

Chiltern College Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY221229
Inspection date	28 November 2007
Inspector	Lisa Jane Cupples
Setting Address	The Chiltern College, 16 Peppard Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 8JZ
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Registered person	Chiltern College
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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Chiltern College Day Nursery is part of Chiltern College and opened in 1947. It is situated in the grounds of the college, and is a registered charity. Chiltern College also offers out of school care, in the form of a before and after school club and holiday play scheme. These operate from another building within the grounds and are run by a different staff team. The nursery serves children from the local area and beyond. There is also a school on the same site; this caters for children who are aged five to 11 years old. The nursery is open 51 weeks a year from 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday. Children in each age group have access to separate, secure outdoor play areas.

There are currently 239 children on roll, which includes 61 children who receive funding for early education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The staffing structure is made up of the college principal, the head of day care, a co-ordinator for each age group and 54 childcare staff. Of these, 44 staff have appropriate early years

qualifications, and seven are working towards a qualification. The nursery also employs a catering company, housekeeper, gardener, cleaners and a maintenance man.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from a nutritious diet because the setting has a clear understanding of healthy eating. The nursery supplies the children's meals and they are prepared and cooked either in the nursery kitchen for children under two years, or in the college kitchen and brought over to the nursery on trolleys. Menus are displayed for parents and individual menus are produced for children with specific dietary requirements through discussion with parents and the information is shared with the caterers. Allergies, medical and cultural needs are recorded on the children's registration forms and details are displayed for all staff, ensuring the children's needs are being met. The children under two years have their food prepared and cooked in their own kitchen. All staff are fully aware of the children's specific dietary requirements. The nursery has a flexible approach to providing food and if parents prefer they are able to provide their own food. Meal times are relaxed throughout the setting, as staff sit with the children and in the older rooms' staff eat with the children, developing their social skills and table manners effectively. Children are praised as they remember to say 'please and thank you'.

Children's independence is encouraged at meal times. Children are able to dish up their own food and pour their own drinks from the small, manageable water jugs on the tables. Staff serve the youngest children's food and help to feed them when necessary. Children take responsibility for themselves following lunch time, as they clear the tables and empty their plates and put their cutlery in the box. Children's social skills develop well because staff sit with the children and talk about the children's day, the activities they have completed and what they would like to do in the afternoon. Children talk about the types of food that are good for them, helping them to develop an understanding of healthy eating from a very early age. The setting also works closely with a nutritionist who reviews the menus to ensure children receive a well balanced and varied diet.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through daily routines and discussions. For example, children are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times and talk about 'washing away the germs, to make our hands clean'. Children's good health is promoted because staff implement stringent cleaning routines to ensure the whole environment is exceptionally clean. For example, nappy changing areas are cleaned thoroughly after each use; staff wear disposable gloves to protect the children and themselves. Children will receive appropriate treatment if an accident occurs on the premises because all staff hold first aid certificates. Fully stocked first aid kits are stored around the setting, ensuring they are easily accessible in an emergency. Parents also give written consent for the setting to seek emergency medical treatment or advice. Comprehensive systems are in place to ensure staff gain written permission to administer medication and parents are required to sign to acknowledge they have been informed when they collect their children.

Children throughout the setting have ample opportunities to develop their large muscle skills. There are separate outdoor play areas for each age group and children have access to verandas ensuring they reap the benefits of the fresh air during all weather. Children use wheeled toys and control them with ease as they complete the circuit around one of the outdoor areas. Children use a wide range of tools and resources in the outdoor sand pits. They practise their

climbing skills on the age appropriate climbing frames and balancing equipment. Staff ensure the outdoor areas are well-equipped covering all areas of the children's development and the six areas of learning effectively. Children also benefit from the use of a soft play area and have the use of the college hall for physical activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

All areas of the nursery are vibrant and stimulating with a substantial range of posters and photographs. Children's work is displayed brightly, valuing their achievements. The premises are warm, welcoming and inviting for the children and their families. Notice boards are used effectively at every entrance and are full of up-to-date information for parents, staff and visitors, including full copies of the setting's policies and procedures. Children have access to a vast selection of resources and play materials across the setting. The activities and equipment are carefully selected to reflect the age and stage of the children in the different age groups. Even the outdoor areas have a wide variety of resources aimed at the children's needs. Children in all areas are able to self-select activities, increasing their independence, freedom of choice and decision-making skills effectively. There are ample resources around the setting which are used throughout the day by the children which reflect a diverse society and help the children to develop an understanding of the wider world.

