

# St Joseph's Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	302861
<b>Inspection date</b>	29 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Karen Cockings
<b>Setting Address</b>	221 Doncaster Road, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S70 3QY
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<b>Registered person</b>	St Josephs Day Nursery & Pre School Ltd
<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 was registered in 1998 and is a privately owned setting. It operates from converted, detached premises on the main Doncaster Road, close to Barnsley town centre. There are nine rooms available for children's play on the ground and first floors of the building. All children share access to two enclosed outdoor play areas. A maximum of 57 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 with the exception of bank holidays.

There are currently 119 children on roll. Of these, 43 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area, including Sheffield, Leeds and Holmfirth. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 14 members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health needs are met satisfactorily overall, with some good aspects to the care provided. The nursery is clean and comfortable, with clear procedures in place to ensure that children are protected from the spread of infections. Staff follow good hygiene practice and established cleaning routines ensure that all areas are maintained well. The nursery kitchen was recently inspected as part of a random sample of food outlets in the Barnsley area and was the only facility to be given the highest grading of five stars. Staff also encourage children to follow safe hygiene practice by ensuring that they wash their hands regularly as part of daily routines. Notices are displayed above sinks for both staff and children. Staff talk to children about why it is important to wash their hands thoroughly and to use soap, in order to get rid of any germs. The risks of cross infection are also minimised by the sharing with parents of the nursery's policy with regard to the care of sick children. Information about communicable diseases is gathered and any such illnesses are notified to the relevant authorities.

The setting employs a cook to prepare meals and snacks, which means that childcare staff can concentrate on the needs of the children. Children are offered regular snacks and meals throughout the day and staff raise children's awareness of healthy eating by talking to them about their food and planning relevant activities, such as making a display of fruit pictures. As a result, children know that some foods help them to grow big and strong. However, meals are not consistently well balanced and sometimes portions for snacks are small, with little choice. Menus are displayed for parents to see what their children are eating each day. Older children sometimes help to serve snacks to their friends, but opportunities for them to develop more independence at meal times are restricted as foods are served for them.

Children thoroughly enjoy outdoor activities, which contribute to their overall good health. The outdoor areas provide a good variety of resources, so that children have plenty to occupy them, even if they prefer less active play. There are books, jigsaws, games and writing materials set out to interest most children, as well as equipment to help them to develop physical skills. Children steer wheeled toys confidently around the garden and practise balancing and climbing skills as they use the slides, balancing beams and stepping stones. They learn that they need to hold out their arms to help them to balance as they move carefully along the beam. They are eager to show what they can do and call adults over to show them how they can jump and hop. Children develop good hand-eye coordination and dexterity as they take part in activities, such as making threaded pictures, drawing and painting. The layout of the nursery does not allow for free flow between indoor and outdoor areas, although most children spend reasonable periods of time outside each day. There are fewer opportunities, however, for the babies who are not yet walking to have some time in the fresh air.

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

The provision is good.

Children's safety is given high priority at the setting, where effective measures and procedures are in place to maintain a safe environment for them. Security precautions are implemented successfully. For example, a closed-circuit television system is in place outdoors and staff are careful to check the identity of any visitors to the setting. Parents use the intercom system to gain entry to the building. Perimeter gates are kept locked and notices posted as reminders to staff and parents. Clear daily checking systems help to ensure that the environment and

equipment are safe and staff are expected to report any hazards. Equipment, such as radiator guards, safety gate and socket covers, is in place to reduce the risk of injury to children.

Children have access to a varied range of toys and play materials, many of which are stored at low level and in labelled boxes so that children can make selections safely. They learn how to use their environment and equipment safely as they play. They understand that staff have to check the garden before they go out to play and they become familiar with evacuation procedures because they are practised regularly with them. Planned visits to the nursery from the fire service and paramedics help children begin to understand about the role of others in keeping them safe.

Staff have a secure understanding of their responsibilities in relation to child protection. The nursery's policy has been reviewed to ensure that it reflects Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and current telephone numbers are readily available. This ensures that staff are able to act promptly if they have concerns about a child in their care.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the nursery environment. They arrive eagerly, are familiar with routines and quickly settle to an activity of their choice. Staff respond sensitively to younger children who may be a little upset on leaving their parent. They give cuddles and reassurance and divert children's attention by holding them up to look through the window or finding them an interesting toy.

