

St Paul's Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	134024
Inspection date	16 January 2008
Inspector	Janet Maria Moutter
Setting Address	119a Walton Street, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX2 6AH
Telephone number	01865 270686
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Registered person	Somerville College
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 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 Paul's Nursery is a private day nursery, registered in 1992, and has been established for over 28 years. It was initially established as a work place nursery for staff of Somerville College, although it now serves the wider community. It operates in one large room, which has a separate area for the "under twos", with an area for cots. There is a small enclosed area for outdoor play which consists entirely of safety surface. Staff are able to occasionally take the children into a private garden in Somerville College and for walks in the grounds. They also use the university parks, which are nearby.

There are currently 23 children aged from six months to under five years on roll. Of these five children receive funding for nursery education. The setting supports children who have English as an additional language.

The nursery is open from Monday-Friday 09:00-17:00. Children may come for sessions in the morning (9:00 - 13:00) or afternoon (13:00-17:00), or attend all day.

The nursery employs six staff. Five of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards an early years qualification.

All staff continue to update their skills with further training on short courses.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are very aware of the importance of good hygiene. They know why they should wash their hands after going to the toilet and before having their snack and lunch. Any children who need medication have it administered in line with recommended procedures, with forms being countersigned by parents. All accidents and pre-existing injuries have a robust procedure for the parents to follow and appears to work extremely well. The setting is clean, with the food preparation area being hygienic and not accessible to children. The children learn good personal hygiene routines quickly. Children develop their personal independence skills well, managing their own boots to go outside and helping themselves to water whenever they are thirsty.

Children learn a great deal about healthy living when in this nursery. Staff discuss healthy snack menus, which are displayed for parents to see and they are also enlisting parents views on their children's particular favourites. Thought and consideration has been given to the children's diet, taking into consideration and meeting individual special dietary needs. Meal times promote pleasant social interaction between the children and staff where they have opportunities to develop independence skills, talk about the food they eat and develop fine skills as they learn to use their knives and forks.

Children get plenty of fresh air and daily exercise as they go out at least once each session. The setting plans and provides a good range of activities to promote children's physical development. They have a mini gym on Fridays where they take advantage of being able to use the university's hall. During each session the children are encouraged to express themselves with movement and a particular favourite action rhyme for many in the nursery is 'The Bear Hunt' and the story of 'The Gruffalo'.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe, happy and secure in the setting because staff take every precaution to promote their wellbeing and safety. The physical environment is attractive and there is a lobby for the children to hang their coats which acts as a waiting room for parents. Space is at a premium therefore, resources and equipment, while clean and well maintained, do not always meet the needs of the children in the older age range. The nursery are successful in keeping to a small number of children attending, so that they can offer a cosy friendly environment where children can thrive and gain confidence and want to play and learn. Fire safety equipment is professionally checked and fire practices are undertaken.

Children benefit from an outdoor play area, with a good range of toys and equipment which are safe and promote their physical development. The area provides limited shade from the sun; Children are kept safe from over-exposure, as their use of it on very warm days is either restricted or the children are taken next door to the university gardens and grounds, and to the parks and amenities close by. Comprehensive risk management is undertaken to ensure outings provide the children with well organised enjoyable experiences with high adult to child ratios.

Staff are vigilant in ensuring there are no hazards for children so that they are safe and secure. All staff have recent training in child protection and the manager is the designated person. Staff know exactly the procedures to follow should the need arise and this promotes children's safety and welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children, from the youngest to the oldest, enjoy their time in this setting. They settle quickly, receiving very good support from the staff if needed and soon move around the play area confidently, readily choosing their favourite activities. All find something of interest with staff making effective use of guidance documents to promote all areas of children's development well. Children concentrate for long periods, playing purposefully, actively learning both indoors and outside. Children get on well together. Older children take turns willingly, such as when using tools and sharing games and activities with the younger children. Relationships are excellent throughout the nursery. Children's welfare needs are met well, although there is a tendency for set routines, such as snack time, to interrupt their play. Nevertheless, children enjoy a good balance of self-chosen and adult-led activities.

Babies enjoy looking at themselves in mirrors enabling a growing awareness of their face and body. The staff have made the baby area very tactile and at different levels. This is to encourage the movers and shakers, to crawl and pull themselves up to standing and to explore the activities around them. They have a close relationship with staff and have the ability to snuggle in when needing comfort. The key person system in the nursery gives children the opportunity to develop special relationships with other adults.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are supported well to make good progress in all areas of learning. This is owing to staff having a good understanding of what is required of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Planning is good both at the termly and weekly levels and is linked closely to the stepping stones of each area of learning. A strength is the way in which weekly planning is reviewed and annotated for each child in order to inform what should happen in the following week. This is particularly helpful to children who may need to further consolidate a key skill or an activity. Assessment of children's learning is good, with daily assessments fed into children's individual assessment folders at the end of each week to ensure that future activities provide challenge. Staff readily build up a profile of children's progress against the stepping stones and at the end of the year this is passed to the primary school who find this information helpful.

