

Learningland Day Nursery, After School Club and Holiday Care Scheme.

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	131599
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Registered person	Milbrook Christian Centre
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

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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?

Learningland Day Nursery and Out of School Care opened in 1996. The nursery operates from a house and the after school club from halls in the neighbouring church building in Millbrook, Southampton. All children have access to the enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 43 children may attend the nursery at any one time and 32 children may attend the out of school club and holiday play scheme.

The setting opens five days a week, 51 weeks a year. Sessions are from 07.30 until 18.30 in the nursery, and from 15.00 until 18.30 in the after school club. The setting also offers holiday care for school aged children from 07.30 until 18.30.

There are currently 76 children aged nought to under five years on roll within the nursery. This includes 20 funded three and four year olds. There are 56 children aged four to eight years old on roll at the out of school club.

There are 14 staff employed to work with children. All of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play a very positive role in keeping themselves healthy and learning about healthy living. They are supported extremely well by practitioners who have a clear understanding of promoting good health, hygiene and nutrition. Children keep healthy as they learn the importance of washing their hands before eating and after using the toilet; those in the nursery brush their teeth after eating and when eating snack outside use hand wipes to ensure their hands are clean. Children's risk of infection is minimised because practitioners implement very good health and hygiene procedures, for example, they wear disposable gloves for nappy changing, provide individual bedding and clean table tops and high-chairs with anti-bacterial spray before meals. Effective routines are in place to ensure that toys, equipment and baby resources including bedding are cleaned and laundered regularly. Children are encouraged to learn self care at all times as they learn to use and dispose of tissues to wipe their noses and of the need to wear hats and sun cream on warm days. Children learn not to eat food that has been dropped on the floor as it will be dirty and could make them unwell.

Practitioners are extremely well prepared to deal with medical emergencies as they are trained in first aid and some in the use of Epipen; they have parental consent to seek emergency treatment and first aid kits are available throughout the setting. Accidents and the administration of medication are recorded well and the wide range of written policies ensures parents are aware of the setting's procedures for dealing with illness and accidents.

All children in the nursery greatly benefit from the many opportunities to play outside throughout the day in the well equipped garden. They participate in a very wide range of activities that develop their co-ordination and skills. For example, they dig in the sand-pit and explore the climbing apparatus suitable to their age and stage of development. They are excited as they blow and chase bubbles and relish playing in the water trough. Practitioners ensure the garden is an extension to the learning environment; they devise interesting games such as treasure hunts that encourage children to think and solve problems and recognise the benefits of providing children with frequent access to the outdoors in all weathers. Children can sit and complete puzzles whilst enjoying the fresh air. Young children and babies are provided with the same fun and learning opportunities and to suitable equipment that allows them to develop large muscles such as sit and ride toys. Those not yet walking sit on blankets in the shade with toys as they enjoy watching the older children.

Indoors, children learn to move and control their bodies as they take part in music and movement sessions held in the church hall. Babies use equipment, such as play gyms, walkers and pushchairs and are becoming competent walkers. Consequently, all children begin to recognise the importance of regular physical exercise as part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and the effect exercise has on their bodies. As they get hot they take off jumpers and need to drink.

Children in the after school club and holiday care scheme benefit from the chance to let off steam and develop physical skills as they have daily access to in and outdoor facilities. They organise themselves for games of football when they visit the neighbouring recreation ground, dig tunnels in the setting's sand pit and cool their feet with water from the water trough. Indoors they take part in organised games in the church hall and use equipment such as a parachute.

All children are provided with a good range of healthy and nutritious snacks and meals provided by the nursery cook. Meal times are very sociable, as all the children sit together and demonstrate good manners and develop independence. They learn about what is good for them as practitioners tell them that milk will make their teeth and bones strong. Children are involved in regular cooking activities which helps them to try new foods and discuss what is healthy to eat. Practitioners are close by to help feed the babies and toddlers, and make themselves available to help and assist the older children who need it. Babies enjoy the closeness of being held as they are bottle fed. Menus are planned and displayed for parents to see and information regarding what the children have eaten is recorded and shared effectively with parents. Water is always readily available throughout the setting for all children to access. Babies are offered drinks regularly to ensure they remain hydrated. Children's health is well maintained because practitioners know about their individual health and dietary requirements as written information is shared and discussed with parents at registration.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a very warm and welcoming child centred environment. The nursery is bright, colourful and stimulating where children's own work and creations are displayed on the walls. Children in the nursery have their own base rooms but come together on occasions for example for breakfast and singing. Children in the pre-school use all rooms in the top floor of the house and regularly visit the adjoining church hall for indoor physical activities. Those aged two to three years use a large open plan area downstairs. Toilets are easily accessible for all children which encourages their independence. Babies and toddlers have their own room downstairs with cots available for sleeping. Rooms are set out with carpeted and large hard floor areas for messy play.

