

Old Station Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY218342
Inspection date	03 December 2007
Inspector	Janet Maria Moutter
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Registered person	The Old Station Nursery Ltd
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 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?

Old Station Nursery is a private provision established in 2002. It operates from two buildings on the site of the converted old railway station in Faringdon, Oxfordshire. The children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. Children come from the local community and surrounding areas.

A maximum of 60 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open from Monday to Friday from 08.00 to 18.00 throughout the year. Children attend for a variety of sessions; wrap around care is offered for school age children up to eight years. There are currently 80 children aged from three months to eight years on roll. Of these 11 children, receive funding for nursery education.

The nursery employs 15 staff, nine of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The inspection took place five months after flooding had rendered the whole of the pre-school two rooms unfit for children to use. The Nursery have worked hard to stay open and offer a safe secure environment for children.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

All children in the nursery are gaining a clear understanding of the importance of hygiene practices. Older children independently visit the toilet themselves and deal with their own personal routines. Staff ensure younger children and babies are encouraged and supported well; for example, all babies' and toddlers' hands and faces are cleaned before and after meals. Staff ensure that children are cared for in a clean and hygienic environment and there are clear written routines for staff to follow when changing nappies. Staff are vigilant at recognising any child who is feeling unwell and take effective steps to support them. Staff clearly follow procedure and record any medication they are asked to administer by the parents, they ensure parents re-sign to acknowledge the entry. There is a clear sickness policy in place and the nursery keeps parents well informed of any childhood illness or health issues.

Children develop a positive attitude to being active in the outdoor areas. They enjoy the wide range of physical activities that contribute well to their healthy lifestyle. They climb, swing and balance as they use the large apparatus. They enjoy the physical challenges as they develop their skills in a safe environment, for example, staff supervise and assist the children to gain confidence as they reach out and are supported as they cross the ladder on the climbing frame and down the steps. Indoors children show sound hand-eye coordination as they use scissors, pencils, paintbrushes and tools correctly. It was good to see them use their fine motor skills to peel and segment their oranges at lunchtime. Babies and young toddlers develop good coordination skills as they crawl around and use the furniture to pull themselves onto their feet to practise their early walking skills.

All children benefit from the healthy and nutritious diet they receive. All food is prepared and cooked on the premises using fresh foods and vegetables, for example, sausage with mashed potatoes and green beans, followed by fresh fruit. Babies' food is pureed according to their individual needs. Mealtimes are sociable occasions when children chat happily with staff and their peers. Children enjoy their meals and eat well, with some having second helpings. Fresh drinking water is readily available and there are effective procedures in place to ensure individual dietary needs are met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment. The effective systems in place ensure that children can play freely and are safely supported by the vigilant staff; for example, the buzzer system into the nursery ensures no one enters without authorisation. All visitors' identifications are checked and their presence recorded. Children learn to keep themselves safe by taking part in regular fire drills and using tools, such as knives and scissors, safely. An in-depth risk assessment is undertaken at regular intervals.

Most areas in the nursery are child-orientated. Children and parents are greeted warmly on arrival and children settle easily into the daily routine. Most areas are well resourced with toys and play equipment which promote the ages and stages of development very well; for example, all children have heuristic play opportunities and enjoy the various textures and smells of the natural materials. Most rooms have good-sized carpeted areas for children to sit and play in comfort. There is domestic style furniture provided within the baby room to reflect home life

experiences and assist staff to bottle feed babies in comfort. However, the babies sleep area is not safe and suitable for its purpose.

Children are well protected from harm because staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities to safeguard children. Staff and management are aware of what action they are required to take should they have any concerns. Policies and procedures are regularly updated and shared with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children make good progress and thoroughly enjoy their time at the nursery. They show a strong sense of belonging and are motivated and stimulated throughout their stay. Babies and young children benefit from the very positive interaction with the staff and enjoy the close contact with lots of hugs and cuddles. Staff have a clear and sound knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They plan a stimulating range of activities and play experiences for all young children; for example, they get really excited as they hunt for items hidden in the large pile of paper strips. They throw the paper into the air onto their heads then roll on the floor and cover themselves over. They sit on the staff's knees, snuggling in as they look at the pictures in the book together. Babies love to watch themselves in the mirrors; they gurgle, wave and chuckle at their reflection whilst banging loudly with the whisk on the floor. The small indoor climbing frame is very popular with the toddlers.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. A balanced curriculum and accessible resources ensure children have a positive range of learning experiences in a fun and enjoyable manner. Staff work effectively together on the planning and these are clearly linked to the areas of learning in the curriculum early learning goals. However, on the day of inspection the individual needs of the children were not clearly represented in the planning. The staff make observations of the children and every child has their own individual attainment folder where their progress is documented and but is not supported with examples of work and not all children's records were available to the Ofsted Inspector. Some staff are skilled at bringing out children's interests and ideas and they incorporate these in the planning. However, other staff are unsure of the planning to enable them to use a varied range of methods that encourage and motivate individual children to reach their potentials. Staff ask open-ended questions which promote children's thinking and positive discussion, for example, while making the planets mobiles the staff asked what materials did the children think they would need and the children asked about the names of the planets.

