

St. Margarets Nursery and Afterschool Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127599
Inspection date	04 March 2008
Inspector	Mary Van De Peer
Setting Address	St. Margarets-at-Cliffe Cp School, Sea Street, St. Margarets-at-Cliffe, Dover, Kent, CT15 6SS
Telephone number	01304 853 352
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Registered person	St Margarets Nursery and After School Club
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?

St. Margaret's Day Nursery and Out of School Club is committee run and opened in 1992. It operates from two care rooms in a separate building on the site of St. Margaret's of Cliffe County Primary School, near Dover, Kent. A maximum of 30 children may attend at any one time. The nursery and after school club is open each weekday from 08:45 to 18:00, term time only. Out of school hours are 08.00 to 08.35 and 15.15 to 18.00. Pre-school children attend from 08.45 to 15.00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 36 children aged from two to under eight years on roll. Of these, 25 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs ten staff. In addition there are two administrators and a cleaner. There are six staff, including the manager, who hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting has three staff who are working towards a qualification. The nursery is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance. They also receive support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

All children in the nursery and out of school club learn about the importance of taking charge of their personal care. For example, they know when and how to wash their hands effectively. The areas children use are kept clean and organised, this enables them to locate what they want to play with, easily and safely. There is a clear sickness policy in place which helps reduce the risk of cross infection in the setting. The accident and medication administration records are clear and very well kept, parents sign all entries relating to their children. All staff have attended a recognised paediatric first aid course and there are first aid kits in each play room, as well as for when children are off the premises on local outings. If children are hurt they are treated effectively and quickly. The required appropriate information on children's health is recorded and staff have a good awareness of the children's individual needs. Children's physical development is good. Their skills are being appropriately promoted. Children are able to use a wide range of indoor and outdoor equipment and resources that promote fine and gross motor skills, including chalk boards, a climbing frame, threading and cutting activities. Staff also provide good opportunities for children to use their imagination and be creative with simple resources such as sheets and re-cycled cardboard boxes. Children are free to play outside whenever they want to, as the doors to the garden area are always open. This helps contribute to a healthy lifestyle and children benefit from plenty of fresh air and exercise. Although most children do not want to sleep, they are able to rest when they need to throughout the day.

