

St Edwards Junior School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY309807
Inspection date	08 June 2007
Inspector	Miriam Sheila Brown

Setting Address	252 London Road, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL52 6NR
Telephone number	01242 538900
E-mail	headmaster@stedwardsjunior.co.uk
Registered person	St Edwards Junior School
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. Edwards Junior School opened the Kindergarten in 2006. It operates from a multi-purpose, single storey building within the grounds of St. Edwards Junior School. There are four base rooms, an open-plan library and indoor physical play area, laundry room and toilets. There is an enclosed outdoor area with grass, hard standing and impact absorbent surfaces for outdoor play.

A maximum of 79 children may attend the Kindergarten at any one time. There are currently 95 children from one to five years on roll. Of these, 67 children receive nursery education funding. The Kindergarten is open each week day for 49 weeks of the year from 08:00 to 17:30 during school terms and from 08:30 to 15:30 during school holidays. The Kindergarten employs 11 staff plus support staff, all of whom hold recognised childcare qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn to understand simple good health and hygiene practices through their play and daily routines. In the baby room staff wipe children's hands and faces using disposable wipes and in the rest of the kindergarten all children are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times. Bathroom areas are well designed and resourced to enable children's independence in their personal care. Nappy changing areas and routines effectively meet children's individual needs and reduce the risks of cross-infection. Staff make good use of games to reinforce children's awareness of caring for themselves. For example, they very much enjoy playing 'Kim's game' where a number of items are displayed, then one removed and children guess which is missing. Items displayed are all to do with sun protection and staff reinforce this message whilst playing the game. Staff all receive first aid training meaning they are able to deal competently with any accidents that may occur.

Children enjoy cooked meals provided by the main school and these are planned to provide a well-balanced menu and to meet individual dietary requirements. Older children have their lunch in the main school canteen whilst children under two remain in the kindergarten. Children bring their own snacks and parents are offered suggestions of healthy options for these. Staff sit with children at snack and meal times and encourage them in social interaction and good manners. Drinks are provided during the day, although these are not freely available to all children. Parents are provided with a copy of the following weeks menu through the weekly newsletter.

Children are challenged to build on their fitness and physical skills using a wide range of outdoor equipment, such as, climbing apparatus and wheeled toys, each day. Indoors they enjoy dancing to music and move confidently and imaginatively pretending to be penguins whilst practising their concert songs. Children use a variety of small tools and equipment to assist in developing small muscle control. These include scissors, pens, brushes, glue sticks and sand and water toys.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Kindergarten premises are professionally organised to provide age-related play rooms that are resourced effectively to meet the needs of children of different ages. The premises are welcoming, clean and well-maintained and include a large area where the whole group may meet together for some activities, such as, singing. In each of the playrooms resources are stored in low-level units with pictures on storage boxes to enable all children to make decisions about their playthings. The youngest children have space in their room to rest, according to their needs, whilst being continuously monitored by staff. Outdoor play areas are fully enclosed and the buildings are secure throughout the day.

Good safety routines, such as, practise evacuation drills help to ensure children know what to do in an emergency, whilst risk assessments for the building and outing venues, ensure they remain safe whilst they play. Staff supervise children carefully throughout the day and gently remind them not to run inside and to tuck their chairs in after leaving a table. All visitors and parents are greeted by staff and accompanied at all times.

All staff receive child protection training and demonstrate through discussion, a very good understanding of both the signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to use should concerns arise. This helps to ensure children's welfare is effectively supported. The child protection policy is detailed and easily accessible to parents and staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children of all ages are happy and settled in the kindergarten. They are greeted warmly by staff and confidently choose activities and resources on arrival. Throughout each day children benefit from playing with a variety of toys which support their all round development. For example, imaginary play in role-play areas, tactile play with pasta, sand and dough, creative play with paint and glue and physical play in the ball pool or on apparatus. Activities are organised around a theme, such as 'travel' and children enjoy visits from the local road safety unit, as well as listening to stories and creating art work connected to this theme. Outdoor play is timetabled each day and children enjoy planting and watering the tomatoes, herbs and flowers in the garden area. Children relate very positively to each other and staff. They are gaining a positive understanding of the need to respect others, which is effectively promoted by staff who encourage them to take turns and share resources.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff demonstrate a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and use the early learning goals to ensure a balance of experience is offered which covers each area of learning. Observations and assessments are used to help inform planning, although these currently do not link directly to the stepping stones, and some aspects of assessment are not completed with sufficient regularity to inform short term plans. Children's 'I can do' books demonstrate they are making good progress overall. The play and learning environment is well organised to offer children a variety of play experiences.