Children are generally confident and motivated learners; they take part in all of the activities and those children who find this difficult are sensitively supported. Staff members plan and provide a variety of stimulating and practical activities to support the children's early-learning goals. There are currently a limited number of children, within the Foundation Stage room, who are cared for by a small, consistent staffing team. This is due to temporary arrangements of accommodation and resources, caused by the summer flooding. This has not changed the staff members high expectations of the children's behaviour, the staff act as positive role models and skilfully support children in developing their independence, confidence and self-esteem. The staff throughout the nursery, know the children well and have a clear understanding of their stages of development. They ask good indirect questions, to make children think and to reinforce, and extend, their learning. They undertake regular written observations of the

children. However, assessments on the funded children are not completed and information from observations is not used in planning for individual children's future learning as a new system has been introduced and is still evolving.

The children develop a generally good understanding of number as their are displays around the nursery, such as on the rocket board, number line and the magic number of the week. They count confidently and use number during their activities; for example, they count four chairs around the table and then up to eight with the two tables and two staff make ten for snack. The more able children are gaining good levels of confidence and skill as they use the computer. They are able to recognise and name the various shapes, such as triangle, circle, square and rectangle, then move the shape to the matching space using the mouse with support from the staff.

They enjoy singing and have a good repertoire of well-known songs and rhymes. Documentation shows they have regular music sessions. Children have frequent chances to explore media and materials. They use their imagination very well when developing storylines with their peers, and they all share making wall displays such as 'Incy, Wincy, Spider' and firework displays. Children also gain an understanding of time. They eagerly discuss significant past, present and future events in their lives, especially birthdays. They have very well developed designing and building skills, and can use tools and materials imaginatively to initiate and refine their ideas.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Effective relationships with the parents provide staff with in-depth knowledge and information. This ensures that they have a clear understanding and appreciation for the uniqueness of each child so that they are fully included in the life of the setting. Cultural diversity is promoted within the nursery. Staff skilfully raise children's awareness to similarities and differences in a positive way. They celebrate a limited range of festivals throughout the year and this term they will learn about Christmas. However, the range of activities and resources in this area are minimal. Children's behaviour is generally good. Staff are sound role models and conduct themselves in a calm and caring manner. Children have good manners and say 'please' and 'thank you' appropriately. Staff give gentle reminders when necessary and thank children for their responses. Children learn to share and take turns through the staff's effective strategies. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children benefit greatly from the nursery's clear commitment to a fully inclusive setting. All children enjoy the positive play and learning opportunities they take part in. Careful planning of activities and resources by staff ensures all children are fully included and achieve their learning potential. The setting works with outside agencies and other professionals to establish best practice and care for the children. There are individual education plans in place, along with other plans from various support agencies which staff closely adhere to.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. There are strong bonds with parents which contribute significantly to the children's well-being within the nursery. Staff work closely with parents and relationships are open, trusting, friendly and professional. This ensures that children are settled and there is good continuity of care. The nursery takes effective steps to ensure all parents are well informed about the setting and can access all the information. Parents recognise and value the care their children receive. This was demonstrated through very positive verbal and written responses during the inspection period.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

There is a clear management structure in place which offers support to staff at all levels. They have good appraisal systems in place which include formal meetings. There is a good level of qualified staff within the team and they show commitment to their ongoing training and development. Regular staff meetings are held along with in-house training sessions. As a result, they are a cohesive and knowledgeable staff team. Children are protected because staff are appointed through rigorous and robust employment procedures. A comprehensive induction and probationary period forms a firm basis for staff employment. All documentation that underpins the setting is well organised and all elements are covered.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. There is clear leadership within the setting and the manager spends time effectively working alongside the staff. There are systems in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the educational programme, which includes some regular observations of children's progress and evaluation of the planned group learning activities. Staff are keen and knowledgeable with regards to planning the curriculum, and some children's assessment records are kept up to date, but were not available for inspection by the Ofsted Inspector.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

As a result of the last combined inspection, the group was given key issues and recommendations to help develop the quality of the provision. The care report requested the group continue to develop the records to assist in future planning. The setting was also asked to make sure the heating equipment was safe and used effectively. The education report asked the staff to improve the planning of the sessions to ensure children have opportunities for children's name recognition, to mark make for a purpose relevant to play and label their own work. The setting was also requested to develop opportunities for staff to understand the aim and objectives of the early learning goals and children's progress to them. Finally to develop a system to monitor and highlight strengths and weaknesses in children's development.

Since the last two inspections the Nursery has developed the records to assist in future planning. However, due to heavy flooding in the summer which has caused limited space, the conditions some of the children and staff are working under did not allow the staff to be in total control of their environment at the time of the inspection. Therefore, the risk assessment allows them to monitor heating equipment for safety. Staff knowledge and their planning has improved and is evolving in Nursery Education. All the children have the opportunity to make marks and the older children's planning allows them to recognise labels such as their own work. These improvements have had a positive impact on the quality of care and education offered to the children.

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 premises are safe and suitable for their purpose, especially with regards to toilets and toddlers sleeping arrangements
- ensure the range of equal opportunity activities and resources are extended for all children

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):

- continue to develop the observation and assessments systems and extend the daily individual evaluation, to inform future planning. Ensure children's progress records clearly identify children's next steps of learning and are available for inspection
- ensure planning enables all staff to use a varied range of methods that encourage and motivate individuals to reach their potentials

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