Staff plan and provide a variety of stimulating activities for all age groups. Babies and toddlers have regular opportunities for exploratory play with materials, such as dough and paint. Staff are familiar with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and use this to assist them in their planning of activities and monitoring of children's development. They interact positively with children to encourage language and communication skills. For example, they show a baby their reflection in the mirror, talking and smiling at them as they look at their face in the glass.

Children enjoy what they do at nursery and acquire new knowledge and skills. The very young children practise physical skills as they pull themselves up and explore the resources around them. They all learn many songs and rhymes, which are used frequently throughout the nursery. They are cared for by familiar staff who get to know them well and are responsive to their individual needs. Transition between groups is managed sensitively so that children gradually become familiar with their new environment.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and children's learning is good. Staff have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage, using their knowledge effectively to help children to make good progress towards the early learning goals. The older children are cared for in the first floor rooms of the nursery where they move freely between the different play areas for much of the day. They concentrate well on activities they enjoy, such as being customers and shopkeepers in the 'shoe shop' or carefully fitting a train track together and working out a route on their map. They have a good sense of belonging and are eager to talk about 'their' nursery and what they like to do there. Children develop firm friendships, seeking out others to join in their play, and they are becoming increasingly independent in managing their own personal care, such as putting on their own coats to go outside.

Most children are confident communicators and use language well to express their own needs, build relationships and to develop their own play. Songs and rhymes, including 'made up' ones are used extensively and help to teach children about the days of the week and everyday events, such as tidying up. Children also learn other ways of communicating because signing is used frequently and children learn some words in other languages. They use their listening skills well as they sit in small groups with the tape recorder and book, listening to the story as they turn the pages. They listen intently to stories, especially when 'Floppy' the dog is there to assist. There are many opportunities for children to practise writing skills and as a result older and more able children are beginning to write well formed letters. For example, a child chalks their name legibly on the playground outside and children write invitations to a pretend party.

Children use number in practical contexts throughout the day. They count each other at snack and group time and think about how many cups they will need for the children in the group. They sing number songs and can identify and sometimes reproduce numbers that are special to them, such as writing the number four and proudly saying that this is how old they are. Planned activities support mathematical learning well. For example, the shoe shop in the role play area provides opportunities for children to match and sort shoes into pairs, measure their feet and use mathematical language as they discuss whose feet are bigger or smaller. However, effective use is not always made of opportunities to develop children's knowledge of shape and volume as part of everyday activities.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is well promoted. They are curious about the world around them, developing good observational skills as they use binoculars outside to examine buildings and plants. They become familiar with technological equipment, such as the computer and tape recorder. Displays show that children have used cameras to take photographs of themselves and their environment. A range of visitors, including an optician, vet and paramedics, have come to the nursery to talk to the children about the work they do. Outings, such as a visit to Worsbrough Mill, also help to increase children's knowledge of time and place and how foods are produced. They have opportunities to design and build models with construction toys and household materials.

Children explore different media and use their imagination and creative skills as they pat and roll dough, make collage pictures with autumn leaves, paint and draw. They have easy access to a wide range of craft materials in the creative area. They listen to different musical styles and sometimes paint their own pictures in response to what they have heard. However, at times, art work is quite adult-led and does not allow enough opportunity for free expression. Children become deeply absorbed in role play activities, which are well resourced and planned. They also use dressing-up clothes and home corner equipment well to develop their own storylines and to re-enact aspects of their own lives.

Staff make effective use of time and resources to promote children's learning. They plan a varied programme with opportunities for freely chosen activities and for coming together at group times. Children have an easy rapport with staff who get to know them well and manage behaviour positively so that children understand what is expected of them. Staff make focused and spontaneous observations, which are fed into children's assessment records and used to inform the planning process. This helps to ensure that children make good progress in their learning and development.

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

The provision is good.

