

St Malo Under Fives Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 106223 |
| Inspection date | 14 February 2008 |
| Inspector | Jacqueline Allen |
| Setting Address | Belle Cross Road, Kingsbridge, Devon, TQ7 1NL |
| Telephone number | 01548 854308 |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | The Trustees of St Malo Under Fives Centre |
| 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Malo Under Fives Centre opened as a playgroup over 30 years ago, has been registered since 1991 and is run by a committee. It operates from its own building and outdoor area in the grounds of Kingsbridge Primary School, which comprises of two main rooms, a kitchen area and toilets.

The group is open from 09:00 until 15:30, Monday to Friday, except for Thursdays when the toddler group use the premises in the afternoon. A lunch club takes place between 12:00 and 13:00, enabling children to stay most days. The group may provide care for a maximum of 26 children from two to under five years. There are currently 52 children on roll, of which 36 are in receipt of funded education. The group currently supports several children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

There are seven regular members of staff who work with the children. All hold a level 3 qualification in early years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted by all the staff who hold current first aid certificates, appropriately treat and record all minor accidents and share these with parents. Children's medication needs are well managed and recorded, and prior parental consent obtained for the staff to seek emergency medical treatment, as required. Children routinely wash their hands before eating and after toileting, using liquid soap and paper towels. Good hygiene procedures are employed when nappy changing and tables are cleaned using anti-bacterial spray before use. This all helps to reduce the spread of cross infection.

Children benefit from good procedures to encourage healthy eating. For example, they are provided with a range of fresh fruit and/or raw vegetables at snack time. Parents provide their children with a healthy packed lunch, such as sandwiches, yoghurts and fruit, and keep additional treats to a minimum. Staff encourage children to eat their healthy food first and are good role models themselves when they join children to eat their own nutritious lunch. Children's special dietary needs are well collated to ensure staff are aware. Children help themselves to water from a lidded jug as required. They are offered water or small cartons of milk at snack time.

Children benefit from a well planned curriculum which provides a range of physical activities both inside and outdoors. Children enjoy climbing up and sliding down a range of play equipment, crawling through tunnels and into tents, and using wheeled resources outside. They have moved imaginatively outside using coloured ribbons, as part of the planned activities to increase their awareness of Chinese New Year.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children greatly benefit from a very well organised play environment where there are bright displays of children's work and there is good use of available space. For example, children enjoy table top activities, messy play, computer use and the book corner in one room, and two role play areas and physical activities in the other room. Children are interested in the exciting variety of quality resources and self select from low-level storage units and toys laid out attractively for their use. For example, children relish their time in the play hospital as they use bandages, a stethoscope and play instruments for checking ears.

Children are extremely safe as staff have an excellent knowledge of potential risks to children and take the appropriate actions to reduce these promptly. Children regularly practise the emergency evacuation procedures to ensure they know how to leave the building safely and staff clearly record these fire drills. Children's safety is given the utmost priority by confident staff who deploy themselves effectively to ensure the premises are secure to prevent children leaving unsupervised and uninvited visitors gaining access. Visitors are promptly signed in. Children are released to authorised carers only as the staff have excellent systems in place for their safe collection. Children learn about their own safety through ongoing discussions with staff who clearly explain possible consequences.

Children's welfare is very effectively safeguarded as the staff have excellent knowledge of the signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to follow in line with the Local Safeguarding

Children's Board. Staff rotate their attendance at child protection courses to ensure the group hold up to date knowledge, which greatly benefits children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle quickly and are keen to access the wide variety of activities and resources. They are well considered and supported by caring staff who have a good understanding of their stage of development and plan effectively for younger children. Children enjoy looking at books, are confident to talk to staff as they are encouraged to access activities and relish their time in the physical and role play areas.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are forming harmonious relationships with their peers and the staff. They are already familiar with daily routines as they find their name and are welcomed into the group. They frequently access books and talk through the story as they turn the pages. They persist at activities of their choosing for some time. For example, children sit at the chalk easel and draw a very detailed picture of a train. They play well together in the hospital role play area, where staff extend their language and understanding through good interaction and questioning. Children create a large structure with plastic bricks which they explain is an ambulance to transport children to hospital. They show knowledge of using telephones and select a notepad and pencil as they talk, showing good pre-writing skills.

Children are making good progress in all areas of their learning. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn, and plan effectively for their progress. Children's assessments identify their achievements and the next steps in their learning. However, these are not linked to the stepping stones to clearly show children's progress in all areas. They have formed effective links with the local school and church where they celebrate various festivals. Children enjoy learning about people in the community, through visits from the local police and visiting the fire station. Staff follow consistent daily routines, which include group number activities as well as weaving learning into children's play. Staff encourage children's recall through taping sounds on a listening walk for children to identify on their return. Children benefit from an attractive play environment and skilled, attentive staff who spontaneously challenge children in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children settle quickly as they are very well supported by the caring, professional staff who confidently reassure them and encourage their play. Their individual needs are well met as all the staff respect and value each and every child in their care. Children learn about diversity through their access to resources and planned activities which reflect positive images. For example, children learn about Chinese New Year through attractive displays and theme tables with an assortment of items, such as a wok, bonsai tree and photographs of noodles. Children broaden their understanding of this festival through watching a DVD where a child takes them through their day of celebration. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children with additional needs are supported by experienced, professional staff, who help children to achieve their best. They have close links with parents and other professionals, to

ensure children's needs are recognised. Staff continually seek ongoing training to further their understanding. Children behave well as staff consistently manage their behaviour effectively. For example, staff talk quietly and calmly to children as they explain what is not appropriate and discuss feelings and saying 'sorry'. Children's behaviour incidents are routinely recorded and shared with parents to aid consistency. Children thrive from the ongoing positive behaviour management as they are routinely praised and encouraged, which raises their self-esteem.

Children benefit from the good sharing of information with parents. They have access to the group's policies and procedures and receive regular newsletters to keep them updated. The partnership with parents and carers for nursery education is good. They are given a comprehensive prospectus which includes detailed information on the Foundation Stage curriculum and staff gain information on children's starting points. Planning is displayed to make them aware of current activities and each child receives a termly report, which is shared with parents, and includes what they have achieved in each area and identifies their next targets.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children's care is enhanced by the consistent team work of professional, caring, committed staff. There are good systems in place for the recruitment, induction and ongoing professional development of staff, which ensures they all have good knowledge of the National Standards, which greatly benefits children's care.

Children benefit from the good organisation of daily routines and the effective deployment of confident staff who have clear roles and responsibilities. Daily registration systems record the attendance of children and staff, which shows that high adult to child ratios are achieved. Documentation is well organised to ensure confidentiality and benefit children's care. However, the procedure to follow if allegations are made against staff is not clear.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. Staff are committed to ongoing training and attend regular meetings. They routinely monitor the effectiveness of their planning and assessment records and make changes as required.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection one recommendation was raised relating to formalising risk assessments, informing parents of medication administered and ensuring that the equal opportunities, complaints and child protection policies are available to parents and staff. Risk assessments are now very thorough, parents countersign any medication given and all three of the named policies are available to staff and parents. This improves children's health, safety, care and welfare.

At the last nursery education inspection two key issues were raised relating to using daily routines to increase children's understanding and ensuring children are engaged throughout the session. All staff are now level 3 trained and routinely challenge and extend children through daily routines and all interaction. Staff have revised snack time and now use a café system, so that activities continue throughout the session. This has improved children's learning.

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

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure the procedure to follow if allegations are made against staff is clearly explained

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop children's assessment systems to clearly show their progress through the stepping stones in all areas

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