Children's safety is promoted effectively because staff implement the setting's policies and procedures effectively. Staff complete daily risk assessments to ensure the rooms are safe for the children before they arrive. The co-ordinators carry out monthly risk assessments and the day care manager completes a full risk assessment every six months. The setting has a clear hazard reporting system in place and any defects are reported to the maintenance team to ensure issues are addressed as soon as possible, maintaining a safe environment for the children. Detailed arrival and collection procedures are shared openly with parents and carers to ensure they are fully aware of the setting's procedures. No other person is allowed to collect the children unless it has been agreed and put in writing by the parents. Parents are requested to introduce other people to the staff prior to them coming to collect the children. In an emergency staff use a password system and contact the parents. Lost and uncollected child policies are detailed and available to parents on the notice board and group prospectus. These procedures help to keep the children safe and secure at all times.

Children learn about keeping themselves safe through routines and general conversations throughout the day. They talk about tucking in their chairs so other children will not trip over, they pick fallen toys and resources up off the floor and know they should not run in the building. Children and staff practise regular fire drills and clear procedures are displayed throughout the setting, ensuring they are fully aware of the emergency procedures. A flood light has been fitted at the assembly point to help the children feel secure if they evacuate the building in the dark. The premises are kept safe and there is a buzzer on the door to each outside entrance ensuring that staff are alerted to any visitors coming to the nursery. Visitors must show a form of identity if they are unknown to the staff and are required to sign in and out of the college main reception area, detailing a full record of all people on site at any given time, helping to further protect the children. Children are extremely well protected because all staff have an exceptionally clear understanding of child protection and the procedures to follow if concerns are identified, keeping the children safe. Detailed policies and procedures are in place and shared with parents to ensure they are aware of the setting's responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely happy and settled throughout the setting. They laugh and joke with the staff team as they play, learn and develop while having great fun during their time at the setting. Staff have an exceptionally clear understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and implement it effectively, ensuring children are provided with an extensive range of activities and experiences. Staff interact extremely well with children of all ages, developing their speech and social skills, enabling them to become skilful communicators as they progress through the nursery. Staff are affectionate and provide the children with a calm and relaxed environment. Children are able to self-select resources from a young age, helping them to become competent learners. They have ample time to explore and investigate their surroundings and staff support them effectively. Staff hold the children as they have their bottles, making eye contact and gently talking to the children helping them to feel safe and secure in their care. Children are able to explore their own bodies, playing with their toes and looking in mirrors as they learn about themselves. They take part in a broad range of sensorial activities, such as exploring textures and using a wide variety of treasure baskets. Staff are extremely attentive and talk to the children continuously, building their confidence and self-esteem effectively.

The whole staff team are enthusiastic and actively encourage the children to join in the activities. Children enjoy a wide range of adult-led activities and continuous provision throughout the day. Children are extremely settled and are making good progress in all areas of their development. Children are beginning to handle books and pretend to read to each other. Staff are skilled at asking open ended questions encouraging the children to think about what they are trying to achieve. For example, one child with the play dough tries to make a cake. The member of staff talks her through the activity, introducing new techniques and demonstrating how to use the tools and resources. Children use their imagination well as they make cups of tea and have cake at their home corner picnic. They complete puzzles on their own and with the support of staff when necessary. Staff extend the children's experiences at every opportunity; they ask questions and show an interest in all the children do. Children respond well and their spoken language is developing well because staff spend so much time talking to them.

Children enjoy their time at the after school club and are actively encouraged to make suggestions and share their thoughts about new activities on an 'ideas board'. Staff encourage freedom of choice and there is a clear distinction between the school day and the club, enabling children to relax and have fun after their long day at school. Staff are enthusiastic and participate fully in all the activities. Children have access to the school resources and take part in exciting activities such as fashion and talent shows, baking, role-play and creating their own ideas during art and craft activities. Children use ice blocks and use a range of resources to see how quickly they can make them melt. They use tools and salt, eagerly watching the results. Staff plan a wide range of activities and prepare resources in advance, although the planning is extremely flexible and children lead the sessions because staff are keen to stress that it is their club.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning are outstanding. Children are making rapid progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas. The whole staff team have an extremely clear understanding of the Foundation Stage and deliver the planned curriculum exceptionally well. Staff make the most of incidental learning opportunities throughout the day because of their experience and clear understanding of their aims for the children. The stimulating activities are linked to individual stepping stones. Staff fully understand the importance of high quality

observations and assessments of the children. The information gathered is discussed in detail at staff meetings and the whole curriculum is planned around the needs of each child who attends. Staff are given time to observe their children and also to write up the observations and analyse their findings, ensuring the activities provided are pitched at the right level and provide sufficient challenges for all the children.