Children are making very good progress in all areas of learning and are actively involved in play throughout the day. Circle and group times offer excellent opportunities for them to express their feelings, thoughts and ideas whilst learning about taking turns and respecting each other. Their language is developing well and children use this to organise their day-to-day activities and imaginary play. Many successfully identify initial sounds and most write their names with letters correctly formed. Children count, match and weigh in planned activities and accurately identify basic shapes.

Children thoroughly enjoy exploring and investigating, whether this is in the garden area discovering that slugs have eaten some of the plants or playing indoors with craft materials. Inside they use the interactive white board and computer games with growing confidence. Singing, listening to music and playing instruments help children to express their thoughts and feelings in a variety of ways.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued as individuals and have their personal needs met by adults who work in close cooperation with parents. For example, details of care routines, diet and specific needs are discussed with parents and clearly documented for staff information. Parents and children are greeted warmly by staff each morning, assisting positively with settling and separation.

Throughout activities, children are learning about their community and the wider world, as they enjoy visits from the road safety unit, celebrate a number of festivals throughout the year and join in with fund raising events, such as, 'children in need'. This helps to increase their awareness of different cultures and lifestyles. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children with special needs are well supported by their key workers and the kindergarten special educational needs coordinator. Staff make detailed observations to enable them to plan for children's particular needs and liaise with other health professionals, such as, speech therapists. Children are very well behaved within the clear and consistent boundaries set by staff. Staff use praise in a positive and meaningful way and provide strong role models for children. All children enjoy picking a stamp from the box and marking their work books when a task is completed. Children very much enjoy being the 'star of the day' when they have specific jobs, such as, collecting the register from the kindergarten office.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents have clear information about the kindergarten through the weekly newsletters, termly diaries, easily accessible policies and procedures, notice boards and daily opportunities to speak with staff. Open evenings and written reports offer one-to-one opportunities for parents to speak with staff and to increase their understanding of the Foundation Stage. The kindergarten also organises activity days when parents and carers are invited to spend a day at the setting, playing with their children. This assists in developing parents' interest and understanding of how their children learn. Parents views are sought regularly and discussion with them demonstrates strong support for all aspects of the care provided. Staff are welcoming and friendly and children are keen to come to the setting each day.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the children for whom it provides. Recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well protected and cared for because staff are appropriately trained and supported in their work. Minimum ratios are met or exceeded in all rooms throughout the day and support in the form of emergency and break-time cover is in place. The organisation of the kindergarten into age-specific rooms helps to ensure that each child has a sense of belonging without feeling overwhelmed. However, current organisation for the use of outdoor areas limits children's use to specific times of the day.

All documentation, including individual permissions, accident and medication records, are well maintained and available for inspection. Policy and procedure files are comprehensive, providing both staff and parents with clear information about all aspects of the setting's organisation, and are easily accessible. Children's details are stored appropriately to maintain confidentiality and regularly updated with parents.

Leadership and management of the nursery is good. The staff team are well supported by the manager and the school. Regular meetings, appraisals, induction and training offer staff a firm structure to develop their practice and expertise. Peripatetic teachers are employed to support children in spoken French and music, further supporting adult-led kindergarten activities. The kindergarten has a clear view of areas in which they plan to develop. These include extending the provision to reduce the waiting list and to use outside areas more effectively.

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.

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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 all children have easy access to fresh drinking water throughout the day.
- develop use of outdoor areas to enable more free movement for children.

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):

- complete observations and assessment more regularly to ensure that children's individual needs are identified and used to inform planning.
- link observations and assessments to the stepping stones to enable clearer identification of individual needs.

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