

# Blossom House Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	251739
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 December 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Deirdra Keating
<b>Setting Address</b>	6 Higham Road, Stratford St. Mary, Colchester, Essex, CO7 6JU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01206 323093
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Blossom House Kindergarten
<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 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?

Blossom House Kindergarten opened in September 2000. It operates from a self-contained bungalow in the village of Stratford St. Mary, Suffolk. A maximum of 30 children may attend the kindergarten at any one time. The kindergarten is open five days a week, 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 08:00 to 18:00 each day. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 44 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 24 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area and attend for a variety of sessions. The kindergarten supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The kindergarten employs seven members of staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications and one member of staff is currently working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority and has been awarded the Suffolk Quality Assurance Scheme.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is extremely well promoted because staff follow thorough and consistent procedures that are documented and shared with parents. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place to ensure children's good health is maintained such as an exclusion policy. This is strongly promoted prior to admission to ensure that children are not at risk from cross-infection. The kindergarten is spotlessly clean and well maintained. An indoor shoe policy ensures that all outdoor footwear is changed on entering the building. Children are developing excellent health and hygiene practices because staff actively promote hand washing using large picture timelines. Prompts made by the children encourage children to wash their hands at the attractive and accessible sinks that have been specifically designed for them. Nappies are changed by caring and sensitive staff who maintain extremely high standards of care using thorough and preventive measures to ensure that children are protected from cross-infection.

Children receive superb care if they are ill or have an accident because the setting has correct and appropriate procedures in place. All staff have attended first aid training and an extremely well stocked first aid kit is readily available. This is maintained and checked by a designated member of staff. All parental consents are provided and any accidents are clearly and comprehensively documented and signed off by parents on collection. Accidents are evaluated by forward thinking staff and used as a risk assessment of the kindergarten. Children who are taken ill whilst at the kindergarten are cared for by attentive staff who are extremely familiar with all the correct procedures. Children experience excellent routines which meet individual needs for rest and sleep in line with parents' wishes. A soft and comfortable area is provided for older children and younger children rest on individual mats with their own sleeping bags. Staff dim the lights, play soft music and provide quality one to one time as children are gently coaxed off to sleep. They are carefully observed and checked while they sleep which is recorded on a sleep chart to ensure their safety and comfort.

Children have an excellent understanding of a healthy diet. Staff are extremely careful to account for parental wishes and individual dietary requirements. They provide healthy and nutritious snacks that appeal to children and are presented nicely. Extremely well thought out guidelines are given to parents providing packed lunches from home to ensure that children bring healthy and nutritious food. Snacks feature rice cakes and crackers with spread and fresh fruit. Drinks are displayed nicely on a low-level table for children to access independently. Children enjoy an extremely well-organised relaxed and social snack time where staff sit with them and support them. They develop new skills and become increasingly independent as they pour drinks and spread savoury spreads on their crackers. Snacks are prepared following all recommended guidelines by staff who have attended food hygiene training in the clean and well-organised kitchen.

Children have many opportunities to play outside in the fresh air. They enjoy free access to the two outdoor areas and younger children regularly go outside at other times. The outside area is extremely inviting and houses an excellent range of exciting resources that have been presented beautifully. This encourages children to get exercise and accomplish many new physical skills in the spacious enclosed gardens.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a homely, welcoming environment that is safe, warm, spotlessly clean and extremely well-maintained. The kindergarten comprises of two rooms with kitchen and bathroom facilities. The environment is light and spacious with easy access to the outdoor classroom area that is used as an extension of the rooms. Toilet facilities are accessible and child-friendly. The room has been very attractively decorated to give a child-friendly and colourful atmosphere. Children use an excellent range of high quality safe and suitable equipment. Both rooms have been carefully planned to provide a cosy and comfortable environment where children can select resources of their choice. Resources are presented extremely well promoting children's independence and decision making. These feature a wide range of exciting and appealing toys and materials stored in low-level units that are labelled with pictures and text. The equipment is carefully washed and checked to ensure that they are safe and hygienic for children to play with. This is clearly documented in order that staff know what is available and when it was last sterilised.

Children are cared for in an extremely safe environment where staff take positive steps to minimise all potential risks. Fire safety equipment is checked by a specialist company and certificated. Fire drills are conducted monthly, these are documented and evaluated in a health and safety file to ensure that children know what to do in the event of a fire. Daily risk assessments are conducted by staff before the children arrive. These cover the whole premises and ensure that it is safe and suitable and children are protected extremely well from all identified risks. The premises are very safe and secure and arrival and departure times are managed safely and effectively.

