



# Saffron Walden Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	650123
<b>Inspection date</b>	30 September 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Lynn Clements
<b>Setting Address</b>	ShireHill Industrial Estate, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB11 3AQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01799 522108
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Patricia Lloyd-Ruck
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Saffron Walden Nursery School opened in 1970 and operates from its own purpose built premises on an industrial estate, close to the centre of Saffron Walden.

The nursery serves the local and surrounding communities. A maximum of 50 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 97 children on roll. During the inspection there were 47 children present. Currently the nursery supports a total of 59 funded children.

They have effective strategies in place to support children with special educational needs or English as an additional language.

The nursery is open five days a week, during school term times. Sessions run from 09:00 until 15:15. Children are able to attend either full-time or part-time.

12 members of staff work with the children and are assisted by 8 lunch time supervisors and a school secretary. 11 members of staff including the manager hold relevant early years qualifications and 3 members of staff are currently working towards National Vocational Qualifications in childcare level's 2 and 3. All members of staff attend regular training workshops provided by the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children throughout the nursery enjoy a wide and varied range of energetic activities providing exceptional opportunities for them to keep active and healthy. Children are confident to move freely between the indoor and outside classroom. They develop confidence as they extend their physical skills using both large and small apparatus and equipment. They crawl through tunnels and used wheeled toys competently, showing good spatial awareness as they move safely and carefully avoid each other. Most children are using single handed tools and equipment such as scissors with confidence while younger children are supported by sensitive caring staff who ensure further activities are planned to build their confidence and coordination. Children throughout the nursery are able to rest or be active according to their individual needs.

Children recognise the importance of good hygiene through well planned daily routines and topics organised by staff. They wash their hands before eating and learn that it is also important to wash your hands after stroking the pet visitors who came to nursery, so the germs cannot hurt their tummies. Children remain protected from infection due to the clear knowledge and understanding staff have regarding health care and childhood illnesses, and their thorough cleaning routines of child accessible areas. All health related documentation is in place and parents and carers are kept fully informed of any accidents or incidents. All staff attend first aid training to ensure they are competent to deal with minor accidents and emergencies.

Children benefit from a healthy diet. They have daily opportunities during snack time, to taste different fruits and vegetables from around the world and children enthuse as they examine peppers and oranges, seeing what they look, smell and taste like. Staff work closely with parents to ensure that the healthy eating programme is an integral part of children's everyday life at nursery and is also reflected in their individual packed lunches. Children's specific dietary needs are met and respected. Jugs of drinking water are freely available in all classrooms throughout the sessions to ensure no child remains thirsty.

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

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a purpose built nursery which is maintained to a very high standard. Care is enhanced by the effective organisation of child accessible storage enabling children to access toys and resources independently. Children move safely and freely around the nursery both inside and out making choices about their own play and learning.

Children benefit from a range of safety measures including a secure system for persons entering the premises and a fully enclosed outside play area. Regular risk assessment both inside and out ensures child accessible areas in the nursery remain safe for children to explore and investigate. They develop a good awareness about personal safety when out and about, practising their road safety or participating in fire drills to ensure they know what to do in an emergency. Children tidy away their toys after playing to prevent tripping hazards. All children are protected by vigilant staff members who have a secure knowledge and understanding regarding policies and procedures to protect children and promote their individual well-being. Children's safety and welfare remains paramount.

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

The provision is good.

Children play an active part in the nursery. They are motivated and interested, moving freely around the wide range of developmentally appropriate activities, selecting resources and making decisions about joining in or choosing to instigate their own play and learning. Staff are beginning to introduce the 'Birth to three matters' framework to support children's early achievements, promoting their confidence and self-esteem, encouraging them to become active learners who are confident to explore the world around them. Children participate in activities both inside and outside. They use all their senses to explore, such as feeling and smelling the home made play putty, talking about it's cold smoothness or scrunching sand between their fingers. They paint freely and move spontaneously to music joining in simple songs or matching actions to rhymes.

