

# St Joseph's Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	145948
<b>Inspection date</b>	06 February 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Nikki Whinton
<b>Setting Address</b>	St Josephs Place, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 1DD
<b>Telephone number</b>	07814 481740
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	St Joseph`s Nursery
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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. Joseph's Nursery in Devizes has been established for 31 years. It currently operates from temporary split site accommodation. One part of the provision is running from a room in the Narthax, within the grounds of the primary school. The group is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children at the setting and members of the local community. A maximum of 10 children may attend this temporary provision at any one time. The group is open weekdays from 09.00 until 15.15 throughout school term time.

There are currently 71 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 52 children receive funding for early education. The group currently supports children with English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 11 members of staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and four are working towards a qualification. The group has achieved the Pre-School Learning Alliance Accreditation, the Investors in Children and the Investors in People Awards.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children help themselves to a good variety of healthy free-choice snacks, such as cucumber, peppers and breadsticks during the sessions. In addition, they are offered a balanced range of nutritious food options at the planned snack time. Children are encouraged to try new foods, such as lychees or croissants that are often linked to the current theme. As a result, children are broadening their appreciation of food tastes whilst having the chance to consume food in sufficient quantities to meet their varying needs. Dietary issues or allergies are discussed with parents prior to a child commencing in the setting. These discussions are recorded and any requirements are accommodated. Children help themselves to drinking water throughout the play sessions, which helps to ensure they are consuming fluids in sufficient quantities to meet their differing needs.

Children learn good health routines, such as blowing their own noses before hygienically disposing of the tissue or washing their hands after eating or going for a walk. Children benefit from the staff's knowledge of first aid and the correct administrative procedures to follow if accidents occur. There is a range of measures to support children's good health. Written parental permission has been obtained to seek emergency treatment or apply sun cream, the group's sick child policy is included in the prospectus and children use separate paper towels when hand drying, to reduce the risk of cross contamination. However, whilst parents give written permission for children to be given medication, they do not sign the record book to acknowledge when it has been administered. As a result, children may be put at risk.

Children lead a healthy lifestyle when in the provision. The staff promote the benefits of outdoor activities and try to ensure children experience fresh air and exercise at every session. This is achieved either through physical activities, including parachute play, and/or by walks, for example along the canal side to the local garden centre. Children improve their fine motor control and coordination by learning to handle safely a variety of tools, including pencils, glue sticks or scissors.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

The premises are clean, well maintained and of an appropriate temperature. Colourful displays and examples of children's artwork create a stimulating, welcoming environment for parents and children. Safety is a high priority within the provision and there are a variety of measures to keep children safe. For example, the premises are secure, staff carefully supervise children whilst using the toilet within this shared use building, high staffing ratios are in place, especially when taking children off site, and risk assessments are completed prior to children entering the setting. In addition, children learn to share some responsibility for their own safety. They take part in regularly planned emergency evacuation drills and tidy away toys themselves after play, to help reduce trip hazards.

Children play with a good range of clean, well maintained, age appropriate resources. They benefit from the staff's understanding of safety issues concerning the purchase and ongoing maintenance of equipment. As a result, children play with toys that are safe and suitable.

Children's welfare is supported by staff that have a clear understanding of child protection issues, confidentiality of information and the correct procedures to follow if concerned about the wellbeing of a child. The prospectus provides parents with details of the provider's child protection responsibilities. This is an effective way of making them realise the policy, prior to their child commencing in the setting.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are confident, enthusiastic and well motivated to learn. Most children enter the provision very willingly and any child who is a little hesitant to settle receives very good individual support to help them quickly become involved in the group's activities. Children have the chance to be independent learners as they make decisions for themselves concerning the resources they wish to explore, such as construction materials, information technology resources or 'fuzzy felt'. Staff are well deployed to support their care and learning. For example, one child and a member of staff are absorbed in the role-play area sorting play food into healthy and less nutritious categories. Children have good social skills. They have a very good relationship with the genuinely caring staff and are forming positive friendships with their peers. Children are gaining self-care skills through routines such as putting on their coats for outside play, helping themselves to snacks or washing their hands before eating. Through practical activities such as group story times or 'share and tell', children learn to concentrate and sit quietly for short periods, whilst listening to others.

The small numbers of children currently in the setting that have not yet reached the Foundation Stage, attend sessions with their older peers. Activities are adapted as required to enable all children to participate and to succeed. Staff undertake written observations and assessments of these children following the Birth to three matters framework.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff are experienced and well qualified. They have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage and the areas of development covered by both planned and spontaneous activities. They plan a very broad and balanced practical curriculum, which is based firmly on promoting children's progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. There is a good balance between structured and free choice activities. Staff have recently introduced 'learning journeys' with the older children in the group, as a way of linking their learning to their individual interests. Key workers undertake regular written observations of the children, which they use to complete assessments following the Wiltshire Building Blocks scheme. However, there are some gaps in some children's assessments. As a result, staff may not always have an accurate picture of some children's actual progress, so their learning may not be maximised.

