

Our Lady's Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	122587
Inspection date	26 September 2007
Inspector	Christine Stimson
Setting Address	Our Lady of Lourdes R.C. Church, Hampton Court Way, Thames Ditton, Surrey, KT7 0LP
Telephone number	0208 398 7475
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Registered person	Diocese of Arundel & Brighton Catholic Diocesan
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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 outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Our Lady's Nursery opened in 1976. It operates from two rooms within Our Lady Of Lourdes Catholic Church in Thames Ditton and provides access to a hall, toilets and outdoor play facilities. The nursery opens from 09:10 to 12:10 Monday to Friday during term time.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 26 children aged from two years to under five years at any one time, but the nursery only accepts children from two and a half years old. There are currently 30 children on roll and this includes 13 children who are in receipt of the nursery education grant. Children attend mainly from the local area and priority is given to Catholic families. Six part time staff work with the children, of these three have recognised early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

All children enjoy the opportunity of planned outdoor activities in the garden area of the nursery. They thrive on the fresh air and participate enthusiastically in ball games, chalking on paving stones, planting seeds and crops, riding on cars and playing with water and sand. This contributes towards a healthy life style. When the weather is inclement children play indoors making use of a large hall where they practise their skills of climbing up, over and through a climbing frame.

Children are beginning to understand the importance of personal hygiene and are encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating food. For example, children are asked to help staff prepare the fruit for snack time. They are questioned about what they have to do first and they know it is to wash their hands. They are asked why this is important and children talk about germs being on their hands. Staff leave boxes of tissues on the side in the room and in the outdoor area to encourage children to wipe their own noses and develop self-care skills.

Children benefit from healthy and nutritious snacks of fruits, some of which are exotic. Children are able to name these fruits and enjoy tasting them at snack time. A table has been set up for children to independently help themselves to drinks of water throughout the session. They understand they must sit down at the table to have their drink and children put their dirty cup in a basket marked for that purpose. This encourages independence and ensures children do not become thirsty.

Several staff hold first aid qualifications and a well stocked first aid box is kept within the room children play in. This, together with written permission from parents to take children to hospital in an emergency, ensures children's accidents are dealt with effectively by staff. The nursery has a sick child policy in place that is shared with parents and the nursery have written prior consent from parents to administer medication to those children who need it. This supports children's health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and friendly environment where they feel safe and secure. The nursery is well maintained, spacious and suitable for the age of the children attending. The through room can be divided by folding doors if staff wish to teach the older children separately from the younger ones, but generally children experience a free flow play environment where they can move from one activity to another at will. The outside playground is safe and secure and staff escort children to and from this area.

Resources and equipment are safe, at child height and in good condition. Children are able to access items for themselves, which encourages independence and choice. They help staff tidy things away in a routine that has been established and even the very young children are aware of their role and responsibilities.

Children are kept safe through effective health and safety procedures, for example, staff come in early each day to make sure all areas are clean, secure and safe for children to play. The children are developing an awareness of what to do about fire and road safety. This is because

regular fire drills are conducted and road safety officers are invited into the setting to teach children about being careful when crossing roads. Managers undertake annual risk assessments on the premises and note down any changes or hazards on this form to bring them to the attention of the church administrators. Although the managers noted some time ago there are no smoke alarms in the nursery, this has still not been rectified and compromises children's safety. Children are well protected as staff have attended training in child protection and know how to proceed if they have any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Staff and managers plan exciting activities for children using the Birth to three matters framework and the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage of learning. They are skilled at taking into consideration the needs of children under three years and are effective in extending learning for those children who are more able. Children receive lots of support from staff who offer cuddles and reassurance, give children time to express themselves and ask open questions that make children think. For example, children play in the sand tray accompanied by a staff member. They spoon sand onto a wheel and watch it spin. They are asked if it is going fast or slow; one child replies 'Slow'. Children are asked what would make it go faster; they do not know. The teacher asks if they could spoon some sand into a small jug; they then count 12 spoonfuls out together. One child is asked to pour the whole lot onto the wheel in one go. The wheel spins really fast and the child says 'Look it is going faster now'. Children are asked if they know why and one child says 'It is heavier'.

Children are developing a love of books and often drift into the book corner to look at books or to put on headphones, switch on the CD player and settle down to listen to a story. Sometimes groups of children gather there and one reads to the others, making up the story from the pictures or recalling the story from memory. All children have regular opportunities to use a range of stimulating creative materials and the nursery has its own recycle bin. Staff and parents put items in the bin to enable children to make models from this junk, using their vivid imaginations.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. The planning is a team effort and is very effective as it is divided into the six areas of learning, with all staff aware of their roles and responsibilities. Staff are motivated and stay focussed on the children. Their calm, relaxed manner permeates to the children who move from one activity to another, selecting resources for themselves from boxes and drawers within the nursery. Staff undertake meaningful written observations of children's learning each day. These identify children's progress and helps the key workers inform planning of how to move children to their next step of development.

Children enter the nursery full of confidence and part from their parents/carers easily. The older children know the routine of looking for their names and where to hang their outside clothing, whilst younger children still need support for this from their parents or the staff. Children's self-care skills are encouraged with children responsible for putting on outdoor clothing, preparing snacks themselves, pouring their own drinks, serving other children, helping to tidy away toys and taking themselves off to wash their hands.

