



# The School House Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY265818
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 July 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Angela Rowley
<b>Setting Address</b>	Meins Road, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB2 6QF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01254 689808
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Stewart Birchall Netstar 9 Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The School House Nursery was registered to the current providers, Netstar 9 Ltd. in 2003. A nurseries manager is employed to oversee both nurseries established by this company. It is located in a detached property in the culturally diverse residential area of Billinge, Blackburn.

The School House is open each weekday from 08:00 until 17:30, 51 weeks a year. It offers full day care for a maximum of 55 children from birth to 5 years. Children are

based in four separate areas according to age. They have shared use of an outdoor play area.

There are 68 children on roll. 26 children are 3 or 4-year-olds who receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports a small number of children with special educational needs. Over half the children speak English as an additional language.

Eleven staff work with the children all of whom hold appropriate qualifications in childcare and education. The nursery receives support from their local education authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children begin to learn the importance of good personal hygiene through appropriate daily routines. This is supported by posters displayed in bathrooms of children hand washing. As a result many children meet their own self care needs such as visiting the toilet and washing their own hands. Effective procedures such as staff consistently wearing disposable gloves and aprons for nappy changing sustain good levels of hygiene and helps prevent the spread of infection, although, split changing mats detract from this good practice.

Children are adequately nourished. All are offered drinks regularly throughout the day particularly during hot weather and younger children access their own individual cups independently identifying their own bodily needs. Children enjoy a varied menu which contributes to the provision of a balanced diet, however these could be better planned to increase children's awareness of healthy eating and to provide fewer processed foods. The preparation and storage of foods is currently problematic as there is no cook in post. In the interim period staff need to ensure that food safety guidelines are complied with, particularly in relation to the storage of babies bottles.

Staff use the Birth to three matters guidance well to establish effective systems to meet children's individual care needs and all are able to rest or be active accordingly. All children throughout the nursery receive good opportunities to receive fresh air, sunlight and physical activity. Staff make good use of the local community and as a result babies are able to go out on walks in their prams, and older children experience many planned outings, for example, to the park, farm and supermarket.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in generally well maintained, clean and well presented premises. Children under 3 years benefit from a stimulating environment created by the provision of hanging mobiles and attractive wall displays of their own artwork neatly labelled with key words relating to the display. Good security precautions are in place such as key coded entrance and password systems as well as CCTV in the

baby room. However, this is hindered by the fact that the outdoor gate is frequently left open as it is not easily lockable by parents leaving. Procedures to monitor the suitability of the premises could be further improved to include the monitoring of room temperatures.

Children under 3 years use a good range of safe, developmentally appropriate resources. These are mostly well organised with many around the room to encourage independent access. Older children lack sufficient resources to extend their play and can mainly only access what is set out for them. This limits their opportunities to make independent choices and follow their own natural play and learning instincts.

Children are well protected. Staff have a clear understanding of the possible indicators of abuse and what to do in the event of any concerns. Appropriate written procedures are in place with a revised version currently in draft format.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

There are some differences between the quality of experiences offered to children under 3 years and those provided for older children.

Babies receive lots of cuddles and enjoy being held closely whilst beginning to hold onto their own bottles at feeding time, developing an awareness of their own abilities. They benefit from familiar routines which keeps them settled and they enjoy textures of natural materials during play. Children show interest in stimulating equipment that promotes sensory awareness such as low level mirrors and tactile toys. This also encourages their natural instinct to explore.

Children under 3 years make good progress in their learning because staff are beginning to make good use of the Birth to three matters framework to provide an interesting and exciting range of experiences from which children learn. For example, making patterns in shaving foam, painting pictures with water and brushes in the sunshine and making prints with the wheels of transport toys in paint. They are beginning to become skilful communicators because staff speak with them and question them lots. This makes them think, make connections and remember. Young 2-year-old children are able and are encouraged to follow simple instructions which also facilitates their independence. They know and can sing a repertoire of songs, some independently. This again contributes to their communication skills and in developing social confidence.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make sufficient progress because staff have a basic understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Plans are detailed and the recording system thorough, however staff lack knowledge and experience of how to use them effectively and so the provision of a broad range of activities linked to the early learning goals is inconsistent in some areas. Children have fun and enjoy the activities planned for them, although some activities lack purpose as they are too complex and children would learn better through the

provision of more first hand, practical experiences. Resources need to be increased and more effectively planned to ensure that children can extend their play, for example by the provision of weighing scales, bags, money, dolls, prams, dressing up, and paper and pens with which to record bills and make shopping lists in the green grocers stall.