Children are protected from harm by knowledgeable, dedicated and experienced staff who have attended in-house training. A concise written statement on safeguarding children is given to all parents. This is underpinned by a clear explanation about staff's ongoing duty to protect the children in their care from any potential harm. A designated member of staff has attended extra training and is responsible for this area. A comprehensive range of information that reflects current procedures is displayed for staff and parents. This ensures that in the event of a concern about a child the correct procedures can be quickly put into place.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children relish their time at the setting and have an excellent attitude to learning. They are happy, settled and purposefully engaged throughout the session. Staff are extremely warm and tactile and children clearly adore members of staff who they have formed special bonds with. Children are individually welcomed by key-person staff who also feedback to parents at the end of the day. Staff confidently use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to develop individual play plans. These plans are based on children's interests and developed from their developmental profiles using observations made by key-person staff. Different focused approaches are changed in accordance with children's individual needs and preferences. Toys for younger children are stimulating and provide a superb range of sensory experiences. Fibre optic lamps and treasure baskets have been used to provide a range of sensory materials. This inspires babies and younger children to express their feelings using all of their senses. Older children who attend after school and in the holidays enjoy a broad range of activities that are carefully suited to their ages and stages of development.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff have an excellent understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. Planning incorporates all areas of the room and details activities linked to the areas of learning. This highlights specific children in order that individual targets are met and children continue to progress. Each child has an individual play plan linked clearly to stepping stones. These are developed by key-person staff and go home regularly for parental comments. Individual 'developmental matters profiles' are kept for each child and are split into aspects incorporating children's developmental stages and interests. Staff help children to consolidate and extend their learning as they read books and link them to their homes, this encourages them to make links between different parts of their lives. Children are encouraged to think and make links in their learning as resources have been skilfully set up to enable children to make connections. Designated staff work extremely well on a one to one basis as they share stories and encourage children's early reading skills. Staff maximise on all learning opportunities; they ask open-ended questions which encourage children to think as they observe ice melting and measure the liquid in the tray. Children self-register every morning this is differentiated for different age groups extremely well with photographs added to names for younger children. Children with English as an additional language are supported extremely well by staff who request key words and phrases in order to enable children to feel at home. All labels around the nursery are also provided in other languages in accordance with children's individual needs.

Children's behaviour is extremely good throughout promoting an optimum learning environment. The session is paced extremely well with children making choices about how to spend their time throughout most of the session. Children are purposefully engaged throughout the session and confidently access resources of their choice from the extensive range on offer. Children are initially assessed from visits where key-person staff record a good range of information about each child's developmental and knowledge to enable staff to gauge children's starting points. This ensures that children's starting points and abilities are assessed in order to provide challenging activities that will ensure they continue to progress toward the early learning goals.

Children have many opportunities to develop their attitudes and dispositions that enable them to achieve in their learning. Children enthusiastically come together for a morning meeting where they talk about the weather and the date. Staff explain about activities during the morning and give special jobs to children which the children proudly discuss. Children are becoming increasingly independent as they put on their clothes to go outside. They competently put on coats and tackle a range of fastenings and footwear with tailored support adjusted extremely well by intuitive staff. Children are extremely confident in their early reading and writing skills. A clear and focused emphasis on language and literacy allows staff to work on a one to one basis following children's individual style of learning. Children confidently speak and share stories. They practise their early writing skills using tactile and interesting materials such as foam. Children learn other languages from an outside teacher where they enjoy stimulating and fun activities and have learned many words and phrases.

Children are making extremely good progress in their mathematical development. They enjoy a broad range of colourful equipment and activities which enable them to learn about shape, space and weight. They calculate and problem solve using plates and chairs at snack time deciding how many more they will need. A water tray with measuring jugs encourages children to learn about liquid capacity. Children are able to be creative, expressing their own ideas and thoughts through art, music, dance, role play and imaginative play. A woodland cottage provides an attractive and appealing role play for children to use imaginatively. They improvise using

boxes as boats as they create an imaginary journey to Africa as they play outside in the fresh air. Children relish dynamic music sessions where they use a range of innovative resources to explore tempo and pitch.

