

School Bank Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	205408
Inspection date	11 January 2008
Inspector	Saida Cummings
Setting Address	Claines Institute, School Bank, Claines, Worcester, Worcestershire, WR3 7RW
Telephone number	01905 759031
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Registered person	Wishing Well Nurseries Limited
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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?

School Bank Nursery is one of five privately owned daycare settings. The nursery opened in 1996 and operates from a church hall situated on the outskirts of Worcester city. Children are mainly cared for in a large hall which is divided by partitions at times when planned activities are carried out with different age groups. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The setting mainly serves children from the north side of the city, but is open to families from all areas. A maximum of 30 children may attend at any one time. Children from the age of two to ten years of age attend the setting. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 during school term-time. The setting also offers before school care from 08:00 to 09:00 and after school care from 15:00 to 18:00.

There are currently 26 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 16 children receive funding for early education. There are a further 26 children aged from four years to under eight years on roll who attend the out of school club. The setting offers support to children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs five members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is currently working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PLA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean and welcoming premises as staff follow good hygiene procedures. The premises and equipment are maintained to a high standard of cleanliness. Children are beginning to develop self-care skills during daily hygiene routines including washing their hands after outdoor play, toileting and before meals. There are appropriate procedures in place for dealing with any accidents, administering medication if requested and initially gathering information from parents and carers concerning individual children's health needs. The risk of infection to children is reduced as parents and carers are made aware of the guidelines followed and children are not cared for if they have an infectious illness. Children's independence is encouraged throughout the session, such as independently visiting the toilet, buttering their own bread and butter during snack time and putting on their own coats.

Children benefit from regular opportunities to exercise and experience outdoor activities. They confidently use various play equipment to help them balance, climb, slide and pedal. Younger children are also able to develop their physical skills as activities are adapted accordingly and age-appropriate equipment and apparatus is available. However, the outdoor play facilities need further development to provide children with a more challenging physical play and learning environment. Children are learning to gain control of their bodies and move confidently around the setting. They take part in planned and spontaneous indoor physical activities, such as dance, movement and circle games. They enjoy joining in with favourite physical games, such as 'What's the time Mr. Wolf?'. Children's physical development and confidence is further developed as they have the opportunity to take part in weekly swimming lessons. Staff encourage children's confidence in water as a chart is kept to acknowledge their achievements, such as ducking under water, floating on top of water and gaining confidence in the water.

Children enjoy a well-balanced variety of healthy and nutritional snacks and drinks. They bring their own packed lunches which contain healthy and nutritious food as parents and carers are made aware of the types of food to provide for their children. Children are encouraged to eat healthily as the staff use stickers to positively reward them for bringing in and eating healthy food. Children enjoy well-organised snack and mealtimes where they sit in appropriate groups and use these opportunities to build on their socialising skills. They enthusiastically join in with conversations about the food they like and which food keeps them healthy and makes them grow. Their independence is encouraged during these times as they are able to attempt doing everything for themselves, such as taking off their food wrappers and washing up their own spoon after eating yoghurt.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are kept safe as staff follow appropriate procedures when they are dropped off and collected. The main door is kept locked and all visitors, children, parents and carers are greeted by staff. Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures. Some of the staff have completed appropriate child protection training

and they are all aware of the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines. They are also aware of the child protection policy and the procedures to follow should there be any concerns.

Children enjoy a warm and stimulating atmosphere where they can learn, explore and develop safely and with close adult support. They play safely due to vigilant staff and carefully considered safety arrangements. For example, radiators are covered, exterior doors are kept locked and all electrical equipment is regularly checked for safety. Their safety is assured as staff follow rigorous procedures for regularly completing risk assessments to ensure hazards to children are minimised. Furniture and equipment are set out to enable children to move freely and safely. Children take part in regular fire evacuation drills which make them aware of the procedures to follow in an emergency.

