

St Neot's School Nursery and Creche: The Brampton Building

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY271620
Inspection date	22 November 2007
Inspector	Jenny Scarlett
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Registered person	St Neots (Eversley) 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 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.

At the time of the inspection there were no children in receipt of nursery education. Ofsted judges that the provider remains suitable to provide nursery education.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Deers Day Nursery opened in 2003 for the provision of Day care for the under threes. It changed its name to St Neot's School Nursery and Crèche: The Brampton Building in October 2007 following a redevelopment. The setting operates from a new self contained building in the grounds of St Neot's Preparatory School. A maximum of 50 children may attend the setting at any one time. The building is divided into two areas one for the under threes called Tiny Tuskers and the other Foundation Stage known as Tuskers. Tiny Tuskers is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 all year except at Christmas. Tuskers is part of the Lower School and is currently open term time only from 08:30 to 15:30 with a before and after school care facility available. All children share access to secure, enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 22 children aged from three months to three years on roll in Tiny Tuskers. There are currently no children in receipt of nursery education funding in Tiny Tuskers. In Tuskers there are 16 children aged three to four years on role; all of whom receive funded nursery education places. However, Tuskers did not form part of this inspection Children come

from a wide geographical area. The facility can support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting currently employs eight staff. All of whom hold appropriate qualifications in teaching or early years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from regular outdoor activities. They run and play in the fresh air which contributes to their good health. They explore, test and develop physical control in stimulating indoor and outdoor experiences. Children particularly enjoy playing on the bikes and scooters, developing their physical coordination and sense of space as they pedal around, skilfully avoiding each other. Staff know the children well and this encourages children to confidently try new skills, ask for help and set their own limits in a safe environment. For example, children competently manoeuvre wheeled vehicles, balance on equipment and climb under, through and over obstacles that provide varying levels of challenge. Children recognise physical activity as part of a healthy lifestyle. Babies are encouraged to develop their physical skills. They have ample space to roll, crawl and explore their environment and plenty of suitable equipment and furniture to help them to pull up and develop their mobility. Non-mobile babies are taken outside each day for fresh air. They have opportunities to crawl on the safety surface and grass whilst others sit content whilst being pushed in the swing. All the children benefit from well balanced routines which allow for vigorous play and rest.

Children benefit from a clean environment. Staff are meticulous in mopping or sweeping floors and in disinfecting tables, before children eat. They follow many good practical hygiene routines to help minimise cross infection, such as following good nappy changing procedures, the preparation of babies meals and providing children with individual bedding. Children learn about personal hygiene, such as toilet routines and washing their hands at appropriate times. Most staff have current first aid qualifications and they deal sensitively and efficiently with minor injuries or illness. Records of accidents are detailed and signed by parents. Medication records are comprehensive and shared appropriately although some consents are not consistently countersigned by staff.

The setting is pro-active in promoting healthy eating and active lifestyles, and staff work closely with parents to ensure that children eat a balanced diet. Children maintain good fluid levels, as fresh drinking water is available. Any special dietary needs are carefully recorded and fully met. Meal times are social, relaxed occasions. Children are given sufficient time to develop their independence with feeding and chewing skills and sufficient food is available to meet their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff have a good understanding of all safety issues and they give good priority to protecting children from harm. The premises are secure as doors are locked and the outdoor play area is fully enclosed. There are very good systems for managing security when parents arrive to deliver or collect children. Ample space ensures that children can play and explore in safety and comfort. Resources are plentiful and age-appropriate. Children choose from an extensive range of toys

and resources both indoors and outside which are maintained in a safe and clean condition. All children's play areas are very well organised to maximise children's potential.

There are effective systems for regularly checking all resources so that they are safe for children's use. Play materials are well organised and stored at low levels so that children can choose safely and independently.

Risk assessments are carried out regularly and daily checks are made of all areas used by children. Temperatures of heaters and hot water are carefully regulated and good use is made of gates, such as across the kitchen to keep children safe. Children learn to be aware of their own safety as staff explain, for example, why they should not climb on furniture. However, children are not consistently protected in emergencies as evacuation procedures are not currently displayed. Staff have completed appropriate training in safeguarding issues and procedures and they have a clear understanding of current practice. Consequently, children are protected from abuse or neglect and staff know how to respond appropriately to any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children feel secure, safe and contented in the setting. There are close affectionate relationships throughout the setting yielding a happy and harmonious environment where children feel safe and secure. Good quality interaction between the children and adults results in confident children who develop strong self-esteem in a supportive and trusting environment. Children engage in creative and messy activities with adult support and have great fun as they explore finger paints and baked beans using all their senses. Staff working with the babies are responsive to their verbal and non verbal communications. For example, during a singing session children gesture and utter one word from their favourite songs, staff respond by singing the songs encouraging children to join in the actions. Staff encourage children's language as they talk to them throughout the day, they ask them questions and repeat their emerging words. A member of staff engages children to build a tower using stacking cups. They all clap excitedly when the tower is knocked down and then repeated. Older children choose to read stories in the book corner, encouraged by successful modelling by staff. Music and songs are used for fun and to soothe children. Activities with beans, paint, and textured fabrics enhance their tactile experiences. Stories and lots of effective small world and role play opportunities are helping the children to make sense of their world. Children are able to appreciate the world around them, in particular making use of the school environment with its surrounding woodlands and nature trails.