Children access a wide range of play equipment and resources suitable for their individual ages and stages of development both in and outdoors. In the nursery these are stored at low level and clearly labelled with text and pictures so children can see what is available and may help themselves.

Children in out of school care use the church hall as their base and access the enclosed outdoor area for planned times of the day. They select what they would like to use from a well stocked cupboard which includes a wide range of creative resources and games. Suitable toilet facilities are easily accessible.

Most areas of the nursery are secure as doors are locked and visitors are monitored well. Risk assessments are carried out but they are not stringent enough to identify all possible risks. A stable door has been fitted to the baby room to ensure children cannot leave unsupervised although this does not offer full protection when the top half is open. The outdoor play area provides a good space for children to play and explore in all weathers. It is securely fenced but the gate is not always locked to ensure children's safety all times.

Indoors, children benefit from a safe environment because practitioners implement procedures to ensure all furniture, equipment and resources are clean and well maintained. Children are kept free from dangers as all potential hazards are removed, for example, spillages are mopped up and hazardous materials are inaccessible. Children are beginning to learn about the importance of keeping themselves safe through routines and discussion, for example, they practise fire drills regularly and are reminded to be careful when walking up and down the stairs. Parents are invited to join their children in sessions where they learn about road safety.

A safe collection procedure is implemented with photographs and passwords being used to identify those able to collect children. Older children being collected from school are transported safely. They learn to keep safe as they follow procedures when on outings to the recreation ground and stay in close proximity to staff.

Children are well safeguarded as practitioners have a clear understanding of child protection issues and how to implement the setting's procedure. Relevant checks are completed on all practitioners and students to ensure they are suitable to work with children. Secure systems are implemented to ensure records are held on all visitors and of children and staff attendance. Children sleeping are checked regularly and a listening device used to monitor them and appropriate records are maintained of children arriving with injuries.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children are happy and settled in the setting. They benefit from the nurturing environment in which they begin their early learning. Children develop good independence as they confidently run into nursery, find their name, hang up their jackets and look for their peers. All children are welcomed by happy and enthusiastic practitioners, which helps to develop a strong sense of trust and belonging. Children enjoy a wide range of opportunities to express their imagination, for example in role-play where they act out characters, during messy play as they play with dough, water and paints and when playing outside. Babies and young children have lots of fun and develop their senses and curiosity as they are provided with a wide range of stimulating toys and play provisions. For example, they sit in a tray of porridge oats mixed with water and explore its texture. Practitioners interact well with the children; they sit on the floor with babies giving them smiles, repeating familiar words and giving them cuddles as they hold out their arms. Relationships are enhanced because of the key worker system and the knowledge the practitioners have on child care development. Practitioners recognise the importance of outdoor play and plan for activities in the garden for each age group of children. Young children benefit enormously because practitioners have used the Birth to three matters framework to ensure that experiences offered are tailored to babies and young children's needs. Systems to observe and monitor children's individual development are in place although the written records are not always kept up to date. Practitioners use their sound knowledge of each child to guide their planning.

Children attending the out of school care are cared for by enthusiastic, committed practitioners who are keen to update their skills. Children are confident in reporting they have fun in this setting; they enjoy playing outdoors, talking to their friends and staff and using the art and craft resources. Flexible plans are created linked to children's interests. Children benefit from the many opportunities for outdoor play and to let off steam although not all want to spend their time outdoors. However, in their keenness to encourage the use of the outdoors, practitioners sometimes do not recognise that not all children want to be outside. But due to the layout of the premises and in order to use the adjoining recreation ground for football, all children need to go out together in order to maintain the required minimum ratios. They have access to ample indoor space to play team games and use the wide range of resources including table football, board games and creative materials. They relish their time in the sand pit in the garden and feel valued as a practitioner takes photographs of their constructions. Children from the different schools attending co-operate well with each other and negotiate who will be in goal for their football match.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are progressing well because practitioners have a secure understanding of how children learn. Children have a positive attitude to learning and are developing high levels of confidence and independence as they select their own resources, fill their own water bottles and tidy up after themselves. Children form good relationships with practitioners and their peers, as they work co-operatively in group situations. For example, as they play musical chairs and take part in singing songs. Children are well behaved and are able to sit quietly and concentrate, for example when listening to stories and during the French lesson when a peripatetic teacher comes and works with small groups of children. Practitioners have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and stepping stones and adapt teaching techniques according to the age and ability of the child. They use open ended questions to make children think and monitor children's progress throughout the sessions. However, development records are not always kept up to date therefore these may not be used effectively to inform next stages of planning.

