

The Old School Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY281596
Inspection date	11 July 2007
Inspector	Lynn Reeves
Setting Address	The Old School, Bersted Street, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO22 9QE
Telephone number	01243 867019
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Registered person	The Old School Nursery Ltd
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Old School Nursery opened under its current registration in 2004. It operates from one large hall and one smaller adjoining room in an old school building in South Bersted, near Bognor Regis, West Sussex. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery serves the local area and surrounding villages.

The provision offers sessional care for 24 children aged two to five years. There are currently 39 children aged from two to five years on roll. This includes 26 children in receipt of educational funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties, disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens Monday to Friday from 09:15 until 12:30. There are six staff who work directly with the children. Most of the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from a mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership as well as other agencies such as Portage.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children access a clean environment where staff implement effective health and hygiene policies across the setting to minimise the risk of infection. For example, tabletops are washed down with anti-bacterial spray before food preparation, toys, play provisions are cleaned on a regular basis, and staff wear disposable gloves when changing babies' nappies, which prevent cross contamination of germs. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through daily routines and discussions. They visit the toilets independently and wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Children are protected from infection because the staff are well informed about children's health and allergies. Healthy eating is promoted within the nursery and the children benefit from a nutritious diet as they are provided with a range of healthy options for snacks. Children happily go to the rolling snack table after washing their hands, collect their plate and cup and confidently pour their own drinks from the jugs before being handed out a range of different fruits. Staff talk to the children about which types of food are good for them, helping to develop their understanding of healthy eating from an early age. Children develop a good understanding of healthy eating and are introduced to a range of new foods and tastes during cooking activities. They demonstrate using their good manners at meal times, saying 'please' and 'thank you' without reminders from staff. Fresh drinking water is available at all times throughout the session and children help themselves, further developing their independence.

Children enjoy daily opportunities to play in the garden and reap the benefits of fresh air. They participate in activities developing their co-ordination and skills, for example, playing on the slide and trampoline, walking on stilts and riding their sit-on-toys around the playground. Children have fun playing chase with each other and practise using the hoops to develop control of their bodies. They excitedly talk about the egg and spoon race they are practising for, for their sports day and delight in opening up the plastic shells to see the eggs inside. Children demonstrate good spatial awareness as they pedal the cars; negotiating the cones and obstacles before pulling into the garage to have the pretend petrol put into their cars with the hosepipe.

Children stay healthy because staff have suitable first aid training and the first aid boxes are well stocked. Staff deal with accidents effectively, for example, as one child hurt herself playing in the playground, this was recorded immediately and the parent was asked to sign the paperwork on collection of the child. Children's health is assured in an emergency situation as relevant information relating to children's medical history and written parental consent to seek emergency medical treatment is obtained.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and safe environment. The premises are warm and welcoming to the children and their parents, as information is clearly displayed. The good range of number, letter, colour and shape charts displayed enhance children's learning. Children's efforts are valued as their work is displayed brightly on notice boards and the organisation of activities ensures children can move freely and safely around the setting. Children are provided with a very good range of play provisions, which are stimulating, fun and interesting. These provide sufficient challenges to all the children who attend and are stored at low level increasing opportunities for children to be independent and make their own choice of play.

Children's safety is assured because staff pay high attention to ensuring risks and hazards are minimised. For example, visual checks are carried out daily before the children arrive and are ongoing throughout the day to ensure the environment remains safe for children. Spillages are cleaned up immediately to prevent accidents and the children are reminded to sit properly on the chairs in case they fall. The front door to the nursery is kept locked when the group is in session and systems to register the children and staff are in place. Although most visitors are asked to sign in and out of the building, this system is not fully secure to ensure children's safety at all times. Children learn how to keep themselves safe in an emergency situation because they practise fire drills on a regular basis, although evidence of the last evacuation was not available for inspection.