Children have many opportunities to explore through messy play experiences where they can compare differences and observe growing things. Ice, water, shaving foam and pasta all give children real hands-on experiences where they can experiment and observe change. They have lots of opportunity to engage in these purposeful activities outside in the fresh air where their interest and curiosity is enhanced. The outside area is extremely well-planned and resourced. A nearby woodland is to be incorporated as a forest area. This is enhanced by trained staff who have attended specific 'Forrest School Training' in order to provide real outdoor experiences linked to all areas of learning for children to enjoy. Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities that help them to develop their confidence and skills both when using large and small apparatus, tools and equipment. Children learn to use scissors accurately and carefully as they cut along a line to make angels wings from paper plates.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children develop an excellent sense of belonging as they are all treated with equal concern and highly valued. Comprehensive records detail all requirements including parental details. An excellent amount of information is obtained by the setting prior to admission to find out about specific needs. All children are included and their differences acknowledged extremely well. Staff provide a six month overlap between rooms to allow for developmental differences. A key-person system works extremely well, this is also reinforced by a buddy system. Consequently children are very well supported and their early words are understood by the attentive and intuitive staff who have been assigned to them. Children play harmoniously in small groups where they show care for one another and the environment. They work extremely well together to clean up after snack time as they wash plates and sweep the floor. The children are developing an excellent sense of community as there are many established links and traditions that they thoroughly enjoy. They have decorated a tree, taken part in charity collections and the local pancake race. Children learn about other cultures and beliefs through a broad range of exciting activities, this encourages them to learn about their differences and similarities. Parents and carers are sourced for cultural knowledge and professions that can be shared to enhance children's understanding and learning. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The setting has an extremely positive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff follow clear policies in line with the code of practice. A designated staff member has attended a range of training. Children's needs are comprehensively met and well documented. This is shared well with parents, carers and other professionals to ensure that children receive the best support and that they are provided with continuity of care. Children learn sign language from staff which they thoroughly enjoy and promotes a fully inclusive environment. Children behaviour is exemplary throughout the session. Staff use extremely good strategies including catch phrases and rhymes. They are excellent role models and spend time patiently showing children how to put toys away. Staff promote activities to help younger children turn-take and share. Children are given one to one support by their key person to ensure that all activities are inclusive and they are learning important social skills from the activities. Any occasional incidents are documented, and are fed back to parents sensitively and confidentially at the end of the session. This provides a personal and meaningful approach and consequently staff have an extremely positive working relationship with parents

and carers. Staff have built close relationships with parents and carers and ensure that through the daily rapport they are able to support parents and families through children's stages of development.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents and carers are invited in regularly to discuss children's progress with key-person staff and the literacy coordinator. Child development profiles have been developed incorporating observations and children's next steps. These are sent home for parents to read and sign on a regular basis. This ensures that parents are kept extremely well informed of their children's progress regarding the Foundation Stage. Parental advice is provided covering a range of issues on request and in accordance with children's needs. Parental questionnaires are given out and evaluated after children start to ensure that systems are effective and fully meet the needs of the children and families using the kindergarten. Parents are extremely happy about the excellent continuity and quality of care.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are cared for extremely well by dedicated and motivated staff. Comprehensive policies and procedures underpin all aspects of excellent practice. Stringent recruitment and suitability procedures ensure that children are cared for by suitable staff who have an excellent understanding of child development and the Foundation Stage. Staff are highly qualified and have a strong commitment to their ongoing improvement and development. Extremely high adult-to-child ratios release staff to attend an extensive range of regular training opportunities. An excellent range of in-house training provides a superb range of courses that are mandatory for staff within a three month probation period. Children benefit from highly qualified and skilled staff who receive an extremely effective and well-planned induction.

The manager has a comprehensive understanding of the National Standards and her responsibility to comply with these and the conditions of the registration. Self-evaluation has been extremely well considered highlighting strengths and weaknesses with a clear development plan to ensure that practice is monitored and continues to improve outcomes for children. A comprehensive operational plan underpins all areas of practice and is extremely well organised. Documents and records are effectively organised and stored securely to maintain strict confidentiality.

The leadership and management is outstanding. The group is owned by joint proprietors who have restricted growth to maintain a small personal feel. The proprietor carefully oversees and monitors the provision which is managed by a highly qualified and experienced manager. The manager has regular supervision with the partners and oversees all staff supervision to ensure staff are supported and continue their ongoing professional development. Staff meet regularly to discuss the curriculum planning and monitor children's progress towards the early learning goals. They work closely with an advisory teacher from the local authority to ensure that the nursery education is monitored and evaluated. Staff are comprehensively aware of roles and responsibilities and work extremely well to form a dynamic and successful team who were nominated for a national award in team working. The management provides extremely informative evenings to introduce new frameworks. The kindergarten has highly developed links with the local school. Staff collect children on a daily basis after nursery sessions and walk them to the kindergarten. Staff structure preparation for transition within the nursery organisation to ensure smooth transition for children who move within the nursery. All required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and is regularly reviewed. Overall children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the setting was asked to devise and make available to parents, a written statement on special needs which is consistent with current legislation and guidance. A concise and up-to-date policy now underpins practice. They were also asked to ensure that the child protection procedure for the kindergarten included contacting Ofsted in the event of allegations being made against a member of staff or volunteer. This included maintaining a sufficiently detailed record of significant issues. The safeguarding policy has been correctly updated and a means of recording any significant issues is available and includes relevant details. This ensures that children are protected from potential harm.

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