Children have access to safe, clean and age-appropriate play equipment and resources. Staff follow appropriate procedures to ensure all equipment is regularly cleaned and checked for safety. Children are constantly supervised and taught safety as part of their everyday activities. This includes daily discussions concerning safety rules, such as not running indoors and how to safely use scissors. Children are kept safe during swimming activities as a full risk assessment is in place which is observed by all staff. The local low-level teaching pool is used and a high adult to child ratio is maintained, with each adult in the water closely supervising the small group of children they are responsible for. The setting reserve the use of the teaching pool for weekly sessions which also includes exclusive use of the allocated changing rooms. Staff hold appropriate discussions with children to make sure they are fully aware of water safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the way the resources and equipment are organised which helps them to gain relevant experiences and to join in with all the available activities. They are able to self-select from a wide variety of age-appropriate play equipment and resources. They are able to choose from either the planned activities or instigate different types of play by self-selecting from the wide range of easily accessible toys and resources. Children socialise well, are busy and engage in purposeful activities throughout the sessions. They enthusiastically join in with meaningful play opportunities that support and develop their social, physical, intellectual and emotional development. Children are confident, happy and building up their self-esteem and independence. They have access to a broad range of appropriate activities which link into topical work and themes.

Young children have opportunities to socialise with older children as staff plan and adapt activities that enable all the children to be involved. The staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan appropriate activities for this age group which ensures they have opportunities to develop and build on their knowledge and skills. Planned activities are adapted accordingly depending on children's abilities and stages of development. Information about young children's starting points, individual needs and preferences are gained and this helps to ensure staff get to know children very well. Staff work closely with children in small groups and playfully respond to their actions, expressions and what they say. Two-year-olds play alongside three and four-year-olds and benefit from watching and learning from their older friends. School-aged children are able to instigate all the activities they wish to take part in. Their activities are planned by the staff which are adapted depending on the children who are attending to take into account their preferences and interests. Staff hold discussions with the children to find out their particular interests and plan suitable activities to build on these interests. Children feel very much 'at home' when they arrive back from school and are given time to relax whilst

they enjoy a sociable tea time. They are happy, settled and enjoy using the various areas and stimulating resources to instigate their own fun and physical activities.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. They enjoy an interesting and varied selection of planned activities that are related to the current topics and cover all aspects of the six areas of learning. A strong emphasis is placed on developing children's self-esteem and independent learning which gives children the confidence to try new things. Children have regular opportunities to investigate, explore and use their senses. For example, they enjoy playing with the sand and experimenting with the different consistencies. They initially try to make sand castles with dry sand, but soon realise this does not work. Staff help children to think about why their sand castles are not forming by asking appropriate questions. Children then fetch water from the low-level sinks in different containers and mix this with the sand. They enthusiastically proceed to re-fill their sand buckets and squeal with delight when they finally are able to build their sand castles. Children enjoy a wealth of arts and crafts, either structured activities or independently accessing materials to creatively produce colourful pictures and collages. They are given time and appropriate resources to encourage them to explore and use their imagination. They make up their own games, stories and act out familiar roles in the home corner or when using push-along cars in the large hall.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is fostered as they have many opportunities to develop positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning. They are independent as they are able to choose the activities they wish to take part in and enjoy carrying out tasks for themselves and others. Children have opportunities to use information and communication technology as part of their everyday play. They confidently use programmable toys, for instance when using the play telephones and tills during role-play. Communication, language and literacy are well developed. Staff use effective strategies to support children's use of language for communication. Children have many opportunities to hold meaningful discussions and are good at communicating and giving their opinions. Children are beginning to learn letter sounds and to recognise familiar letters and words. They enjoy joining in with story time and staff give good explanations when they ask questions about the different characters and parts of the stories. Children also use the book corner to spontaneously access a variety of interesting books for their own enjoyment. They have many opportunities to build on their hand-eye co-ordination and develop their writing skills. They are able to make marks as part of their everyday play as appropriate writing materials are made easily accessible.

Children are developing their number and problem solving skills as staff encourage children to use mathematics during everyday planned and spontaneous activities. For example, children compare the different sizes of their sand castles and use mathematical language, such as bigger, smaller, taller and shorter. Children engage in simple number operations during activities, such as comparing numbers or calculating how many items are left or how many more are needed. Children's physical development is well fostered. They handle small equipment, such as scissors, glue sticks and paint brushes with confidence. They have opportunities to develop their concentration during planned and spontaneous activities, such as cutting and sticking, crayoning, manipulating play dough and building construction equipment.

