

The Mount Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	224208
Inspection date	19 September 2007
Inspector	Mary Anne Henderson
Setting Address	Dark Lane, Broseley, Shropshire, TF12 5LW
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Registered person	The Mount Nursery
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?

The Mount Nursery opened in 1995. It operates from a large demountable building in the grounds of Broseley C of E School in the village of Broseley in Shropshire. A maximum of 38 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 all year round. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 104 children from birth to under eight years on roll. This includes 19 funded three-year-olds and 16 funded four-year-olds. Children come from the local and surrounding areas. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

There are currently seven members of staff working with the children all of whom hold early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy playing in an environment that is well maintained and clean. They are aware of the need to wash their hands after painting, after visiting the toilet and before they eat. Children's welfare is well maintained because the staff are first aid qualified and they have sought written parental permission to seek emergency medical treatment or advice for all children on roll.

The children are learning about the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy a good range of outdoor activities and use a broad range of small and large equipment to develop their muscles. For example, they climb and balance on the outdoor equipment, run around in the fresh air, ride on tricycles and scooters and throw and catch the balls.

Children learn about healthy eating because they eat lots of fruit such as bananas, apples and pears for snack time. They also enjoy drinks of water, milk or juice with their snacks and they have free access to drinking water throughout the session. Children's independence is promoted because they spread butter on their own toast, supervised by the staff. Children enjoy social interaction with their peers and the staff during snack time as they talk about their family life.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The safety of the children is well maintained. Staff ensure areas are safe for the children before they arrive and they use a comprehensive risk assessment format which includes areas, equipment and toys. The children learn about personal safety through activities and by having visitors such as the fireman. Children are also involved in regular evacuation practise with the staff.

Premises are very welcoming for parents and their children. There is an informative notice board in the entrance hall which provides information about policies, registration and the complaints procedures. There is also a range of children's work on display for parents and their children to enjoy. Children use a range of equipment and toys suitable to their age and stage of development. The layout of the space is favourable to children's learning. For example, resources are low reach and labelled to encourage children to access them, thereby promoting their confidence and independence.

Children's welfare is promoted well because the staff have attended child protection training. Staff know what to do and who to contact should they have a concern about a child in their care and they have the current Local Safeguarding Children Board contact numbers at hand. There is a comprehensive child protection policy in place to keep parents informed of procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

To support the development of younger children, the staff have attended training in the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Key workers observe the children and use the development cards to ensure young children are progressing in all areas of learning. Children share and turn-take with their peers, and the younger children are keen to help each other at tidy up time. They are well behaved and they have regard for each other. The children are involved in a good range

of free play and planned activities. For example, they enjoy stories, circle time and imaginary play. They also enjoy finding out about the world around them as they explore how plants grow.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children access a range of resources because they are low level and kept in labelled boxes thereby encouraging them to make their own choices. However, children are not always well informed about the broad range of resources and activities available to them during their child-initiated play times. For example, children are not provided with prompt cards or other ways to inform them about the range available to them. This possibly compromises their learning in this area. Children are confident and call out to their peers as they run around the outdoor play space shouting 'come on, let's go over here'. Children are independent. They put on and take off their own coats and know to go and wash their hands before eating and after visiting the toilet. Children find out about the world around them as they explore a range of festivals around the calendar year, such as Chinese New Year and Diwali. They explore imaginary play as they use the small world people, dressing-up clothes and dolls and equipment in the home corner.

Children access books in an inviting comfortable book corner where they can relax with their peers. They sit and concentrate well during circle time when they explore mathematics, such as counting the boys and girls attending today. They listen and take it in turns to talk, supported by the staff. More able children write their name on their work. All children practice handwriting as they use sheets that encourage them to write letters and numbers, thereby building their knowledge of the alphabet and numbers up to 10. The children enjoy joining in with stories during story time with the staff. They know and can predict the story endings. Children explore shape, space and measurement as they enjoy playing with sand, water and cooking activities. They look at the concept of time as they plant seeds and plants and watch them grow.

Children are finding out about the world around them as they explore and investigate their surroundings. They go on local walks to look at the wildlife and plants. Children enjoy making three dimensional creations with junk and glue during planned and spontaneous activities. They explore paints and crayons and they draw and write at the designated writing areas. Children have begun to look at and identify the uses of every day technology through planned activities. They look at equipment for weighing and baking and they play with tills and telephones during imaginary play. Children have a good sense of space as they move around their indoor and outdoor areas, being careful not to run into their peers as they ride their tricycles and scooters. They climb and balance on the small and large equipment to develop their small and large muscles. Children also enjoy using a range of tools such as knives, cutters, pencils and scissors. Children enjoy music and movement as they listen to audio tapes during indoor physical play. They like to dress up and walk around the play areas and chat to other children and the staff as they pass by.