Practitioners have a very clear understanding of how children learn and provide an exciting and stimulating learning environment, in which they can play an active role and become engrossed in their learning. They use a range of teaching methods to ensure younger and less able children are well supported, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. Practitioners interact well with the children, they make themselves available to offer help and assistance, knowing when to stand back to let play develop.

Children find their own name on arrival at the nursery and on their trays and coat pegs. Children make marks on paper on the writing table and whilst using crayons and chalks. Some are able to write their name, however, there are missed opportunities to further develop this skill as practitioners tend to label the children's work and to promote an awareness of the sounds and shapes of letters and how writing is used in everyday life. Children enjoy listening to stories. Books are made freely available to the children and they select these at their leisure sitting in the corner with their peers to look at the pictures. A child re-enacts what the practitioner has just done sitting on the chair showing the book and telling the story to a friend. The love of books is nurtured as children select a book whenever they wish to take home to share with parents.

Children benefit from the stimulating and attractive learning environment, enabling them to freely access the full range of equipment. Children gain confidence in using numbers as they head count and most children are able to count to 10 and many above this. Practitioners are skilled in using incidental opportunities to encourage the children to count throughout the sessions and to practise subtraction. For example, they encourage children to think about how many cups and plates are needed at meal times as they help to lay the tables. Children learn about volume, weights and size as they play with resources in the sand and water trays, use scales to measure cooking ingredients and take part in planned activities. A display shows how children recorded in a bar graph their preferred books.

Children develop their sense of time and place as they talk about the days and seasons and recall what they have done. They learn to take care of living things, for example, planting seeds and watching plants grow and by feeding the goldfish. Their curiosity and investigative skills are well promoted because they have free access to a range of resources, such as magnifying glasses, telephones, torches and tills. Children have access to a computer on a daily basis where they develop their skills using the mouse and various programmes which develop their understanding of technology. Children learn about their local environment as they walk to the library and shops.

Their imagination is well fostered as they have access to a good role-play area although enough equipment is not always provided to allow opportunities for them to act out their real and imagined ideas with their peers. Children enjoy singing and playing with musical instruments. They are eager to learn and show good perseverance with activities, for example, they create pictures selecting their own materials from the well stocked low level containers. They find glue and scissors they need and use them competently. They play with sand, water, cereals and gloop and take part in regular cooking activities. They learn to use tools safely at the woodwork table.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are highly valued and their individual needs met well. Good relationships are formed with practitioners who work closely with parents to ensure children's needs are met. Practitioners place a great importance on supporting children in becoming independent and self reliant which is demonstrated in their high levels of confidence and self esteem. They are given opportunities to participate in all activities as practitioners ensure they promote a fully inclusive environment. Children's differences and similarities are recognised and celebrated. They receive lots of praise and encouragement for their efforts and develop secure and trusting relationships with practitioners during their time at the nursery and out of school care. Children are fully included in the life of the setting; they help to tidy up and lay the table for snack time. Staff know the children well and consider the children's individual needs and preferences. Children are confident and can express their needs and feelings. They develop independence well as they pour their own drinks and make choices of what to play with. Children feel valued as they see their work displayed; those in the pre-school enjoy being the daily helper as they help serve food and lead the group up and down stairs. Children have a positive attitude towards themselves and one another and recognise the need to share and take turns when involving themselves in each other's play. Children know what is expected from them and their behaviour is good because they receive clear, consistent messages from the practitioners who act as good role models. They gently remind the children what is acceptable, so they begin to learn right from wrong. Children in the out of school care are polite and negotiate well with each other.

The nursery has suitable arrangements in place to care for children with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. A trained Special Educational Needs Coordinator is in place and liaises with other practitioners to ensure children are appropriately supported.

