

St Michael's Community Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	122677
Inspection date	10 March 2008
Inspector	Ann Moss
Setting Address	The Village Hall, Dell Close, Mickleham, Dorking, Surrey, RH5 6EE
Telephone number	01372 361021
E-mail	
Registered person	St Michael's Community Nursery
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St. Michael's Community Nursery was registered in 1993. It operates from the back room in the local village hall within the village of Mickleham, near Dorking. It has been purpose built within the existing area of the hall. Children have access to a covered outside area and garden area which are both secure. The nursery mainly serves families from the local area.

There are currently 36 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 24 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and makes provision for children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five mornings a week during school term time, 38 weeks per year, from 09.15 to 12.15 plus there is a lunch club from 12.15 to 13.05.

The nursery employs seven members of staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications one is working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years and Childcare Service (EYCS)

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the staff's secure knowledge of appropriate hygiene procedures, which they implement well.

Children learn the importance of simple good personal hygiene through topics and activities. They use wipes to clean their hands before snack time and use paper towels when washing their hands after using the toilet and messy play. Effective arrangements support the care for children who become unwell and are awaiting collection and these procedures for excluding children who are ill or infectious protect others from cross infection. Most staff are trained in first aid and the use of emergency medical equipment, such as epi-pens. This means they can give appropriate care, if needed. All required records and permissions are in place regarding accidents and the administration of medicine to children.

Staff work in partnership with parents to ensure children's dietary needs are met. They create opportunities for children to talk about being healthy through the use of topics, displays and activities, such as cooking. Snack times are generally social occasions when children and staff sit together around a table and enjoy each other's company. Children develop healthy eating habits and enjoy a variety of fresh fruit, such as banana, orange and apple. This gives them a range of healthy options to choose from. Children have milk or water to drink with their snack. Children bring in packed lunches and parents are provided with information on healthy eating. Most children eat their lunch in a healthy eating order, such as sandwiches, yogurt/fruit and then biscuit. Children remain refreshed as drinks are freely accessible throughout the session and they help themselves when thirsty.

Children have daily access to energetic play indoors and outdoors. Outdoor resources stimulate and challenge children's physical development, such as running, stepping, climbing, sliding and hopping. In the main hall children find out what their bodies can do as they slither and wiggle. Children show increasing skills in hand eye coordination as they confidently engage in activities, such as construction and painting freely.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children arrive with enthusiasm and settle well. Colourful displays of children's art work, posters, photographs and notice boards provide a welcoming environment for children and parent/carers. Staff organise the indoor space effectively allowing children to move around freely, safely and independently. Children use a wide variety of good quality toys and resources inside and outside. These support enjoyable activities that stimulate and challenge children in ways appropriate to the needs of the range of children attending.

Children's safety is well promoted as staff are inducted into the nursery's health and safety procedures and are fully aware of their role and responsibilities. Staff deployment effectively supports children's activities, such as moving from inside to outdoors, eating and drinking and using the toilet. Staff carry out thorough documented and visual risk assessments, indoors and outdoors, routinely. There are effective security arrangements in place to prevent the children from leaving the premises unsupervised and control the arrival of visitors. Fire detection equipment meets with regulation and staff vary the times and dates of emergency evacuations

to ensure all children and staff take part. Children are beginning to learn to keep themselves safe through staff's gentle reminders. For example, they know why they must not run indoors and understand that tools, such as scissors have to be used safely. However, staff do not sufficiently remind children of the potential consequences of climbing on furniture, such as tables and chairs. This impacts on children's safety.

Staff have a good understanding of child protection issues. The nursery's comprehensive procedures guide staff and inform parents about any action to be taken if they have concerns about a child in their care. Children benefit as staff's knowledge is regularly reviewed and updated.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children come into nursery eager with enthusiasm. They thrive as they benefit from warm, close and supportive relationships with staff. They approach staff willingly for support or reassurance, demonstrating that they feel secure and settled. Children enjoy a good range of play-based learning activities, indoors and outdoor, that give them some control over their learning and allows them to explore and investigate, developing their creativity. For example, they freely use sand and paint and have opportunities to examine and probe foam. Some children readily take the lead in their play and use their imagination; they 'free flow' scenarios and narratives and move in different ways, such as being a dog or fire fighter. Children play happily individually or in small groups and show care and concern as they invite others into their play.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make steady progress. Their overall development is sufficiently promoted because most staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and principles for learning. Children learn through a well balanced programme of child initiated and adult led activities, which are delivered by dedicated staff. However, some staff lack the necessary skills and confidence to challenge children's thinking and learning through asking open ended questions. Staff observe children during free and focused activities and use their notes to assess their achievements. However, children's individual next steps are not clearly linked to the stepping stones and effectively noted in planning so that all children learn at a good pace.

Children have lots of opportunity for sustained communication. They speak confidently to their peers, adults and openly in group situations. They express their ideas and experiences well using good vocabulary. They listen well to favourite stories, songs and rhymes and join in with recurring lines. Children are beginning to give meaning to mark making. Most children recognise their first name and older children are beginning to write these using generally well formed letter, although they do not write for purpose during role play, such as lists and labels. Staff miss opportunities within the daily routine to link sounds to letters.