Staff are aware of how young children learn and incorporate this into the sessions, using effective questioning and ensuring they supervise the children without inhibiting their ideas and imagination. Children's behaviour is well-managed as staff hold appropriate discussions

to encourage them to play safely, think about their actions and to be kind to one another. They share, take turns and learn to co-operate because of the high level of support they receive and the good role models set by staff. As a result, children are generally well behaved which enables them to progress as there is a positive learning environment. Staff plan interesting activities and make good use of the available resources to motivate children and to help them try new experiences. They know the children very well and use observations to assess individual children's stages of development. Staff set informal targets for each child to progress or to challenge them in specific skills. However, the system for planning appropriate activities to enable each child to progress and be sufficiently challenged needs further development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children know each other well and form harmonious relationships. They hold meaningful discussions in small groups and include each other in spontaneous play. Children understand what is expected of them as staff regularly hold discussions concerning safety rules and behaviour. They work and play well together, taking turns, sharing and helping each other. An example of this is when the older children help the younger children to pour out drinks of water from the jug. Any behavioural issues are dealt with appropriately and sensitively. Staff are good role models and encourage children's positive behaviour to ensure there is a consistent approach. Children are initially settled in on a gradual basis which is fully planned with the parents and carers to ensure enough time is allowed. Staff ensure there is a flexible approach to accommodate each child, even when they only attend for a short amount of time. As a result, all children are fully included in the life of the setting.

Children's individuality is valued and staff help them to feel good about themselves by frequently providing positive support, praise and encouragement. There are plenty of opportunities for children to be valued and their individual personalities are recognised and affirmed. There are appropriate procedures in place for caring for any children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. Staff support children with any specific needs and there are effective systems in place which enable them to implement individual learning plans for children. There are good procedures for working with parents, carers and outside agencies which ensures any children with specific needs are able to progress at their own pace and reach their full potential. There is also an effective procedure for working with any children who speak English as an additional language. Children broaden their experiences through well developed themes that help them to look at and investigate their own cultures and the beliefs of other people. A wide range of playthings and activities help children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Children benefit from the good relationship between their parents or carers and the staff. Staff work closely with parents and carers, taking the time to chat to them at arrival and collection times to ensure there is a constant two-way flow of information between the setting and home. Parents and carers are provided with good quality information about the setting which includes information about nursery education and how children work through the Foundation Stage curriculum. Parents' and carers' views and concerns are respected and acknowledged and they know how to make a complaint on behalf of their children if they wish to.

There are good links between home and the setting to extend and involve parents and carers in their children's learning and experiences. These include parents and carers helping their

children to collect items to bring in for either topical work or 'show and tell' sessions. Staff are aware of the importance of involving parents and carers in the life of the setting and their children's development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care, learning and play are well supported by the good organisation. They are cared for in a well-organised environment and the premises are bright and welcoming. The management and staff work together to ensure the organisation and procedures are regularly reviewed with improvements made as required. There are good systems in place for keeping all of the required records. Parents and carers are supplied with good quality information about the organisation of the setting and how the children are cared for. They are kept fully informed of the setting's events through regular newsletters and notices. Appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures are in place which ensure children are well protected and cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child development. The service is regularly reviewed as parents' and carers' views, suggestions are taken on board and, whenever possible, changes are made to accommodate any requests.

Staff are enthusiastic and create a learning environment which stimulates and motivates children. They are committed to improving their knowledge and understanding and enjoy attending various training events. Children benefit from staff's development as any new procedures or good practice are implemented into the care provided. Children's individual care needs are met as their detailed information is held in the area they are cared for and the staff have access to this at all times.

Leadership and management for nursery education are good. The provider and nursery manager have clear aims for the setting and are committed to evolving and developing the provision. The effectiveness of monitoring and evaluating the provision for nursery education is good. The staff are very keen and enthusiastic and have clear roles and responsibilities. Children's care is well supported because staff are qualified, experienced and have high regard for the well-being of all children. High staffing levels are maintained and this ensures children are given close attention. The organisation and deployment of staff means that children are well supported and form close bonds with the adults who care for them. The written plans cover the main focus activities and link into the other free play activities made available during each session. These are linked to the 'stepping stones' to ensure all areas of learning are covered. Staff plan appropriate activities for the different age groups according to their abilities and stages of development. The grouping of the children is organised to ensure their individual needs are met and contributes to children's good health, safety, enjoyment, achievements and their ability to take an active part in the setting.