Children feel a sense of belonging at the setting, where they are given a warm welcome. Staff talk to parents about their children and find out as much as they can, so that they can meet children's individual needs. Children with English as an additional language are well supported. For example, staff learn some words in the children's home language and take care to find out about the correct pronunciation. They access the local cultural diversity team for support and borrow dual language books for parents and staff to use with their children. This helps children and parents to feel that they are valued and assists the settling-in process. Staff also work well with children who have learning difficulties or disabilities and with other professionals involved in their care. They monitor children carefully and produce detailed reports to show how they are progressing. Effective methods, such as the use of sign language and pictorial cards, help children with communication difficulties.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They show care and concern for others, for example, as they hurry to fetch another child a tissue or as they offer help to put on a shoe. A visit to the nursery by a person who is blind, and their guide dog, helps children to understand more about the needs of others. They learn about braille and practise writing their own names. Their awareness of different cultures is raised through resources and planned activities, such as the celebration of festivals and tasting of different foods. Children also learn to count and to use simple words in Spanish and French.

Children are sociable and play generally well together. They learn about taking turns and sharing as they play and they respond well to the positive approach taken by the adults who care for them. Staff acknowledge children's achievements, telling them they have done a 'really good job there - especially as you thought you couldn't do it'. Children are eager to show that they can do 'good sitting and listening'. They develop a sense of responsibility and are keen to help with daily routines, such as tidying up and serving snacks.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory but with many good aspects. Notice boards and displays are used effectively to share information with parents about the service and the range of activities provided. These also include displays related to the Foundation Stage and the 'Birth to three matters' framework. For the youngest children staff produce a daily sheet about significant events of the day and this is given to parents at collection time. Otherwise staff make sure they talk to parents about daily events and children's progress. Parents know that they can see their child's development folder on request and an appointment is then made with their child's key worker, so that this can be shared and discussed with them. Staff talk to parents about their children prior to admission in order to find out as much as they can. However, parents are not invited to share what they know more formally, nor are they asked to make their own contributions to children's records. Children may take book bags home to share with their parents and information about current topics is displayed. However, there is potential to involve parents more in their children's learning and this is identified as an area for further development.

Parents speak highly of the nursery and staff give priority to building positive relationships with them. They are confident to raise any concerns and procedures are shared with them. A collection of the nursery's policies is readily available and their views are sought by means of a comments and compliments sheet.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Management and staff work effectively together to meet children's needs and to promote their welfare, learning and development. There are relatively few changes in the staff team, which means that there is continuity for children and their families. An effective system of recruitment and vetting ensures that children are cared for by staff who are suitable to do so. Applicants are invited to spend time in the nursery prior to interview so that they gain an initial understanding of how the service operates and staff also have an opportunity to give their own feedback. Staffing records are maintained and stored securely.

A clear rota system ensures that staff know where they are working and their areas of responsibility each day. They organise space and resources well to provide a variety of play experiences for children and to enable children to make independent choices for much of their day. Required documentation, such as accident and medication records and attendance registers, are in place and contribute to children's health, safety and well-being. A collection of policies and procedures help the setting to run smoothly and are regularly reviewed.

Leadership and management of the educational provision are good. The owner and the manager of the nursery have a clear understanding of their respective roles. The manager and senior staff effectively support other members of the staff team. Through the induction and appraisal systems, staff training needs are identified and staff are encouraged to attend training to enhance their practice. The manager and deputy play lead roles in overseeing planning and record keeping to ensure that children make good progress towards the early learning goals. The setting is committed to ongoing evaluation and improvement of the service offered, working closely with other professionals from the local authority.

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

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the setting agreed to review the child protection policy to include detail of the procedure to be followed if an allegation were to be made against a member of staff. The policy has now been reviewed and amended to ensure that there are clear procedures for dealing with such an allegation. This helps to protect children and safeguard their welfare.

The nursery education inspection recommended that nursery practice continue to be reviewed to ensure ongoing development and promotion of choice and independence for children. Nursery practice is subject to continuous review to ensure that children are benefiting from a broad and balanced curriculum, which promotes their development. Playrooms for the Foundation Stage children are set out so that they can move freely between areas at most times of the day, making their own choices about their play. Toys and play materials are stored so as to be easily accessible, which enables children to select resources for themselves. Role play areas are used well, with many opportunities for children to use their imaginations and develop their own play ideas.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since 1 April 2004 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 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):

- review the arrangements for meals and snacks to ensure that they are consistently well balanced and consider ways of encouraging more independence for older children at meal times
- consider ways of providing more opportunities for the babies to spend some time outdoors.

#### **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 further ways of involving parents in their children's learning
- review the planning of activities to ensure that children have more opportunities for free creative expression and for developing awareness of mathematical concepts through everyday activities.

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)