Staff use the Birth to three matters framework to plan and provide varied and imaginative activities, experiences, care and education for young children. They are sensitive to the children's needs and recognise them as individuals. Although staff monitor some aspects of children's development, the planning and assessment system is not consistently linked to the Birth to three matters framework or the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage of learning. The system does not, therefore, show how well children are making progress in all areas of development and learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There are currently no children receiving funding for nursery education in Tiny Tuskers. Through discussion staff plan an effective curriculum to ensure that each child is able to reach their full potential. They demonstrate

secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Through discussion staff complete regular observations and assessments of the children's progress. The manager and staff discuss how they use effective teaching methods, such as providing interesting and innovative activities, using open ended questions to help children think and allowing children to finish activities to their satisfaction. This is supported by observations of them with the younger children in the setting.

Staff are able to support children's personal, social and emotional development. The non-funded children in the setting are confident and show good levels of independence both in their personal care and in their play. They learn to cooperate whilst building a road and track. They begin to negotiate the space available and who is going to build which part of the track or road. Others show care and concern when one of the children drops the toy and one of the children picks it up for them.

Staff are able to support children's language development well, as observed through their work with the younger, non-funded children. They discuss significant events in the children's lives, for example, mummy and daddy coming back from holiday or baby brother being at home. Younger children confidently choose books for enjoyment and indicate to staff when they want it read to them. Staff ensure that children develop a love of books and are encouraged to enjoy listening to stories. They ask the children questions about the story and extend children's knowledge by singing songs, such as Old MacDonald Had a Farm to broaden their knowledge and interest. Through observation of the younger children and through discussion with staff, it is apparent that they promote mathematical skills for children in the setting. For example, children confidently count in everyday play activities, such as counting the number of cows they see in the book. They use mathematical language appropriately, such as big and little. They confidently construct a train track realising they need a curved piece or a straight piece to complete the track. Staff are also able to support children's creative development well, as observed through their work with younger, non-funded children. Children enjoy rhyming and confidently join in with rhymes and action songs. They show interest in musical toys recognising the sounds and attempting to move to the music. Children have lots of opportunities to explore colour and texture. They investigate the bowl of baked beans as they use spoons to pour them into containers, or use their hands to feel the texture. They use a range of materials, such as paint, crayons and glue to be creative and make marks on paper.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children behave well. Staff have a calm and consistent approach to behaviour management. Staff provide clear and consistent boundaries to help children know what is expected of them. They use distraction, praise and encouragement to encourage good behaviour. This means children begin to distinguish between right and wrong and the staff set good examples to the children, such as reminding them about turn taking, sharing and manners. They are aware of the daily routine and have some opportunities to take responsibilities within this, such as helping to tidy up. Children are valued as individuals and staff know them and their families well. This is because staff find out about the individual needs of the children attending through ongoing discussions with parents. All children have equal access to activities and inclusion is promoted. Staff recognise that some children have additional needs and know the procedures to be followed, if required.

The planning, equipment and resources promote children's awareness of other cultures and the world around them. Children learn about other religious festivals and celebrations throughout

the year, such as Chinese New Year, Divali and Christmas. Staff promote equality of opportunity as they ensure all children are able to access and engage in the range of activities on offer. They provide toys and resources that reflect our diverse society and use language that does not re-enforce stereotypes. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children benefit from the setting's good systems for communicating with parents. Policies and procedures are shared in the prospectus and regular newsletters provide further helpful information about children's care. Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. The prospectus is currently being updated however, the school's web site includes information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and the ethos of the school. In discussion with staff development records are always available for parents to see, although the detail of children's progress towards the early learning goals is only systematically shared when children move on within the school.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting has recently moved in to a new self contained building which accommodates the under threes and the nursery children within the lower school. The changes have been relatively seamless and this is reflected in the happy confident children who have adapted well to their new environment. Children benefit from the setting's effective organisation of time, resources and staffing. Sessions are carefully planned and staff work successfully as a team supporting and encouraging children in their development. Space in the new building is used creatively to provide a wide range of play opportunities both indoors and outside. However, the display boards have not been sited which prohibits staff from creating an attractive environment for the children. A rigorous procedure is in place in relation to the recruitment of staff. This means that staff employed in the setting are suitable to meet the needs of children. The induction procedures ensure that all new staff become fully aware of all the policies and procedures within the setting enabling them to quickly become part of the staff team. Staff are supported in their roles, receive annual appraisals and on-going training that further increases their knowledge and skills for the benefit of the children. Children enjoy the facilities of clean, safe and spacious premises. The manager of the Tiny Tuskers has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses within the setting and has a development plan in place to continue to improve the service offered to children. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The staff are all well qualified, experienced and competent in their work with young children. Through discussion there are systems for monitoring the quality of nursery education including evaluations of activities. The staff have established links with the Head of Early Years and head of Nursery within the Lower School who assists them in their curriculum planning and systems for assessing children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection a recommendation was made to ensure the complaint's procedure includes details of the regulatory body (Ofsted). The information for parents highlights the procedures for complaints and the protocols. As a result, parents are fully aware of the systems in place and who to contact should they have a concern and complaint.

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):

- continue to develop assessment systems so that they show clearly how children are making progress towards Birth to three and the early learning goals (also applies to nursery education)
- display evacuation procedures

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):

- make improvements as indicated in the care section above

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