The adjoining primary school kitchen provide a hot midday meal for the nursery children who want it. A menu is sent to all parents so they are aware of the type and quality of food on offer. The children attending the out of school club also have a hot meal. This is cooked in the setting and the children help with the preparation of their meal. Snacks are always healthy and nutritious, consisting of fruit, cheese and drinks of water and milk. Children are always able to help themselves to drinks of water throughout the sessions. Children are learning about the benefits of healthy living.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are looked after in suitable premises with a welcoming atmosphere. The setting's effective risk assessments mean that hazards, such as heaters, sockets and exits, are minimised. The rooms are brightly decorated and children's work is displayed all around the walls. Low level storage, tables and chairs allow children to use the available resources effectively and independently. Children's play and care areas are clean, safe and bright. The toys and equipment used by the children is age-appropriate and is checked at regular intervals for safety and hygiene. The outdoor play area is available for the children to use every day. Staff have achieved a good balance between freedom and safety limits. Security is given good attention and clear procedures are followed when children arrive, depart and on outings. An evacuation procedure, involving all the children, is carried out along with the neighbouring primary school and also independently. Children experience a sense of danger and how to keep themselves safe in an emergency. Staff have a clear understanding of the setting's comprehensive child protection procedures. Safeguarding children is given high regard and their welfare is protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The staff work hard to make the children feel welcome and they settle down well when they arrive. The flexible routine helps children know approximately what part of the day it is, so they feel more secure. The children are happy and occupied at the nursery. The staff have a good knowledge of both Birth to three matters and the Foundation Stage. They have created an environment which is friendly, fun, as well as educational. There is a wide range of activities and equipment which are stored within all the children's reach. This enables them to make choices in their play. Children's work is displayed all around the nursery alongside colourful posters, showing positive images from around the world. This helps to promote their self-esteem. Art and craft resources allow children to be creative, they can experiment and find out about different textured materials and their qualities. Children are mark-making, using the wide variety of resources around the nursery, for example, pencils, crayons, chalks and paints. Currently, the stories children are listening to have a fairy tale theme and they are extending their imaginative play by re-creating a castle. They are also looking at ways to make the armour for the castle guards. Children are learning to use their imagination and improvise by using the resources available. The children and staff make weekly trips into the village, here they visit the church, the market and the library. They are learning about their local community and people's roles within it. All the children are able to sow and watch flowers and vegetables grow in the garden area and by using jars for beans. Natural objects are displayed and children are encouraged to touch them and talk about what they see and feel. For example, pieces of wood, pebbles and shells. The exciting and stimulating play environment allows children to be creative, develop and learn new skills.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are able to learn, experiment and have lots of fun using the good quality toys, resources and equipment. This results in them being supported in all the areas of learning. Children enjoy being independent as they make choices in their free play. However, the way some adult-led activities are presented, means their independence is not always promoted appropriately. Children's confidence is growing as they try out new experiences and explore their creative sides. A variety of natural materials and textiles, such as wood, foam, dried beans and pebbles encourage descriptive vocabulary from the children, words such as bumpy and shiny are used. Children practise their mark-making skills using resources which include, pencils, crayons paper, chalks and boards. More able children are able to write the letters in their name. Board games and 3-dimensional activities provide children with the opportunities to recognise and name shapes and numbers. They extend this knowledge when they mould the play dough, cutting out shapes and identifying whether they are big or small. Children work well together, constructing road or train tracks for example or playing outdoor ball games. A selection of books is always available for children to look at and staff read stories linked to the theme, for example fairy tales. Children enjoy participating and imitate the pictures with their own actions. They also sing rhymes and songs, sometimes using musical instruments for additional effect. Staff ensure they find out children's starting points using observations and profiles parents have completed. This information is used to inform the plans. On-going evaluations covering each learning area help identify children's next steps. Staff monitor and record children's achievements. Children benefit from appropriate challenges in their play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are learning about people from other cultures and with disabilities through the wide range of activities made available in their everyday play. These include books, small world figures, puzzles and dolls. Activity plans show the opportunities children have to find out about festivals and celebrations from around the world. They understand that all people are different. The nursery has effective arrangements in place, for the care and support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff use effective and positive behaviour management strategies. They are good role models which helps children learn the importance of showing respect for others. Children's overall behaviour is good. They receive lots of praise for their achievements and staff ensure they are consistent and enthusiastic when giving encouragement, not dwelling too much on negative behaviour. Children's work is on display throughout the nursery and they are proud to show what they have done to parents and visitors. Children's self-esteem and confidence is promoted very well. Parents confirm that all the staff are very approachable and talk with them almost every day. They receive a good insight into their children's progress and development at the nursery. Photographs of the children taking part in different activities are on display and also placed in the children's records. This helps make sure parents can see how their children play and spend their day in the nursery. Written information is shared with parents and their feedback is sought, helping to ensure children receive continuity of care.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. The open door policy means parents, including prospective parents, can visit the nursery at any time. Parents confirm they are able to talk to a member of staff or the manager when they need to. Their children's development and progress is discussed almost on a daily basis. Written information is always available for parents to view. Creative work is displayed throughout the nursery and parents enjoy looking at what their children have produced with them. Notice boards have up to date Ofsted, nursery and child care information for parents and visitors to read. Regular newsletters are also produced, for example, providing important details about up and coming events. Foundation Stage information along with the nursery's play plans are also available for parents to refer to. Several parents state that they feel they have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and can see their children making progress in all areas. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered very well.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The nursery is very well organised. Both the indoor and outdoor areas are well planned and laid out, providing good play opportunities for children. All the required documentation and regulatory record-keeping is very well kept. All paperwork is readily available for inspection, although this responsibility is not made clear to parents. Informative and clear policies and procedures contribute to children's continued safety, health and well-being. The nursery's Ofsted registration certificate is displayed along with the public liability insurance information, for all visitors to view. A robust and staff recruitment procedure is in place, with many staff holding recognised child care qualifications. The nursery has an induction and probationary process which allows new staff to settle in and learn how the nursery operates. An effective appraisal system means all staff are monitored and their personal and professional development needs met. Staff work very well as a team, they are able to reflect on their practices and continually improve the quality of care and education provided at the nursery. Children benefit from being cared for by well-qualified and experienced staff.

The leadership and management is good. The manager is very experienced and has lots of enthusiasm which in turn motivates all the staff. She is committed to finding new ways to develop and advance the nursery in all areas, subsequently improving the learning experiences for children. The setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides

Improvements since the last inspection

There were two recommendations raised at the previous inspection. The first one was for the provider to ensure all staff have up to date knowledge of child protection procedures. Several staff members have attended local child protection awareness training, as well as the up to date Safeguarding Children workshops. The setting's policies have been reviewed and updated. They include information for parents as well as procedures to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff. Children's safety and well-being is protected well. The second recommendation was for the nursery to provide nappy changing facilities that ensures privacy for young children. There is now a changing unit, which is fixed to the wall, in the adult cubicle. This provides privacy when staff are changing children. Children's privacy is appropriately respected.

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 confidentiality policy states that Ofsted may inspect children's records

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):

- consider reviewing adult led activities to ensure children's independence is being promoted appropriately

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