Children develop an understanding about diversity when playing with a range of resources that reflect all people in society through discussions and planned experiences linked to topics and special events. For example, they celebrate festivals, such as Easter and Chinese New year and participate in cooking and tasting food from different countries. This positive approach fosters their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

All children benefit enormously because practitioners establish good and friendly relationships with their parents and carers. Parents report they are made to feel welcome and are happy with the care and education their children receive. Information about the nursery is provided to them via the prospectus, policies and procedures, newsletters and notice boards. Information is obtained from them about children and updated regularly. Effective communication at delivery and collection times and via daily diaries ensures children's needs are met well. The nursery has a clear complaints policy and procedure which are prominently displayed and given to parents along with a wide range of information that underpins the setting's good practice. The

complaints policy makes parents aware that they can see the complaints record on request. Recording of complaints is clear and concise.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good. Parents receive detailed information regarding the Foundation Stage of Learning and curriculum when they enter the pre-school, through newsletters and see detailed plans displayed on notice boards. Children's individual progress and achievements are discussed during handover time and noted in written development records. This enables parents to keep up to date on their child's progress. Parents receive regular newsletters, are asked to send things in from home relating to themes and topics so they get involved in their child's learning and are able to read and comment on children's assessments at any time. The nursery has an open house policy where they are happy for parents to come in and discuss any issues or concerns about their child or the care they receive with the management or key workers. As a result children's learning is significantly enhanced by the contributions parents make and the secure links in place between home and the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Most aspects of the setting are well organised. The established team of practitioners are clear about their roles and responsibilities and work together very well to provide good quality care and education for children. Systems for recruitment, induction and staff appraisal ensure they are suitable, appropriately qualified and have a secure understanding of and develop in their roles. Documentation and children's records are generally maintained well. Parents are provided with a wide range of written information about the setting which promotes children's health, safety and welfare. Resources and space are used effectively to enable children to move freely around in and outdoors as they play and learn; staff are deployed efficiently to support children and provide positive role models. However, systems do not always ensure risks are appropriately assessed. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management for the nursery education is good. The manager and staff work well as a team; they aim to improve their skills and the education for children. Staff receive regular appraisals and attend training. The manager monitors the written curriculum plans which helps to ensure that children generally make good progress through the Early learning goals. The setting is in the process of reviewing the methods used for planning, assessing and reviewing the provision of nursery education and that will also be used throughout the setting. Areas for improvement are identified and acted upon. For example, a system to formally obtain parents' views on the provision is being developed.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection recommendations were made to ensure all accidents are countersigned by parents at the end of each day and to develop a more rigorous staff induction and training programme for staff working in the different areas of the nursery. Records of accidents are suitably recorded and acknowledged by parents. Effective systems ensure staff receive suitable induction and ongoing training that meets their needs and the position they hold. For example, a suitably qualified practitioner already working in the nursery is attending further training relevant to out of school care as she works in this area of the setting also. This demonstrates the high level of commitment by the setting and individuals to improving their skills and the care for all children.

At the last education inspection recommendations were made to ensure all staff maintain accurate assessment records of children's progress and use these records to inform focus activity plans and to develop the questioning techniques of staff working with Foundation Stage children to encourage children to think and express their ideas.

Practitioners develop good detailed plans of activities which clearly show the learning intention and how to extend or simplify them for the more or less able children. Assessment records are maintained although not always consistently. Practitioners develop good questioning skills and techniques that encourage children to think and solve problems.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been a complaint made to Ofsted that required the provider to take action to meet the National Standards. The complaint related to National Standard 6: safety and National Standard 14: documentation. Concerns were raised over the security of the premises, the registration system for staff and the complaints procedure. As a result the provider fitted a new door to ensure children cannot leave the premises unsupervised, introduced a new system to record the hours of attendance for children and all staff and updated the complaints policy. Ofsted was satisfied that by taking these steps the provider remained qualified for registration at the time the investigations were closed.

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):

- ensure all children's preferences and needs are considered when using outdoor areas for play in the out of school care provision
- improve security of the nursery and procedures for assessing risks.

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):

- continue to develop systems of record keeping to provide consistent evidence profiles for all children and use this information to plan their next stages of learning

- extend opportunities for children to gain an awareness of the sounds and shapes of letters; and how writing is used in everyday life and initiate it in their play.

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