

Maidstone Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY302109
Inspection date	28 January 2008
Inspector	Clare Stone
Setting Address	Oldborough Manor Community School, Boughton Lane, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 9QF
Telephone number	01622747434
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Registered person	Asquith Court Nurseries Limited
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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Maidstone Day Nursery is situated on the grounds of the New Line Learning Academy, it is one of over a hundred child care facilities run by Asquith Court Nurseries Ltd. It originally opened in 1997, taken over by the current owners in 2004. The nursery operates from several rooms in two purpose built buildings. It is situated on the site of a large secondary school on the outskirts of Maidstone, Kent. A maximum of 90 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:30 for 51 weeks of the year. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 99 children aged from three months to under five years on roll. Of these, 32 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children from a wide catchment area.

The nursery employs 17 staff. Most staff hold current Early years qualifications and attend regular updates. There are also staff working towards a recognised child care qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children learn very good personal hygiene through well organised activities and routines. They wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating their snack. Children's health is effectively promoted because the staff are well informed about children's health and provide very good support for individuals. In each room there is a list of children's needs for staff to use and this is updated regularly. Most staff hold current first aid certificates so are able to administer first aid in the event of an accident. This ensures children's welfare in the event of a serious accident where parents and emergency contacts are not available.

Children benefit from an extremely healthy diet. They enjoy a cafeteria style snack and drink arrangement. Children can choose from raw vegetables, fruit, cheese and other healthy options. They choose when they want a drink and help themselves to their snack. This helps promote independence and self help skills. To help parent's become involved in their child's care they can attend taster evenings so they can sample the food their children are having at meal times.

Under three's are developing warm relationships with staff, who are responsive to their needs. Babies and toddlers are encouraged to express their feelings and needs verbally and non-verbally by staff. The staff know their children well as they use the key person approach. This ensures each baby has continuity of care during their time at nursery. For example, staff plan their lunchtime around their key children making sure they are available to give bottles and change nappy's. The rooms are set up so all young babies and toddlers have plenty of opportunity to explore their surroundings. Staff make sure they recognise the babies achievements and congratulate them by clapping and giving them praise.

Children enjoy a fantastic range of energetic physical activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They are learning to develop self confidence in their physical skills whilst taking risks in a secure and controlled environment. The staff have left a section of the garden growing wild so the children can go and investigate this area in its natural state. The nursery understand the children's need to play outside and ensure children have access to outside play in most weathers. Children's hand and eye co-ordination is good. They are skilful when playing throwing and catching games. At the time of the inspection some of the children visited the farm which is on the same site as the nursery.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children arrive happy and settle well. The nursery has a warm, clean and welcoming environment. There are beautiful displays of the children's work. This shows that the staff value the children's achievements and gives the children a sense of belonging. Children can move freely around the nursery and well planned rooms mean the children make the most of the learning environment. They can be independent taking themselves to the toilet and choosing where they would like to play. Toys and resources are easily accessible. This ensures children follow their own interests.

Children's safety is paramount in the nursery, because staff have a very good understanding about health and safety issues. Measures have been put in place, such as bolts on staff toilet doors and risk assessments are filled in to safeguard the children on a daily basis. Staff remind

children not to run and good explanation helps them understand what may happen if they continue to run around the nursery. There are good procedures for the safe arrival and departure of the children, with all staff understanding their role and responsibility. Policies and procedures are clear and available for staff and parents to read.

Staff have a cleaning rota to ensure all toys and resources are kept clean. Any items that are broken and cannot be fixed are thrown away. This prevents children from becoming unwell or injured.

Children are well protected and safeguarded from harm because staff have an excellent knowledge of safeguarding children and child protection procedures. Staff are aware of the four possible signs of abuse and regularly attend training in this area. There is a child protection officer within the nursery who follows up any concerns and updates staff with any changes in legislation.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children take part in high quality activities throughout the day. Babies and toddlers play happily and enjoy their time at nursery. Staff are aware of the Birth to three matters framework and plan activities accordingly. Children can follow their own interests and careful planning for the younger children and babies ensures that their individual needs are well met. Children play well together and share resources. Sessions are organised so that children experience free play, with adult-led activities that children can join.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding.

Children are progressing extremely well, they are fully supported by the staff's extensive knowledge of the Foundation Stage Curriculum. All planning is child lead, the staff observe the children playing and then plan activities to help extend their play. The planning covers the six areas of learning and is reviewed on a daily basis to see if the children are progressing well in their learning journals. Staff are good role models and demonstrate a positive attitude towards learning by presenting activities in an interesting and enthusiastic manner. Staff interact well with the children, supporting their learning by asking open questions. This helps children organise their thoughts and extend their creative ideas. Children have fun at nursery and staff make the day enjoyable.