Children talk confidently to peers and adults. Staff use Makaton as part of the setting routine. Children are learning basic signing skills, which helps them to realise there are differing ways to communicate. They thoroughly enjoy sharing their thoughts and ideas. For example, a child explains, 'bananas make you grow and so does spaghetti', whilst another informs a member of staff during story time, 'you speak like my granny'. Children explore books spontaneously and are absorbed listening to whole group stories involving props. They use numbers confidently and spontaneously, 'I was four on my birthday', 'I had four Weetabix for breakfast'. Children are learning to calculate and to solve mathematical problems, such as when estimating the number of children in the setting or the number that precedes or follows another. They are

able to count by rote, for example, when counting shapes on a mosaic pattern. Children are learning to recognise numbers as labels through daily routines including referring to a giant number line during registration. Practical activities including drawing round shape templates, completing three dimensional puzzles and building with construction materials, enable children to increase their awareness of shape, space and measure.

Children take part in stimulating, wide ranging outings within the local area. Children sing songs to residents at a nearby nursing home. They walk along the canal side to the nearby garden centre, visit Devizes market on Thursdays to buy food for snack time, and go to the library and the visitor's centre. Children welcome visitors to the nursery including a parent to cook them an authentic Chinese meal, a police officer to show the children his police car, fire fighters and staff from Longleat Safari Park's pets' corner with some of their animals. Such stimulating opportunities help children to gain an awareness of their local environment and the wider world. Children thoroughly enjoy using their imagination whilst involved in role-play. They benefit from the staff's active involvement to enhance their play experiences. Children take part in child centred creative opportunities including drawing self portraits as part of the topic, 'All about me', making three-dimensional artwork and experimenting with spirographs.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are respected as individuals and made to feel very welcome. Children benefit from the staff knowing them extremely well, having an appreciation of their individual home circumstances and from recognising their likes and dislikes. Children access a suitable range of resources, including small world figures, dolls, books and posters to help them gain an awareness of diversity. Children attending with English as an additional language receive targeted support that is appropriate to promote their full integration and progression within the setting.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are independent and demonstrate good self-esteem. They have the confidence to share their feelings, such as when a child tells a member of staff, 'I went on a pony, but I was a bit scared'. They gain social skills as they learn to await their turn, for example, when toileting and to share resources, such as whilst exploring an exciting new construction set that a parent had donated to the setting. Through interesting practical experiences, including trying vegetarian haggis as part of Burns Night celebrations or sampling Mississippi mud pie on American Independence Day, children gain an awareness of a range of cultures and festivals.

Children behave well. Their behaviour is supported by staff that have high expectations of children's behaviour, act as extremely good role models and who consistently use positive strategies, including praise, encouragement and carefully targeted sticker rewards, to promote children's appropriate behaviour.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are made to feel very welcome in the setting. They are encouraged to take an active role in their child's learning, for example, by sharing their skills, helping their child to bring in articles from home linked to the current topic, by serving on the committee or by volunteering for the parent rota. Parents are provided with a high quality prospectus, which contains detailed information about the provision, together with its policies and procedures. Parents are kept up to date with nursery activities through a regular newsletter, white boards detailing the activities the children have experienced during the session, the parents' notice boards and informal discussion with staff either at the beginning or end of each session. In addition parents are given regular written information about suggested

activities to do with their child at home, which are linked to the current topic. Parents are kept informed about their child's academic progress through twice-yearly parents evenings, and 'insight evenings', where parents have the chance to experience activities for themselves and gain a greater understanding of their education value. However, parents do not have regularly planned opportunities to share with staff what they know about their child's academic achievements, to aid staff when completing Foundation Stage assessments.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's care, learning and development are supported by a well qualified, highly competent, experienced staffing team that works together extremely well. High staffing ratios are maintained, which helps to ensure children receive lots of good quality attention. The group is currently working from a split site with all of the staff and most of the children attending both groups. However, due to the highly effective organisation of the provision, there has been minimal disruption to either children or their parents.

All legally required documentation is in place and available for inspection or staff reference. However, whilst a parent's contact number is retained for each child, alternative emergency contact names or telephone numbers are not in place for all children currently attending.

The leadership and management are good. The committee and staff work closely together and have shared aims for the group. The group has formed some links with the local primary school. Staff meet on a regular basis to review the educational provision, cascade training and plan future sessions. However, the leadership does not currently monitor the key worker assessments. The group has a very positive attitude towards professional development. The group is involved in reaccreditation schemes, staff regular attend early years courses, they undertake evaluative written observations of their colleagues' practice and welcome members of the Wiltshire early years team to help enhance the quality of the provision.

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

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

As a result of the last combined inspection the group was given key issues for action and recommendations to support the development of the group. The care report requested the group ensure an effective registration system is in place for emergency situations, children do not have unsupervised access to the kitchen area, that the outdoor area is checked for hazards on a daily basis, parents sign to acknowledge when children have been given medicines and that children have access to resources to support their learning in information technology and investigatory play. The education report asked the setting to provide and use available resources to encourage children to make choices and develop independent learning.

The current provision does not have a kitchen area. Effective registration systems are in place and the outside area is checked prior to usage. Children are able to access investigatory and information technology resources. They make independent choices regarding the resources and activities they wish to explore. These improvements have had a positive impact on the quality of care and education offered to the children. However, parents do not sign to acknowledge when children have been given medication.

## 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 maintain 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 good.

## 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 parents sign the record book to acknowledge when children have been given medication
- ensure alternative emergency contact details are maintained 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):

- develop the planning and monitoring of the educational provision, to ensure that the current ongoing observations that are undertaken on the children are used to complete regular Foundation Stage assessments across all aspects of the curriculum. Use information from assessment when planning for individual children's future learning
- develop the educational partnership with parents, to ensure parents have regularly planned opportunities to share with staff what they know about their child's academic achievements, to aid staff's assessments.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)