

Millfield Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	253400
Inspection date	01 November 2007
Inspector	Ann Keen
Setting Address	Millfield House, Tithby Road, Cropwell Butler, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, NG12 3AJ
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Registered person	Dinah Elizabeth & Andrew John Miller
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?

Millfield Nursery School is a private day nursery which opened in 1989. It operates from the ground floor of a house in a rural village approximately 12 miles from Nottingham. Children have access to two group rooms, plus a soft play room and two separate outdoor play areas. Children attend from a variety of villages in area.

The nursery may care for a maximum of 40 children aged between two and eight years old at any one time. There are currently 60 children on roll, which includes 36 funded children. The nursery is open from 08:00 to 17:30, Monday to Friday, all year with the exception of bank holidays and Christmas. Of the eight staff who are employed to work with children, six hold an early years care and education qualification to Level 3. The nursery receives support from a specialist teacher from the local authority. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are currently no children attending with English as an additional language.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The good opportunities for fresh air and exercise are a strength in the nursery. The extensive outdoor play area is used appropriately to develop children's muscles and co-ordination. Children enjoy a range of resources to support their physical development, such as using climbing frames, tyres, a boat and hoops. Children are generally protected against infection because staff follow adequate hygiene practices. However, children are not always encouraged to wash their hands before eating and drinking to avoid the spread of infection. Children are cared for in a well-maintained environment, therefore promoting appropriate health care.

Documentation is comprehensive in supporting the daily practices, such as policies regarding health and safety and foods. In case of injuries, children can be attended promptly by one of the many staff with first-aid qualifications. The first aid kit is checked regularly and well stocked. Children enjoy regular healthy meals and snacks which are freshly prepared, nutritious and provide a balanced diet. Examples of menus and snacks include spaghetti bolognaise, chilli and fruit. The setting has good procedures in place to ensure that medicines are administered correctly. The spread of infection within the nursery is reduced as the setting excludes children who are infectious. The health of the children is also promoted by the nursery as it has obtained permission to seek emergency medical treatment or advice should it be required.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's welfare is suitably promoted because children are cared for in a secure environment. They have suitable space in which to play and be active. Outside children can play safely on grass or bark chippings. The equipment is age-appropriate so children can climb and travel along the apparatus at a level challenging for their needs. The outside play space is well kept so the risks to children are minimised. Children have access to a good range of resources appropriate for the purpose, helping to create a stimulating environment for the children. The nursery arranges its premises to make them secure and safe for children. All external doors are securely locked and access to the building is only by the authorisation of staff. The good range of furniture accommodates a varied range of activities. Children who need to rest are able to sleep or relax comfortably on mats. The visual impact of the nursery is positive and there is a stimulating display of achievements, information to learners and to parents about the work of the nursery.

Robust systems to help prevent accidental fires are in place such as ensuring fire inspections take place, keeping a fire blanket in the kitchen and practicing evacuation procedures with children. Children are suitably protected from child protection issues as the staff have a good knowledge of their role in safeguarding children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children of all ages arrive happily at the nursery and settle quickly. Play and learning takes place in three play rooms and an extensive outside area, providing both free choice and adult-led activities. Children are engaged in activities at all times and adult-focused activities such as making cakes support children's learning effectively. Staff and children engage in meaningful

conversation casually. Children enjoy specially planned activities like hunting for pumpkins at hallowe'en and regular activities such as using soft play equipment. Children are building confidence and self-esteem as the staff pay attention to them, constantly praising them. Children are learning to use their initiative well as they know they can help themselves to toys and equipment. The nursery provides added interest to the children's day by taking them on trips around the fields and looking at the alpacas. Children have positive and enthusiastic attitudes to play. However, occasional activities and the organisation of large groups does not necessarily support children's development well.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff use the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage to support children's learning effectively. Planning is organised around the six areas of learning to provide children with a broad and balanced programme of activities. Staff generally use suitable methods to help children learn; children sing action songs such as 'Five little speckled frogs' and play dominoes to match numbers of spots. Staff generally assess the children's progress and record their observations in accordance with the stepping stones. Although they use the information gained to help them to match the activities closely to children's needs they are not using the system fully effectively at the moment. Staff are aware of children's different stages of development and aim to provide activities which challenge individuals and move them forward in their learning. However, they occasionally provide activities which do not support children's learning well. This means that when children are working in large groups children are always getting the best from the activities. Staff are clear in their expectations for good behaviour and provide consistent support to help children understand boundaries and expectations. Children benefit from the wide range of resources provided helping them with good opportunities to explore, experiment and play. Accommodation is well planned to provide for children's needs and the outside is especially spacious to allow for boisterous activity.