Children concentrate on stories read by adults and join in with the familiar phrases of the story. Some children anticipate what is coming next and staff are very skilled at reading the stories,

holding all the children's interest. Children's language skills are very good. They interact with staff and their peers making conversation about home events; the other children show an ability to listen to them without too much interruption. The areas set up for children give them lots of opportunities to mark make and write for a variety of purpose. There are painting easels, drawing paper and pens, felt tips and crayons. Notepads in the home corner, transformed into a doctors surgery one day and then a veterinary surgery the next, allows children to write prescriptions for their patients and chinks and boards are to hand in the outside area.

Children are becoming aware of sizes and use mathematical language in their play. For example, children earnestly build a tower out of cardboard blocks. They stack them according to size and struggle to reach the very top of the tower that has become high. They discuss who is the tallest of them and then this child tries to put the last brick on. They discover one block has been missed out and the teacher asks where they should put it. They show her and she encourages them to dismantle the tower to fit it in. They realise that would be the wrong place so make a joint decision to create two towers out of the blocks instead. Children use number in their everyday activities and are beginning to solve simple problems. For example, one child tells the teacher they have not got enough knives for cutting up the fruit snack because another child has joined them. He says they also need another chair and plate. The teacher gets him to count the plates and count the children and he tells her they need one more of each.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developing as they have access to programmable equipment and computers and welcome visitors from their local community. Children have visits from firemen, police officers and nurses and this helps them to learn about people who help us. Children enjoy annual visits from an organisation who bring farm animals to the setting. They are delighted to learn about how to care for the animals and love to stroke and pet them.

Children develop creativity through a range of resources such as painting and sticking. They are encouraged to develop their imaginations by designing their own artwork for displays in the rooms. Children are enthused and eager to participate in creative activities such as printing, using cut up fruit pieces dipped in vibrant paints.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children arrive at the nursery and feel a sense of belonging as they are greeted warmly and with affection by familiar staff. They are confident to talk of their experiences outside nursery, for example, talking to staff about what they do at weekends whilst having a break at the snack table. There are good opportunities to learn about the different cultures and traditions of people around the world as children take part in festivals connected with Diwali and Chinese New Year. The setting has a wide range of resources that children can access to enable them to develop a positive awareness of other races and cultures. Books show characters from around the world and there are a variety of dolls from other cultures, some dressed in traditional costume. Play figures and dressing up clothes that represent other cultures are used as a part of children's integral play. The setting is less well equipped for depicting people with disabilities, which inhibits children's understanding of diversity. All children are welcomed into the nursery and staff have experience of caring for children with learning or physical difficulties or those with English as an additional language.

Children are well behaved, occupied, polite and are beginning to understand right from wrong through consistent boundaries, praise and appropriate strategies used by staff to manage

behaviour. Children are beginning to share and take turns and they show interest in each other by listening as others talk about their experiences during snack time. Children question staff as they read to them and they are given responsibilities within the nursery. For example, children tidy away toys and give out milk or plates to others. All of this goes towards ensuring children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Children benefit from the parents involvement in the nursery and the effective communication by newsletters, a prospectus and daily verbal feedback from managers and key workers about their children's progress. Information about the curriculum is available to parents in the prospectus and they are encouraged to comment about the care their children receive. Staff find out from parents what children can already do when they arrive at nursery and then undertake six weeks of observations to ensure staff build on what children already know.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from being cared for by a staff team who are experienced in child development and have a sound knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. Staff are able to provide a range of stimulating activities to ensure children in the nursery progress well towards the early learning goals. There are a comprehensive range of policies and procedures which guide staff in their care of the children and the organisation of the setting.

Leadership and management are outstanding. There is a strong commitment to the professional development of staff, who are valued for their contribution. Managers ensure staff are aware of their role and responsibilities as this is stated on the weekly planning sheets and discussed at team meetings every two weeks. Staff work well as a team, they are committed and willing to stay on after the nursery has closed to prepare for the next days activities and to discuss any issues arising from that day's session. Children are well supported within the structure of the adult/child ratio. Staff know the children well and they are deployed effectively to ensure children's individual needs are met. The managers regularly review the policies and procedures to ensure consistency of care for children and they have successfully developed professional and friendly relationships with parents. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection one recommendation was made to make sure low level glass does not cause a hazard to children. Since then children's safety has been supported as all the low level glass in the doors leading to the hall and the car park have had safety film put on them. At the last nursery education inspection one key issue was raised to make sure children were given opportunities to design and construct using different materials. Since then very good progress has been made and children now have daily opportunities to construct using a variety of different resources. Foam blocks, stickle bricks, wooden blocks with popper screws, duplo, octagons, popoids, magnet blocks and recycled materials are used for children to construct with. Children combine recycled materials together using staples, pritt sticks, runny glue, masking tape, whole punches and string, paper clips and paper fasteners.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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):

- comply with recommendations from the fire officer in relation to smoke alarms
- ensure children have access to positive images of people with disabilities.

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