

Manor Farm House Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY344769
Inspection date	24 April 2007
Inspector	Carole Argles
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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?

Manor Farm House Nursery School opened in 1967. It is privately owned and is one of two nurseries run by the provider. It operates from a former school building in the village of Netherhampton, near Salisbury, Wiltshire. The premises consist of three buildings which are set in their own grounds.

The nursery is registered to provide care for 40 children aged from two to under eight years. There are currently 36 children on roll, of whom 25 receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery opens five days per week from 08.30 to 15.30, during school term times; there is also a holiday club. The nursery supports children who have learning difficulties or disabilities. Currently, there are no children who speak English as an additional language.

There are six staff who work with the children, of whom four hold an appropriate early years qualification and two are undertaking training.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The children's good health is well supported by the staff and they are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle. The staff have a good knowledge and understanding of ways to reduce the likelihood of infection spreading between children. For example, there are hygienic nappy changing procedures, the tables are wiped before the children eat, and the premises are kept clean. Any staff who prepare food hold a food hygiene certificate and implement suitable storage and reheating procedures. The children learn good hand hygiene routines, always washing their hands before eating or cooking and after handling pets. Through discussions with staff, they begin to learn why this is important to remove germs and keep them well. There is a policy of excluding any children who are ill or infectious and there are clear procedures for the safe administration of any required medication. Suitable consents are in place and first aid kits are readily available; staff hold suitable first aid certificates. This contributes well towards protecting the children in the event of accident or illness.

Jugs of drinking water and cups are available in each room so the children can serve themselves if they are thirsty. They receive nutritious snacks which frequently include fruit or salad vegetables. Many children have a cooked midday meal provided through the nursery. A varied and healthy menu is available which the children helped to design. The children were eating well, enjoying a casserole with vegetables, followed by fresh fruit. Staff are careful to respect any specific dietary requirements or allergies. There are many activities which help the children learn about the importance of healthy eating and to encourage them to enjoy a wide range of foods. Many readily help with gardening, planting potatoes and growing tomatoes and beans. These foods are harvested and eaten by the children. There are many cooking activities making wholesome recipes and the children were eagerly making cheese straws which they later sampled.

The children have many opportunities for exercise in good size grounds; they play out in most weathers, bringing coats and boots to allow them to do so. They are developing good control and coordination of their movements, running freely, climbing and kicking balls. There is a wide range of equipment, including tunnels, balls, skipping ropes, hoops and climbing frames of different sizes. These provide appropriate levels of challenge for children of all abilities and help them develop new skills. The children move around safely and show good sense of space as they use equipment or are in close proximity to others. This is demonstrated well when they play group games with a parachute. The children enjoy being active and playing outside and this helps to keep them fit.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises are welcoming to children with many displays of their artwork and posters; a wide range of toys and activities are set out ready for them to use. Consequently, most part readily from their parents and carers and settle quickly. Staff use the buildings well to support the children's developmental needs, using separate rooms to group the children by age or ability, or to provide different types of activity. Effective use is made of the outside area to provide range of experiences for the children and in good weather this becomes an extension to the classroom. Shade is provided to protect the children from the harmful effects of the sun. There is a wide range of toys and resources. These are safe and suitable for the children to use and

support all areas of their development. Many items are stored low down in boxes so that the children can make choices about what they do and act independently.

The staff have a satisfactory understanding of safety issues and take appropriate action to reduce the risk of accidental injury to the children. For example, the heaters are guarded, the grounds are suitably fenced and children are prevented from entering the kitchen. Staff check the premises daily to minimise hazards, for example, by dispersing any rainwater that has collected in the sand pit cover. Suitable fire precautions are in place and the children practise the evacuation drill regularly so they know how to act in the event of an emergency. Generally, the children are supervised well, for instance, when they are using climbing equipment. Walkie-talkie radios are available so that, if required, a member of staff can summon assistance when working alone in a building with the children. However, at times the children are not supervised closely, for example, at the beginning of the session when parents are coming and going, or when they go to the cloakrooms alone, crossing the playground to an empty building. These situations pose potential risks to the children's safety.

A suitable safeguarding children procedure is in place and this is made available for the parents to read. The owner and her staff have a sound understanding of the signs that may indicate that a child is at risk and they know how they should act if they have concerns about child in their care. This contributes effectively to protecting children from harm or abuse.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are happy, confident and settled. Those who are less confident receive sensitive support from the staff. They relate well to others, forming relaxed relationships with the staff and playing cooperatively together. The children are developing good communication skills because there is plenty conversation and interaction with the staff. They talk about themselves and real and imaginary events. The staff ask many questions to encourage them to think. Independence is encouraged and the children help others, handing round the snack and tidying away the toys. They develop good self-esteem because they are praised and their achievements recognised. For part of the day, the children are grouped together so that they can take part in age-appropriate activities in separate rooms. However, at other times, they are in mixed groups. This promotes their social skills and the younger children often learn from the example of their older peers.

There is a good range of equipment and toys which provide appropriate levels of challenge for all children. The younger ones enjoy playing with stacking and sorting toys which promote their hand-eye coordination, whilst there are complex puzzles and construction toys to challenge the more able. The children are interested and well occupied with a wide range of self-chosen and adult-led activities. There is a suitable routine for their day which provides opportunities for them to be active, as well as quieter times for rest. The staff observe the children to assess what they can do, and know them well. They use this knowledge to help them adapt activities to match the children's abilities. Detailed progress records are maintained for the older children and a system of recording the development of the younger ones is being established.