Staff have good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues as they have completed relevant training in this area. All existing injuries that children arrive into group with are recorded and staff would contact the relevant agencies as necessary to protect the children. The required policies and procedures are in place and shared with parents to safeguard children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are extremely confident, quickly settle into routine and are encouraged by staff from the time they arrive until they go home. They develop good independence as they hang up their coats, put on their aprons for art activities and wash their own hands. Staff make themselves available to talk to the parents and get to know the children well, which help to secure relationships between the children and staff developing a strong sense of trust. Younger children's needs are fully met because staff have introduced the Birth to three matters framework and the dedicated staff ensure that they are on hand to offer a cuddle when needed and to help the children learn at their own pace. Children are provided with a range of experiences to keep them stimulated and interested. All staff interact well with the children, knowing when to stand back to allow their play to develop. Staff take the opportunity to talk to each other about how each child is progressing, then plan for their next steps of development. They evaluate activities to ensure the children are getting the best from them and adapt them according to the age and stage of development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. The staff are very knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage curriculum and the early learning goals; they differentiate activities and adapt techniques according to the age and ability of the child, which enhances the quality of care children receive. They provide an exciting range of activities and experiences to all children including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The key workers observe the children's progress and record what they have achieved throughout the session, which are then used to inform next stages of children's development. Staff work very well as a team, suggesting new ideas and methods for the planning, and monitoring the children in a variety of ways to identify individual targets for children to work towards. Staff provide a curriculum that meets the needs and abilities of the children; this ensures children are able to achieve their full potential.

Children are extremely confident and demonstrate high levels of independence; they put on their own aprons, visit the bathroom on their own and help themselves to resources. They work well as part of a group, take turns, help and support each other, for example, as one child

manages to select the computer programme correctly, another child claps her for her efforts and gives her a cuddle. Children are proud to show off their creations and talk about what they have made. They receive praise from the staff for their efforts, which help build strong relationships. Children talk openly about their own personal experiences and enjoy talking about the toys they have brought from home. They use past and present tense well as they recall personal events. For example, one child tells the group his mum and dad have new bikes and another says she helped her mum make the pizza for tea last night. Children put on their listening ears during registration, call out the answers to questions, and use their thinking caps to remember which day it is. Children are able to form clear and recognisable letters and some are able to write their names on their work with little support. However, there is limited labelling across the nursery for children to recognise and consolidate their understanding of the written word. Children freely access books and handle these with care; they enjoy listening to stories and can recall what is going to happen next.

Children use mathematical language to describe size, shape, position, volume and measure during free play and planned activities. They use a range of compare bears to match and sort, play with various bricks and blocks, count how many children are sat in the circle, how many currants are in the buns and weigh ingredients on the scales. They have recently completed a project on how tall and short, big or small people and objects are. Children use mathematical programmes on the computer to match and sort, and pair objects, colours and shapes and sing nursery rhymes, such as 'Five currant buns' and 'Fish alive' to add and subtract. Children explore and investigate living things as they watch the tadpoles in the tank and learn about life cycles. One child explains that it will take seven weeks for them to turn into frogs. Children excitedly water the flowers and seeds they have grown in the garden and talk about how the tomatoes have changed from green to orange and soon they will turn red when the sun gets on them. Children use a range of technology, such as programmable toys, tills, phones and the computer, and develop a sense of time and place as they recall events happening at the nursery, for example, the planned sports days.

Children use a range of tools, for example, wooden spoons, spatulas, rolling pins and cutters when using the play-dough and paintbrushes, glue sticks, cellotape and scissors during creative play. They are able to cut straight lines with the scissors and delight in spooning the icing sugar onto their currant buns. Children move confidently around the setting using their various muscles when pretending to be a long train, waving at the adults as they walk past. They crouch into little balls and stretch up high as they pretend to be growing flowers then wriggle and shrink down as they pretend to die because they have not been watered. Children have fun with musical instruments being noisy elephants then quiet butterflies, they sing favourite nursery rhymes, 'If your happy and you know it' clapping their hands and stamping their feet. They use their imagination well during creative play; drawing underwater pictures of submarines, shells and sea beetles. They use their senses to explore the paint, sticking their hands in to make prints and adding currants to the flour and playdough to make buns.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are highly valued as individuals as the staff get to know them and their families well. Children are encouraged for their efforts throughout the session by staff and receive praise when using their good manners, as they say 'excuse me' when they want to speak. Children have equal access to the toys and activities provided and develop their understanding of the wider world as they play with resources that reflect diversity. Planned activities and discussions

around a variety of cultural festivals, for example, Chinese New year, Honaker and Diwali extend children's knowledge and promote equal opportunities.

The setting has effective arrangements in place to care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) continues to attend training courses and workshops and works alongside parents and outside professionals to ensure children's individual needs are met.