Staff are exceptionally skilful at extending the children's vocabulary and learning and enriching their experiences at every opportunity. They listen carefully when the children speak and respond with enthusiasm and interest. Every single member of staff in the setting is highly motivated and they all provide a consistent and exceptionally high standard of activities. Staff are animated, fully engaging the children in innovative activities, for example, the routine shape activity encompassed every area of learning. Staff often provide additional resources to expand on the children's play or leave resources out following more structured activities, allowing children time to consolidate their learning through free-play.

Children concentrate exceptionally well and listen quietly when required. They are able to follow simple instructions and understand the rules of the group. Children self-select activities and resources increasing their already high levels of independence. Children are actively encouraged to take responsibility for themselves and their environment in all that they do. They make choices and tidy away the resources. Children are extremely confident and share their ideas and make suggestions in small and large groups. Staff actively listen to the children and respond quickly and effectively, building the children's self-esteem at every opportunity. Children enjoy handling and reading books, often predicting what will happen next as they pretend to read to each other in the comfortable book corner. Children have many opportunities to recognise letters of the alphabet during the day, staff encourage the children when they are finding their names and help them to identify letters on labels when they are looking for equipment. Children practise their emergent writing skills throughout the sessions, through incidental opportunities and practical activities encouraging them to write for different purposes, learning that text has meaning.

Children use their imagination exceptionally well during free-play and outside. For example, two children using wheeled toys decided that they were farmers; they pedalled over to the imaginary horses and then went to feed the cows and pigs. Children dress-up and are beginning to negotiate roles with each other during role-play. Children have many opportunities to express themselves creatively during their time at the setting. They use painting easels, take part in craft activities, sing, play musical instruments, take part in musical movement and tell stories to each other. Children negotiate roles well and are beginning to make compromises, showing respect and concern for each other as they take turns on the scooters.

Children count at every opportunity, even during story time. They use the number lines around the rooms and count everyday objects with ease. Children use mathematical language to describe shape, size, quantity and position during their play. Children are beginning to understand simple calculation, adding and subtracting groups of objects during practical activities and small groups. For example, they work out how many cups they need, sing number rhymes, and add and subtract the amount of matching pairs during the matching table top game. Children have ample opportunities to use a wide range of natural and manmade materials. They examine and explore the resources, recognising the similarities and differences. Staff find a variety of ways to provide new experiences for the children. For example, children access piles of leaves, with animals, and natural materials on the veranda, enabling them to hunt mini-beasts during cold and wet weather. Children are developing a good sense of time; they are able to explain what

will happen next and often tell staff what activities they are going to do next. Children use computers with ease, choosing programmes and moving the mouse with control.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Staff have an exceptionally clear understanding of equal opportunities and implement the setting's comprehensive policies effectively. Each child is treated as an individual and staff work closely with all the parents to ensure the children's needs are being met in the best possible way. Children's requirements and parent's preferences are fully recorded on the children's registration forms. These details are discussed in detail with the manager, co-ordinators, key workers and the parents to ensure every one is very clear and all expectations are known prior to the children attending. Staff take the time to get to know the children and their families extremely well, enabling them to respond to the children's needs, quickly and appropriately. For example, staff provide activities that reflect the children's interests and also know when children are getting tired or hungry. The routines throughout the nursery are flexible and aimed at the needs of individuals. Staff adapt their practice to meet the children's needs. For example, one child was unsettled during lunch time, the room leader picked up the child and they went for a walk, helping the child to calm down before coming back to the table.

The setting has clear procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The special needs co-ordinator has attended training and has a detailed knowledge of her role and responsibilities. She works closely with the parents and liaises effectively with other agencies to fully support the children and their families effectively. Children are extremely well behaved because clear rules and boundaries are implemented consistently by all members of the staff team. Children know exactly what is expected of them and they respond well to the high expectations of the staff. They are able to explain the simple rules to each other, often reminding other children, or telling staff if they feel someone is not following the rules properly. The full daily programme ensures children are busy and engaged in activities at all times. Staff praise and encourage the children at every opportunity. Children feel valued and respected because they are listened to and staff respond fairly. Children are exceptionally well mannered and polite because staff are very positive role models; they thank the children and say please when asking them to do something. Children learn from this behaviour and use their manners well, rarely having to be reminded. Staff also attend behaviour management forums to discuss a variety of issues and develop consistent strategies to deal with any challenging behaviour.