Staff are very good role models for children. They praise children as they tidy up or help each other with jobs and they encourage children to take turns at listening and talking. Staff talk quietly with each other and the children to ensure a relaxing and accepting atmosphere for children where they can hear and be heard. The staff spend much of their time directly with the children, joining in with their play and asking them open-ended questions to extend and consolidate their learning. The staff team have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning and they are suitably experienced and qualified. They know that children learn through play and they provide sufficient time, resources and equipment to extend children's

learning and promote progression. However, the staff do not always ensure the children are well informed about the range of resources and activities available to them during their child-initiated playtimes. This possibly compromises this area of their learning. Staff work well as a team and meet regularly to discuss issues about the curriculum and the children attending. Planning and assessment is good and the plans include what the children will get out of the activities. The planning is informed by what children can already do and the areas the children need to develop further. There are good strategies in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or those who speak English as an additional language. The staff have previous experience of caring for children who may need further support in these areas and they would seek the support of parents and other professionals to ensure consistency and the inclusion of all children on roll. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are well behaved and respond to strategies used by the staff including praise throughout the day. This promotes their self-esteem. Children have regard for their peers and are able to share and take turns with the resources. They explore festivals through creative activities. For example, they make cards and paint and draw pictures as they learn about Christmas, Easter and Divvali. However, there are limited toys and books depicting positive images of people with disabilities. This possibly compromises this area of children's learning. There are good strategies in place to support children that attend the group with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure consistency and inclusion of all children on roll.

There are positive relationships between the parents and the staff. Parents of young children receive verbal and written feedback about their child's time at the nursery. Parents can stay and settle their child in at the start of the session. Parents access an informative notice board which displays a range of information about the 'Birth to three matters' framework and other relative information.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. The staff keep the parents informed about their child's developmental progression through discussion, parents open morning meetings with the keyworker and through free access to their child's file. All parents receive the group's prospectus which outlines their aims and objectives. Parents also receive newsletters to keep them up-to-date with issues, including current themes and fund-raising events.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good. The management and staff team are clear about the overview of the provision for nursery education and aware of their strengths and weaknesses. Staff attend regular training as supported by the management. This has a positive impact on the children's care and education. The provision for education is monitored well. Staff talk to parents at the time of entry, observe children at play and forward plan for children's individual needs to ensure progression. All staff and the management have a good understanding of the concept of equality of opportunity and they work well together to ensure the inclusion of all children. Overall, children's needs are met.

All children are cared for by staff who are qualified and experienced. Procedures for the recruitment and vetting of staff are sound, thereby ensuring children's welfare is maintained. Documentation is kept up-to-date and signed by both parties, including accident, incident and medication records. The register shows attendance of children and the staff and all visitors are required to sign the visitors book after their identity has been thoroughly checked. This maintains children's welfare and safety. Policies of the setting are regularly updated and made available to the parents.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection, the nursery was asked to address three recommendations and one point for consideration. They were asked to ensure that the nappy changing procedures are comprehensive and that the fluorescent lighting was made safe. They addressed this by improving the nappy changing policy to clearly show all staff the correct procedures. Nappy changing procedures are now part of staff induction to ensure procedures are followed. Also, the fluorescent light in the kitchen is now safe because the nursery ensured there was a new diffuser fitted. The health and safety of the children is now well maintained. The group was also asked to ensure that the procedures for lost children are comprehensive. They addressed this, updating the policy to clearly show that the police would be called as a priority in the event of a child being lost. All staff are now clearly aware of the updated policy which has also been made available to all parents, thereby ensuring the welfare of the children.

Finally, as a point for consideration, the group was asked to increase opportunities for children to explore music and sound patterns and to continue to develop ways of encouraging parents to be involved in their child's learning and informed of their progression. The nursery addressed this by providing a range of musical instruments to the children which are easily accessible at all times. The staff also improved opportunities for children to explore sound patterns by providing time and resources for children to make their own musical instruments to play with. Children now have an improved awareness of sound patterns and changes as they explore musical instruments whenever they want to, thereby supporting their development in this area of their learning. With regard to further encouraging parents to be involved in their child's learning and informed of progress, the group now hold open mornings for parents at the nursery. Parents can stay and play and find out how their child learns through a range of activities, thereby promoting parents' understanding of how to help their child's learning at home. The parents can talk to their child's keyworker during the stay and play sessions and discuss any concerns they may have. Children are now well supported in their learning and progression.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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):

- actively promote children's learning about people with disabilities.

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):

- ensure children are well informed about the resources available to them during child initiated play times.

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