Children have access to a range of activities to encourage their use of simple calculation, comparison of size and shape and positional language. Most children are able to count up to five and some beyond. Children are beginning to recognise numerals within the everyday activities offered. Staff miss opportunities in the daily routine for the children to explore addition and subtraction. Children make the most of the environment to explore the world of nature; they discuss 'Life Cycles' and how things grow. They are confident in their design making skills and staff provide a good range of construction activities at each session. Children talk with

confidence about events in their lives. The themes and activities provided enable children to gain awareness of other cultures and the world in which they live. Children have opportunities to explore a range of information technology within the planned programme.

Children use their imagination in a variety of role play activities. They use paint and crayons although staff do not encourage children to be individually creative through some art and craft activities. Children are given opportunities to respond to what they see, hear, touch and taste. They enjoy singing and have opportunities to move to the rhythm of music through dance and movement session. Children have good coordination skills and understanding of space around them, they move with confidence. Staff provide a good range of activities and resources to ensure that children have the opportunity to use a variety of large and small equipment within the nursery day. Most children are confident within the nursery day, they put on their own coats with minimal assistance, help with routine tasks and show a good awareness of their own personal needs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff treat children with respect and promote inclusion through keeping appropriate records. Children have access to a range of resources, play opportunities and activities, which reflect diversity and acknowledge cultural differences. For example, they celebrate festivals and traditions that are important to them, such as Birthdays and Easter. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

There are good systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff are secure in their understanding of the code of practice. Individual educational plans and close liaison with parents and other relevant professionals ensures all children are included and their individual needs are met.

The statement for behaviour managements does not effectively support staff's good practice. Children behave reasonably well and are aware of the nursery's routines and procedures, for example, music is used highlighting tidy-up time. Staff are good role models and generally effective in managing children's behaviour. However, staff are not always sufficiently clear about their expectations. As a result, children do not know what is expected of them and are not helped to understand the effects of their behaviour on others.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the relationship staff develop with parents and parents are enthusiastic about the nursery and the friendly and helpful staff. They share information about the children's care and educational needs, such as when attending parents' evenings and meeting with their child key person, or during informal discussions at hand over each day. Parents are able to contribute to their children's learning through a communication book and the information they receive about current topics and learning aims through displays and newsletter. They have opportunities to help during sessions or be part of the voluntary management committee.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and settled within the nursery. They benefit from the voluntary management committee managing the transfer of the deputy to acting manager, smoothly and without disruption. The premises are well organised ensuring children have space to move around and

play in comfort. Effective recruitment and vetting procedures are evident and the procedures for induction ensure staff are aware of their role and responsibilities. Most staff hold relevant qualifications or have experience. The voluntary management committee encourage the ongoing training and development of staff's skills in providing effective learning and development through quality play for children. Staff are dedicated, deployed effectively and work well as a team. The nursery has developed a comprehensive set of policies and procedures, which inform staff and parents how the nursery operates. However, the manager knows some lack essential information and these are under review. Most staff hold relevant qualification or have experience. All required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and wellbeing is in place and well maintained.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The manager is committed and works hard to continually improve the quality of care and learning for all children. She is aware of the nursery's strengths and weaknesses and implements action plans to address these. Staff work together to develop planning and attend regular meetings. The manager monitors the delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum and the quality of teaching informally. However, the monitoring lacks rigour. This leads to weaknesses in these areas continuing, which impacts on how children learn. The settings meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the provider agreed to ensure staff are fully aware of child protection issues and are able to implement the policies and procedures in the absence of the designated member of staff. All staff are inducted into the nursery's child protection statement. This means staff are aware of their role and responsibilities and the procedures to be followed, if needed.

At the last nursery education inspection, the provider agreed to: develop planning and assessment so that children's progress is clearly noted and carried through to planning for the next steps of children's learning; and to develop children's access to role play and technology, children's awareness of mathematics in everyday activities and opportunities for children to write their own name on their work.

Some positive action has been taken since the last inspection to strengthen the areas highlighted. Planning and assessment has been developed to include all areas of learning, with focused activities being planned. However, staff do not clearly indicate the learning intention of the activities and how they will be adapted for children of different abilities. Role play and information technology has been developed with the purchasing of a good range of appropriate equipment which is planned within the programme. Children are given opportunities to mark make, however, staff do not provide sufficient opportunities for children to write for purpose, such as labelling. Children's awareness of mathematics is planned within the programme; however, staff do not use daily activities to promote children's mathematical skills, such as at snack time.

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.

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 satisfactory.

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):

- review the policy for behaviour management and ensure this is shared with parents and implemented by staff

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 further opportunities for children to write for purpose and link sounds to letters
- develop within the daily routine opportunities to promote children's mathematical skills, with particular reference to addition and subtraction
- further develop planning and assessments so that children's progress is clearly noted and carried through to planning for the next steps of children's learning and development.

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