Children are confident and show good levels of self-esteem, children behave well because they know what is expected from them because of the clear rules and boundaries in place. Staff deal with unwanted behaviour in a calm and relaxed manner, kneeling down to the children's level to explain what is acceptable, taking into account their age and stage of understanding. Unwanted behaviour is recorded and discussed with parents to ensure a consistent approach. Children are asked to help tidy away at the end of the session helping them develop a sense of belonging and responsibility. This positive approach fosters children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

Parents receive detailed information about the setting's routines, opening times, the Foundation Stage curriculum and how the group is organised via the prospectus. The clearly displayed notice boards and regular newsletters keep parents up to date with themes and topics, however, information regarding the Birth to three matters framework is limited, which impacts on the care being offered for younger children. The partnership with parents is enhanced through encouraging them to help on the parent rota system and getting them involved in the organisation of sports days, Christmas and summer parties. Parents feel all the staff are friendly and approachable and provide positive feedback in relation to the care and education offered to the children. This is evident through discussion and references from current parents and those of children who have previously attended the setting.

Partnership with parents of children who receive funding for nursery education is good.

Parents are informed about topics and activities their child is involved in through daily discussion, information displayed, regular newsletters and open days. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning by sending in things from home relating to themes and topics. They are able to come into the nursery at any time to spend time with their children as they play and learn. Parents are provided with lots of information regarding their child's development via their achievement records, which they can see and comment on at any time. Effective informal communication takes place at handover and collection time, as parents are encouraged to come into the group, collect the children's creations and discuss any issues with the key workers. Information about children's ongoing progress towards the early learning goals can also be discussed during individual appointments with their child's key worker. Children's learning is significantly enhanced by the contributions parents make and the secure links in place between home and the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children gain self-assurance and are starting to develop positive relationships within the group because staff working with them is consistent and a key worker system is implemented to ensure their needs are met. The daily routines are organised well and run smoothly where the children are able to move from one activity to another, never having to wait around, which has a positive effect on behaviour. Children benefit from the good deployment of staff and high

levels of interaction with the children. Staff ask open-ended questions to make children think, and ensure that activities keep children interested and stimulated. As a result, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Robust procedures are in place for the recruitment of new staff as they complete an in depth induction programme. Policies and procedures are implemented effectively and most of the required documentation is in place, although weaknesses have been identified with the visitors' book and the fire logbook. All documentation is stored securely to maintain confidentiality.

Leadership and management are good. The owners influence practice and monitor teaching methods ensuring children are provided with effective support and sufficient challenges. The supervisor provides strong links between the owners and staff team and is extremely supportive. Good support is offered to all staff, both informally on a daily basis and formally through meetings and annual appraisals via the supervisor and the owners. Staff are knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage curriculum and the early learning goals, they are enthusiastic and motivated, which enhance children's care and learning. They are very active in updating their training; they work well as a team, sharing ideas and practices. Staff make good use of regular meetings to monitor the curriculum and the impact on children's individual progress. Activities are evaluated and amended as necessary to improve the quality and achieve the desired learning, which successfully promote children's care and well-being.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the provider was asked to develop further staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour during large group times, taking into account their age and stage of development. Since the last inspection, the staff have attended additional training for behaviour management and ensure that children are split into smaller groups depending on their age and stage of development. These procedures are effective; work well in practise and the children behave very well.

At the last education inspection, the provider was asked to develop the language, literacy and communication programme to include opportunities for children to practise their writing skills. Children use their listening ears during group activities and demonstrate good communication skills. They have access to writing materials throughout the session, which help them to practise incidental writing and planned activities provide opportunities to practise their emergent writing skills. The setting was asked to extend some aspects of the mathematical programme to include calculation and comparison. Children use mathematical skills at all opportunities; they count, subtract, match and sort using compare bears and access mathematical programmes on the computer, which help consolidate their learning.

The setting was also asked to use the developmental and assessment records and the planning further to challenge all children and further extend the learning of the more able children. Staff take observational notes of children's progress and differentiation is now evident on the planning, which ensure that all children benefit from the education programme. These improvements ensure that the needs of all children are being met.

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):

- ensure the fire log book is kept up to date and available for inspection
- develop procedures to provide parents with information regarding the Birth to three matters framework
- ensure the procedures to record all visitors to the setting are consistent

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):

- further develop children's recognition of the written word

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