Children enjoy activities based around themes such as opposites, colours and patterns. Children in the nursery are very competent speakers, they freely talk about what they are doing and can use appropriate vocabulary to describe their ideas. Children undertake a large amount of mark-making activities. The younger children are happy making marks on paper. However, occasionally younger children are given activities which are not developmentally appropriate such as colouring pictures and writing over letters. Some of the older or more able children are starting to form recognisable letters clearly, providing a good basis for future writing activities. Children readily help themselves to books to share with their parents. Daily routines such as counting how many children are present are being used well to help children develop their mathematical understanding. All children are encouraged to play outside and children enjoy practising physical skills with the nursery's outside apparatus. Children are involved and enjoy the varied activities and as a result they are confident and well motivated to learn. Children have high levels of self-esteem and a good sense of belonging. Relationships are good and children are well behaved, complying to acceptable standards of behaviour. The social aspect of children's learning is particularly strong. This results in an atmosphere which impacts positively on children's learning. Children confidently participate in hallowe'en activities such as making cakes. Children's manipulative skills are supported well by controlling small 'tools' such as pens, pencils and glue sticks. Children engage in activities that help them to express their ideas and develop their creative skills like printing with paint and making textured pictures. Children enjoy using the computer which contributes to their overall learning and develops their co-ordination effectively.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The setting ensures all relevant information is obtained so they can maximise their effectiveness. Children behave very well and are helped to develop good social skills, for example, they are learning to take turns. The nursery is well placed to meet the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities should the need arise. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are helped to gain an understanding of the wider world through a sufficient range of resources and festivals, including celebrations such as birthdays. Children are cared for in accordance with their parents' wishes as staff use a range of documents to exchange and record information.

Staff develop good relationships with parents so children feel secure and happy during their time in the nursery. Children's development benefits from the good communication and supportive partnership between the home and the nursery. Parents enjoy the informal contact they have when arriving or leaving, developing communication well.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are well informed about their children's progress through parents' evenings. They are encouraged to continue activities such as reading at home, as children choose books to take with them, creating a positive effect on children's learning. Children's development benefits from the good communication and a supportive partnership between the home and the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by a well-established staff team. They are suitably qualified and attend regular training to improve their knowledge. Staff all undergo robust vetting systems ensuring legal requirements are met. Procedures to monitor staff are generally appropriate as they have regular appraisals. Documentation is comprehensive and reflects the practice well. The nursery has a clear operational plan in place. The environment and facilities are well planned so children are able to play freely and access resources for themselves. Children are comfortable in their surroundings. Children are safeguarded against child protection issues as the staff are aware of their role in noting signs of abuse and suitable procedures if they have concerns. Children's welfare and health is promoted as the staff ensure that they have contact details and signed permission slips from parents in place in case of emergency. The staff are aware of their responsibilities and ensure that they conform to the necessary requirements so that children are well cared for, for example, by keeping the register up-to-date. They adhere to legal requirements. The adult-to-child ratio positively supports children's care. Overall children's needs are met.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. Children are helped by well-trained staff providing a sound basis for children's achievement. They have regular staff meetings to discuss developments and are in the process of conducting the local authority's system for self-evaluation.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the nursery was required to ensure they had clear written procedures that outline action to be taken in the event of a child being uncollected. They now have a policy in place so children are well protected. They were also required to record staff and children's

attendance accurately. They now ensure this happens so children's safety and welfare is protected.

At the last education inspection the nursery was asked to review the use of time and resources. These are generally well organised and children are mostly well occupied although occasional sessions in large groups are unproductive for some children. The nursery was asked to ensure planning takes into account how individual children learn. Staff are aware of the need to target children's individual learning and generally ensure they are moving forward in their learning.

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 by 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):

- take positive steps to prevent the spread of infection, particularly with regard to children washing their hands
- ensure observations are used accurately to plan the next step in children's play and development.

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 staff knowledge of assessments so they plan the next step in children's learning accurately
- ensure all children are grouped according to their developmental needs when in large groups and all activities are developmentally appropriate.

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