Children are very well motivated and enjoy new challenges. They are very independent and see to their personal needs, such as dressing and undressing, visiting the toilet and washing hands, deciding when to have their drink and snack. During the session children told me about their family lives and recounted past and present experiences.

Children are confident writers, they have plenty of access to writing implements and enjoy writing their own names. They are very proud of their achievements and staff use lots of praise to encourage the children to experiment and form their own words. Children really enjoy books and are reading 'We're going on a bear hunt'. Staff extend the children's learning by doing a wall display and asking the children lots of open questions about the book.

Children count confidently and recognise numbers that are important to them. They choose number activities during free play and enjoy number rhymes and songs. Children's understanding

of space, shape and measure is developing well. They recognise the properties of simple shapes and use appropriate mathematical language during free play activities.

Children have plenty of opportunity for using the computer. Staff sit with the children and teach them how to move the mouse and how to play games. The staff take the children on regular walks to enjoy the farm and outside. The children often bring back items to talk about at circle time. This helps children learn about the environment that is local to them. Children enjoy playing Kim's game which encourages the children to use their senses to explore objects and sounds.

Children express themselves creatively through a range of mediums. They paint, draw and make collages that represent their experiences. They are excited to take part in singing and dancing and can make their own musical instruments. Children really use their imagination during role play and staff are skilled at extending the children's play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are highly valued as individuals. They develop a positive attitude to others and gain a good understanding about the wider world and community through celebrating festivals. They also benefit from tasting food from a variety of cultures. There is an extensive range of play resources which show positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The nursery understand that all children are individuals. Children are taught to see differences as a positive and inclusion is high on their agenda. All children are welcome in the nursery and staff have attended training to support children with learning difficulties. They are able to plan individual educational plans and work with outside agencies to provide outstanding care.

Children benefit from lots of praise and encouragement. This helps build children's confidence and self esteem. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and children respond well to this. There are very good systems in place for dealing with unwanted behaviour and parents are kept informed of any behavioural issues.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents and staff work together and share information about children's individual progress and development. Continual assessment and monitoring, both within the nursery and at home, ensures children's individual needs are fully met. Parents' receive excellent information about the Foundation Stage Curriculum. The information outlines what the children are expected to learn and how they learn. The nursery send out newsletters and have a notice board for parent's to read. The manager operates an open door policy and parents are welcome to talk to her at anytime. The nursery also send out questionnaires to ask parents likes and dislikes and these are then evaluated.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The nursery is extremely well organised. All documentation required for the safe and effective management of the nursery is in place. There are robust recruitment procedures in place ensuring that only suitable persons can work with children. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities throughout the nursery and provide valuable support for the children they care for. Most staff have Early Years qualifications and the management team encourage staff to

attend training as they are aware this helps improve the service they provide. Effective measures are in place to allow the nursery to move forward. For example, parent and staff questionnaires.

Leadership and management is outstanding. Clear aims show a commitment to providing exceptional care and education. Staff work well as a team and clear communication allows them to provide a stimulating and well balanced programme of activities. The manager has a thorough understanding about promoting children's learning and together with the staff, make the nursery a fun place to be. Children benefit because the staff have a very good understanding of the curriculum and use a key person system. The staff receive appraisals and the manager keeps a training planner where staff request training. Regular staff meetings and discussion ensure the staff regularly monitor and evaluate the provision and work closely with outside agencies to support their service, promoting outcomes for children.

The nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the following recommendations were made:-

Ensure children's individual needs are being met by providing more play opportunities. The nursery now operates a key person approach which allows children's individual needs to be met.

Ensure complaints procedure includes Ofsted contact details. This is now up to date with current legislation.

Review method for recording accidents. This is now up to date with current legislation.

Review registration system to ensure children's arrival and departure times are accurately recorded. The registration system clearly states the times of children's arrival and departure.

Complaints since the last inspection

A complaint was made to Ofsted in July 2005 relating to Standard 7- Health and Standard 11-Behaviour. This was regarding the lack of working soap dispensers in the toilet area and the management of children's behaviour. All aspects of the complaint were addressed appropriately investigated and as a result Ofsted took no further action and the case was closed. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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. The provider's complaints record refers appropriately to the above complaint.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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