Children benefit greatly from the strong and trusting relationships developed between the staff and their parents. Details of the Birth to three matters framework is displayed clearly on the parent's notice board and the co-ordinators meet with all parents to discuss the format and explain how the children benefit from the system in the setting. They have access to their children's records at any time on request, helping to keep them fully informed of the children's progress and their next steps. Parents receive written daily diaries for children under two-years-old. They are also able to talk to the children's key worker at any time. This is possible because both the manager and the co-ordinators are supernumerary everyday. This enables them to cover so staff can talk to the parents; ensuring ratios are maintained and allowing detailed discussion with the parents if required in the available parents' room.

The partnership with parents of children who receive funding for early education is outstanding. Parents receive high quality, detailed information about the Foundation Stage and the early

learning goals in the group prospectus. The day care manager meets with all new parents to discuss the setting's aims and objectives and to answer any queries the parents may have. The notice boards around the setting at every entrance are used effectively to display the planned curriculum and parents can see how the needs of their children are being met and how their next steps are incorporated into the daily routines and activities. Initially parents are asked to share information about their child's learning at home on the registration form. This is discussed with the child's key worker and used as a base for the initial activities provided for the children. Parents are actively encouraged to share what they know about their child, building extremely strong relationships, benefiting the whole family. Parents are exceptionally well informed about their children's progress. The children's next steps are discussed with the parents and they receive all of the observations made on their children and a copy is held in the children's files. Throughout their child's time at the setting they have access to their children's records at any time on request, helping to keep them informed. The staff work extremely hard to involve parents in their children's learning. The setting has an open door policy and parents are welcomed into the group at any time.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Daily routines are organised exceptionally well and run extremely smoothly. The children move freely from one activity to another, never having to wait around. This ensures they are fully occupied and stimulated throughout the day, which has a very positive effect on behaviour. The ratios are maintained at all times and staff deployment is effective, enabling staff to provide high quality support and supervision for all the children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Comprehensive and detailed recruitment and vetting procedures are in place to ensure all adults are checked and new staff and students complete an in depth induction programme, ensuring children's safety is promoted. Children are exceptionally well protected because all policies and procedures are implemented effectively. All the required paperwork and documentation is maintained to a very high standard and is readily available for inspection at any time.

The leadership and management of the setting are outstanding. The principal of the college plays an active role in the nursery, providing strong support for the whole staff team. The setting employs the head of day care to oversee the day to day running of the nursery. Clear roles and responsibilities are defined, ensuring that procedures are followed to protect the children and the staff effectively. The well-established staff team work closely together providing a vibrant, stimulating and exciting environment for all the children. The manager and the staff team continually monitor, review and evaluate routines and daily activities to ensure they work well and the aims and objectives of each activity are met. They adapt activities and change resources as necessary to improve the overall programme. Staff appraisals are completed annually and the staff's training needs are identified and planned, providing them with the skills to successfully deliver the curriculum to all the children. The entire staff team are devoted and are strongly committed to the improvement of care and education for all children. Children benefit from the experience and qualifications of the staff team because the staff have a clear understanding of their individual needs.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to ensure all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in a fire evacuation and to ensure the sandpits are protected from contamination and the sand is clean. Regular fire drills are carried out at various times to ensure

all staff and children are fully aware of the procedures. The setting has purchased made-to-measure sand pit covers from a swimming pool cover company to ensure they fit securely to prevent contamination and the sand is kept clean, providing a safe play and learning environment for the children.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider was asked to monitor the frequency of observations, to ensure that all children are regularly observed to help them move to the next stage in their learning. To increase opportunities for children to develop an understanding of subtraction through practical activities. They were also asked to regularly evaluate activities to ensure appropriate challenges are being provided which are suitable for all children. Staff carry out regular observations to assess the children's achievements and use the information to identify their next steps of learning, ensuring the children reach their full potential during their time at the nursery. Children have ample opportunities to begin to subtract using small groups of objects during practical activities. They work out how many cups are needed at snack time and use everyday resources to develop their understanding of number. All activities are evaluated and well-planned, adult-led activities ensure the children are sufficiently challenged. Staff are skilled at differentiating the activities to reflect the age and stage of development of the children participating.

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.

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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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