next steps for development and talk about the progress they have made. Opportunities to discuss their ongoing progress, be advised of the next steps in their learning and how they can extend this at home have not yet been introduced.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care and learning is significantly enhanced because management and practitioners work towards achieving the same vision. Practitioners work extremely well as a team and communicate effectively through formal meetings and daily discussions to ensure clear roles and responsibilities are defined. Effective communication takes place between the committee and practitioners, which helps ensure operational issues are quickly addressed and the group runs smoothly. Children's health, safety and well-being is promoted because all practitioners have a secure knowledge of the policies and procedures within the nursery and ensure these are implemented in practice. Consequently, successful outcomes for children are promoted and the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Children are cared for by suitably qualified and experienced practitioners who are committed and enthusiastic about their role. Robust systems are in place to recruit and appoint new staff, although procedures for induction are informal at present. A system to ensure the ongoing suitability of those practitioners already working in the nursery has not yet been introduced.

Leadership and management are good. Children make good individual progress because high priority is placed on monitoring and evaluating teaching, the curriculum and the impact this has on children's progress. Teaching is rooted in a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and practitioners have a very clear understanding of how children learn most effectively. The supervisor influences practice on a daily basis and practitioners continually increase their skills by attending regular training opportunities, which enhances their already well-established practice. Management know the strengths of the group and place high priority on monitoring the nursery as a whole, including the learning environment, which ensures the care and education for children is continually improved. As a result, children flourish in this vibrant learning environment beginning their journey of self discovery and achieve their individual potential during the time they spend at the nursery.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the group were asked to ensure that the child protection procedure complies with current guidance and that parents are made aware of it. They were also asked to record the times of attendance for both children and staff in the register and make the complaints procedure available to parents. The child protection policy has been reviewed to reflect current guidance and this is included as part of the parent welcome pack. Consequently, parents gain a very good understanding of the role practitioner's play with regards to protecting children in their care. Procedures to record the attendance of staff and children have been improved to record actual times they are present in the setting.

At the last nursery education inspection the group were asked to provide opportunities for staff to increase their knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones in order to extend children's learning. They were asked to provide fun opportunities for children to listen and use sounds in rhyming activities and opportunities for children to build on their skills and be confident in writing independently. Finally, the group were asked to continue developing mathematical language and ideas in every day situations and practical activities to ensure children are challenged and extended.

Staff have increased their understanding of the stepping stones and early learning goals by attending training. This has had a positive impact on the learning opportunities they provide for children. Routine activities and group discussions, including singing sessions and story times, help to raise children's understanding of sounds and letters. Resources, such as rhyming stories, are also used to introduce and extend children's learning in meaningful ways. Children enjoy many opportunities to practise writing in a variety of situations, for example when engaging in role-play, and become eager and confident writers. Opportunities for children to develop their use of mathematical language have been increased as they access a wonderful array of mathematical resources, which enables them to explore different concepts and extend their ideas through play.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider of Ofsted to take any action 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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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):

- implement a system to ensure the ongoing suitability of staff already working in the setting and develop the induction procedures for new staff
- develop the system in place to record visitors to and from the group and improve the recording of fire drills

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 procedures for updating children's assessment records ensuring an accurate picture of children's progress is reflected
- increase opportunities for parents to be informed about their child's ongoing progress, next steps for development and how they can extend this at home

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