Children demonstrate good behaviour and self control appropriate to their development. Their ability to express a range of feelings is developing well, they express concern for others, annoyance when things go wrong and happiness and delight as they complete a task. Good opportunities enable children to develop appropriate respect for their own and other cultures and beliefs. Children learn to share and take turns enabling them to participate in group activities.

Children are confident communicators. They enthusiastically speak in groups, motivated by the staff who introduce new and complex words into their vocabulary. They make marks in all areas of play, labelling their art work and when playing with malleable materials. It was particularly good to see the staff had used the children's writing where ever possible in their displays. One

child who has since left the nursery to go to school, had written out the hand washing instructions 'Now wash your hands'. This conveys the message to the children that their mark making is important and has meaning and value.

Children learn to count in their play and activities, they sing number rhymes, count numerous items as they play and count in practical everyday activities as they help at snack and lunchtimes. Their understanding of numbers, quantity, size, position and shape is developing well through practical activities and discussion. Children begin to use their mathematical ideas to solve practical problems, for example they recognise by comparing transport vehicles how many wheels a lorry has or the different shapes on the helicopter. They also recognise and compare, estimate and adjust things, such as while a child was copying a picture from a book of a hot air balloon. The child on finding that what he has just drawn is too big and will not fit the page, stops to think and then an adult watching him questions how they can fix this problem together. Then the adult holds the paper steady while the child operates the scissors. The child then cuts round his picture, to the size he wants in order to complete his air balloon shape ready to attach the next phase, the basket. This demonstrates that children are given time and the encouragement to think things through, solve problems and complete tasks.

Throughout the sessions, staff are fully engaged with the children, often providing individual support. This is particularly beneficial to the children's learning. The nursery is full of visual signs and prompts, which help the children to gain the most from their play. Staff manage the children well, there is a strong commitment to personal, social and emotional development, through fostering independence and co-operation and children make good progress in their personal skills as a result.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children play happily together because staff promote equality of opportunity successfully. Through celebrating festivals, such as Ramadan, and providing a good range of toys and resources, children's awareness of cultural diversity is raised successfully. Currently, the setting has no children identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities although it is well equipped to do so should the need arise. One of the key persons is trained as a special educational needs co-ordinator and has a good understanding of children's different needs.

The children behave very well in the setting because the range of activities provided is exciting and stimulating. When a child is upset, staff intervene quickly to provide reassurance and support. They also have a gradual introduction into the two's to five's area from the babies' so that children can get to know what is required going from the oldest to the youngest and what behaviour skills are needed. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The quality of the partnership with parents and carers is very good. Staff have good relationships with parents and the effective work with them contributes to children's good progress. Parents have access to policies and information about routines and activities, and how these help the children to learn. The setting provides parents with a welcome pack which is reviewed annually, parents evenings, weekly diaries and excellent individual scrapbooks. These details from the caring staff are welcomed by parents as a means through which they can access information about their children's progress. Although, while the two way process of gathering information about their child's needs is verbal from parents and noted by the staff, the parents are children's first and most important educators; however, at present there is no formal initial and on going

assessment where the nursery seeks the views of parents and values their observations about their child's learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

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

Robust appointment procedures are in place, so that children are cared for by persons who are cleared as suitable to work with them. The staff work together really well and the children and their parents benefit from the confident and well supported atmosphere the staff extend. All are clear about their differing roles and responsibilities. Staff appraisals take place regularly and staff training requirements are agreed and acted on. Good self evaluation of the service offered enables the setting to clearly plan what they want to improve and how they can achieve their aims. The manager is aware of weaknesses and makes clear plans of how to make improvements.

All required policies and procedures for the smooth and efficient running of the nursery are in place and reviewed regularly. The policy and procedures for risk assessment are particularly successful in keeping children safe and secure and are monitored closely. All legally required paperwork is in place and confidentially stored.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. Staff receive clear leadership, with all being well aware of their daily roles and responsibilities. Staff work well together to create a suitable learning environment each day. Consequently, children have worthwhile learning experiences on a daily basis. Staff actively seek to improve what is offered to the children. They implement new ideas successfully, such as outdoor learning and various ways to help children learn letter sounds. They do this through taking advice from outside professionals.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection for care, three recommendations were made for improvement. These related to procedures regarding recording details of accidents and pre-existing injuries, vaccination records and to minimise the risk of cross infection from toothbrushes used by the children. Following the last inspection of nursery education, two considerations for improvement were made. These covered monitoring planning and to improve information given to parents.

The nursery has worked very hard to address each issue and consideration successfully. Indeed, many areas that were previously weaker, are now areas of significant strength, resulting in much improved provision for the children's care and education. The nursery is to be congratulated on achieving this.

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):

- expand the resources, materials and equipment available to the children, to allow ease of access and engage the older children's creativity, imagination and exploratory impulses to extend their learning

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):

- devise and maintain a system of two way communication with parents to seek their views when sharing their child's initial and ongoing assessments and achievements both at nursery and at home

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