Nursery education

The quality of the teaching and learning is good and the children are progressing well towards the early learning goals. They take part in a varied programme of activities which are often planned around a theme. These usually provide good levels of challenge for them and they are

interested and keen to take part. The staff have a sound understanding of how children learn. They monitor their progress and this information is used informally to plan the next steps in the children's learning. However, a revised system to assess and plan the next steps in their learning in a more systematic way is being introduced.

The children are motivated to learn and many show periods of sustained concentration. They understand there are times to sit quietly and they listen respectfully at assembly and group times. The children learn to have consideration for others and help care for the nursery's pets. They develop independence, managing their personal care and pouring drinks. The children often make choices about what they do, sometimes selecting equipment independently from labelled boxes that are stored on low shelves, and initiating their own play. Most children speak clearly and confidently, taking turns in conversations with others. They talk readily with the staff who take opportunities to extend their vocabulary, introducing them to new words, such as deciduous when looking at the trees. The children enjoy stories and books. They listen attentively at group story times and often chose to share a book with a member of staff, either alone or with some friends. Many activities promote the children's small muscle control and, in turn, the skills needed for them to control a pencil and write. The staff use a variety of teaching methods to help the children learn. For example, they find out how to form letters correctly by tracing their fingers over sandpaper shapes or drawing letters in the sand, as well as completing activity sheets. The children enjoy singing. They join in enthusiastically and tunefully with action rhymes and songs, both in French and English. They use their imaginations well in pretend play and have opportunities to explore paint freely in self-chosen activities. However, they have limited scope to try out their own ideas, to use their imaginations, or to select from a wide range of resources in adult-led art activities.

Computers are used frequently to support the children's learning. The children eagerly take turns to complete tasks which often involve matching pictures or sequencing them to make a story. The children are interested in numbers. Many are beginning to count correctly and to recognise numerals. They enjoy number rhymes and games, for example, counting their steps when playing "What's the time Mr Wolf?" Practical activities are used to help them begin to consider number problems, for instance, by comparing the number of girls and boys present and saying which is more. The children are curious and have many opportunities to find out about nature and the world around them. They plant seeds and watch them grow; they observe the changing seasons; they look at blossom and the bark on the trees, describing the textures, colours and smell. The children examine objects to find out how things work. They explore musical instruments to hear what sounds they make, and observe how ingredients change as they are mixed and cooked. They begin to learn about their own and others' cultures and traditions through celebrating festivals including the Chinese New Year, Christmas and St George's day.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children behave very well, playing cooperatively together, sharing fairly and taking turns. They often work or play collaboratively together without adult intervention; for example, five children worked together on a painting. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of ways to manage children's behaviour positively. There are age-appropriate expectations for behaviour and the children have added their ideas to the "Golden Rules", suggesting that it is important that they share and say "please" and "thank you". Staff help children consider the feelings of others and give them the skills to begin to negotiate an amicable solution to minor disputes over toys. Children receive praise and recognition for their achievements and when

they have behaved well. This helps them understand what is expected of them and promotes good self-esteem.

There is continuity in the children's care and their individual needs are met well because there is good communication between their parents and the staff. They talk informally about the children daily, perhaps sharing information about how well they have eaten their lunch or what they have been doing. The staff are careful to respect any specific requirements, for example, religious observances or health needs, and this ensures that the children are comfortable and secure. There is an effective strategy so that new children become familiar with the staff and the nursery environment so they settle quickly. Children who have learning difficulties or disabilities receive good support. Each stage in their development is planned with input from the staff, their parents and any other agencies involved with them. These plans are reviewed regularly ensuring their changing needs are met.

There is a wide range of resources in use, including books, small figures and dolls, which help the children become familiar with diversity in society. There are activities, including stories, music and cooking, to help them find out about the wider world. Some children begin to learn French through singing songs and vocabulary activities. This approach helps them to develop an accepting attitude towards others. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good and this supports the children's learning effectively. Parents speak warmly about the staff and the care their children receive and there is effective communication between them. The parents receive plenty of information about the nursery and what their child will be doing through the prospectus, newsletters and notice boards. The activity plans are displayed in each room where they are readily accessible for them to read. Staff keep parents well informed about their child's progress through twice yearly reports and a parents' evening, as well as through their frequent informal discussions. The children benefit from their parents' involvement with their learning and staff provide information so they can help their child at home. This includes sheets about the phonic letter sounds and how to form letters correctly.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The sound organisation of the nursery benefits the children. Suitable records are maintained. All the policies and procedures required to promote the children's welfare and development are in place and implemented effectively. This includes an appropriate recruitment procedure to ensure that new staff are suitable to work with the children. The staff are well qualified and all either hold a qualification or are undertaking training. The staff work cooperatively together. They are well organised ensuring that all runs smoothly for the children, for example, that their lunches are ready on time. The correct staff to child ratios are maintained. Generally the staff are deployed effectively, working with the children at the activities. However, at times, the children are not under their direct supervision. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management is good. The proprietor and her staff have reviewed practice at the nursery and are currently introducing new initiatives to enhance and monitor the children's learning and experiences. For example, the staff are introducing more Montessori teaching methods and materials, and an individual learning plan is being drawn up for every child. The staff are well motivated and enthusiastic about these developments. There are existing sound

procedures in place to monitor and evaluate the curriculum and effectiveness of the teaching. As a result, the children are making good progress.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration, 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 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

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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 that the children are well supervised at all times

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):

- extend the opportunities for children to use their own ideas and imaginations in planned art activities
- continue to establish the systems for monitoring the children's development and planning the next steps in their learning [also applies to Child care]

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