Children's progress is satisfactorily monitored by their key worker who know their children quite well. The current system would benefit from improvement to ensure links to all stepping stones and early learning goals. This would enable staff to more easily identify how to move children on to the next step in their learning.

Children's opportunities to operate independently within the setting are limited because of a lack of equipment and the restrictive organisation of space. Staff sometimes limit children to one room or another which prevents them moving freely around their environment and making choices about their play.

Children show a strong sense of belonging as they greet each other and seek out personal friends. They speak confidently to share their experiences and they listen well to stories. More able children are beginning to re-tell narratives from familiar books such as 'Chicken Licken' and some are beginning to identify alphabet sounds by the use of 'jolly phonics'. Some more able 4-year-olds can write their names recognisably when asked. However, few attempt writing independently because there are too few opportunities to explore a range of mark making equipment and tools such as pens, pencils, chinks, rubbers, sharpeners and scissors. This also impacts on the development of fine motor skills.

Children develop a good sense of number and many can count to 10. They are beginning to develop concepts of mathematical language such as bigger than, tallest and longest because staff introduce this naturally into their play, for example, when building towers or making tracks with bricks. Staff however, miss key opportunities to encourage children to solve simple mathematical problems during everyday activities such as setting the dinner table, counting out the cups required and needing one more or less.

Children develop good ICT skills and many independently control the mouse and follow through simple programs. Staff make good use of the local community to plan outings and promote equal opportunities which broadens children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and children with special educational needs are warmly welcomed in the nursery. Staff ensure that activities and resources positively represent the children who attend as well as the wider community. This helps children develop a positive attitude to others. Appropriate procedures are in place to monitor the provision for children with special educational needs as the manager works closely with outside agencies, although more needs to be done to ensure that any required specialist equipment is obtained via relevant sources.

Children's individuality is valued throughout the nursery. Babies are content and secure because their individual needs are met and routines followed. Older children continue to be able to take a rest if they need one. Staff know each child well and soon identify if they are not their usual selves, ensuring that their health needs are met and parents quickly informed.

Children are generally well behaved. Staff promote and expect good manners and as a result children are very polite. Most children take turns and show respect for others. This fosters children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. Children under 3 years develop good levels of self esteem as they are positively praised and encouraged by staff with big cheers of 'well done' and 'clever girl', although sometimes older children lack confidence in completing tasks as they are not as positively managed.

Partnerships with parents are good. Babies settle quickly because staff work closely with parents during a gradual admission programme. Children who receive funded nursery education benefit from a two way sharing of information using some baseline assessment information and by holding events such as parents and social evenings. They are provided with newsletters which detail useful information about the provision and allow them to make contributions to the theme of activities for example, parents come in to make multi-cultural foods for children to taste.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Policies and procedures are generally all in place and mostly work in practice to promote children's welfare and development. All documentation used to manage the care of children and the setting is appropriate, with all required details recorded. However the systems used to monitor the progress of children receiving funded nursery education need to be improved to form useful tools to help staff identify children's progress along all the stepping stones. This will help them plan more effectively to challenge children and move them on to the next stage.

The current management structure is sound. Each manager is clear about their role and responsibilities and has a clear vision for future plans. This ensures that the service provided to children is continually improved. However, more needs to be done to monitor the effectiveness of the nursery education provision. Staff's knowledge of and confidence in providing an effectively planned environment with first hand interesting experiences to help children learn also needs to be increased. Managers have been successful in achieving this with staff caring for under three's by promoting use of the Birth to three matters framework. Therefore the leadership and management of the provision overall is satisfactory.

Procedures used to promote the development of staff are good. Supervision and appraisal are regularly provided and are used to identify and meet training needs. Most staff have attended recent training to update and increase their skills and as a result the needs of children who attend are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the manager agreed to make improvements to policies relating to child protection and behaviour management, and to the way in which medication records were kept. All medicines given to children are now followed up with parental signatures to acknowledge the administration. This ensures the safety of the children. Both policies concerned are currently under review.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There are no complaints to report.

## **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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### **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):

- review the menus to ensure that children are provided with less processed, more nutritious foods which contribute to a healthy diet
- ensure that all food storage and preparation complies with relevant food safety and hygiene regulations
- make the outside gate secure and establish procedures to ensure safe and suitable room temperatures within the nursery.

#### **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):

- improve systems for assessing children's progress to ensure that they show how children make progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals
- improve the planning and provision of activities to ensure that children receive a balanced range of first hand interesting experiences which help them make progress in all areas of learning

- improve the range and organisation of equipment so that children are able to extend their play and access mark making equipment independently
- review the organisation of the pre-school environment and provision so that children are able to make choices about their play and operate independently within the setting.

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