There are systems in place for observing, monitoring and recording children's achievements. Staff are aware of children's starting points as these are fully discussed with parents and carers when children first join the setting. Staff set informal targets for each child to progress or to challenge them in specific skills. They know the children well and are able to incorporate specific areas of learning into daily activities and routines to assist children with developing at their own pace. However, the system for planning appropriate activities to enable individual children to progress and be sufficiently challenged needs further development. The organisation of sessions are timetabled to ensure children receive a balanced nursery education curriculum. The management and staff work well with external agencies such as the local authority. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider agreed to: ensure good hygiene procedures are in place regarding hand washing; make sure soft seating is available for children needing to rest or relax; ensure the chain link fencing is maintained in good order; and ensure the register records the time of arrival and departure of children.

The hygiene procedures for children's hand washing has improved. They are always encouraged to wash their hands after outdoor play, toileting and before eating. They have access to low-level sinks and are provided with liquid soap and paper towels for hand drying. There are also pictures displayed by the sinks to assist with encouraging children to wash their hands properly. Children now have access to rugs and large floor cushions situated in the book corner. They are able to use these to rest or relax if they start feeling tired.

The outdoor chain link fencing has now been replaced with a sturdy wooden fence. A new, very detailed registration system is now in place. A separate register is kept for the different parts of the day and children's times of arrival and departure are recorded by their parents or carers when they sign them in and out.

As a result of these improvements the risk to children is minimised and they are able to rest and relax in a comfortable area. Consequently, children's health, safety and well-being is assured.

Nursery Education:

At the last Nursery Education inspection three key issues were agreed: that the planning and assessment procedures clearly identify the learning objectives for all children and individual activities; to review staff's management of children to ensure they all access resources equally and do not disrupt the learning of others; and to improve the opportunities for children to do more for themselves, direct and develop their own learning and get the full learning potential from the activities and resources provided.

All activities are now fully planned and evaluated which includes identifying whether the learning objectives have been met. Evaluations show how activities would be changed to either further support children or to challenge them. Children's individual assessments are recorded and staff informally set targets for children to move on to the next stage in their learning and development. However, the planning, observations and assessment systems require further development to ensure there is a clear method for providing appropriate resources and activities to enable individual children to progress and be sufficiently challenged. A further recommendation was agreed.

There is now a new manager and staff group working at the setting who have completed appropriate behaviour management training. They use positive strategies to encourage children's behaviour and ensure all children are included. Children have equal access to all activities and are encouraged to share, take turns and have consideration for each other. As a result, children know what is expected of them and are generally well behaved which ensures there is a positive learning environment.

Children's independence is encouraged at every opportunity. Staff encourage children to do as much for themselves as possible, giving assistance only when necessary. They encourage and nurture children to build up their self-esteem and confidence. Children are able to access a wide range of resources and toys which are stored in labelled boxes situated on portable low-level shelving placed around the edge of the hall. They are able to explore and instigate

their own play. Staff ask appropriate questions during activities to encourage children to think for themselves and to further develop their knowledge and understanding. As a result, children are able to gain the full learning potential from the activities and resources available.

As a result of these improvements children are able to take part in appropriate activities which are effectively evaluated to ensure the learning objectives are met. They are all able to access the activities and resources equally and are becoming increasingly independent. Children's behaviour has improved as they are assisted by staff to respond to the boundaries of behaviour which encourages them to develop self-discipline and consideration for others. Consequently, children are progressing in their learning and becoming happy and confident individuals.

Complaints since the last inspection

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents and carers, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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 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 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):

- develop the outdoor area further to provide children with a challenging physical play and learning environment (also applies to nursery education).

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):

- develop the planning, observation and assessment systems further to ensure appropriate methods are in place to enable all individual children to progress and be sufficiently challenged (also applies to care).

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