Children and staff play happily together, taking turns and responding appropriately to others as they choose books and engage in discussions about where they live and the visit they have planned for the following week to the local supermarket. Children are keen to communicate with each other and staff, extending their imaginary games as they take their pretend sick animals to the role play vets. Staff ensure children have time to offer their ideas and thoughts without fear of failure. Children make good progress in all areas of learning and development supported by staff who have a sound understanding about how young children learn through play.

## **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make steady progress in all six areas of learning. Staff have clear knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum

and plan purposeful learning opportunities to support children. Staff observations ensure they know children well individually. However, differentiation in planning requires development to clearly identify how activities will be adapted to meet and challenge appropriately the needs of the more able or younger less able children, ensuring all children remain motivated to learn. Individual assessment records are in place and staff use these to plan activities which build on what children know and can do and their achievements are linked clearly to the stepping stones. Skilful use of open questions and varied teaching methods provides a sensitive approach to meet children's differing stages of development including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language. Overall, children make at least good progress towards the early learning goals given their capabilities and starting points.

Children greet each other and staff as they arrive showing a clear sense of belonging and confidence in their surroundings. They seek out activities and are busy throughout the day, displaying high levels of independence. Children are developing a good understanding of number supported by staff who make good use of everyday opportunities such as calculating how many children are present at registration and finding out what happens if you add 2 numbers together. They learn about capacity and quantity as they fill various sized containers with beans. Children share play putty breaking it in 2 and saying with confidence that they have 2 halves. Children explore the wider world making visits and examining artefacts to support their understanding. Older more able children use the computer with ease. However, key worker planning requires development enabling children to build effectively on their existing Information Technology skills.

Children are active learners taking risks and trying new activities. Staff work hard as a team praising and encouraging children to develop their personal independence.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children develop positive attitudes to others and the world around them. Images around the nursery of ethnicity, gender and disability provide an environment which encourages children to discuss and explore their ideas and views. Varied topics and opportunities to investigate festivals and examine artefacts from around the world develops children's understanding about other communities and cultures.

Children learn what is expected of them and respond well to the consistent and clear boundaries promoted by the staff as they encourage children to take turns, share and respect each other. Children make room for each other at activities, sharing their toys and resources. Staff use clear age-appropriate explanations helping children to develop their awareness of others and how to behave together when out and about in the wider world. Children's behaviour throughout the nursery is excellent. They learn to use sign language when they begin at the nursery and this is used effectively by children and staff in many positive ways, such as, communicating across the classrooms without using loud voices, or helping shy children communicate more easily. Children's views are listened to and their comments taken seriously, staff treat children with respect and act as good role models. Their calm approach and kindness

is emulated by the children who talk with staff and discuss their own rules for being kind and having fun at nursery. The positive environment builds children's confidence and self-esteem.

The nursery has clear and effective strategies in place to support children with special educational needs or English as an additional language. The nursery adopts a multi agency approach when working with children and their families to ensure they are fully supported to make smooth transitions into mainstream school.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Staff discuss behaviour management strategies with parents to ensure consistency between home and the setting and this also enables them to pick up on any issues or concerns and support children quickly and appropriately. Home visits have been introduced enabling staff to meet children and their families in an environment where children feel safe, confident and relaxed. Home visits also provide excellent opportunities for staff to discuss policies and procedures with regard to settling into the nursery prior to their first visits. Parents are encouraged to share their interests, skills and participate in topics or help with outings. Clear, open communication builds trust between parents and staff providing a secure setting for children which actively promotes continuity of care between home and the nursery. The nursery supports and develops parent networking groups and provides facilities such as workshops and discussion evenings hosted by other professionals to support young families. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Clear policies and procedures are in place. The staff induction programme and regular appraisals ensure that children's health and welfare are safeguarded and staff are valued and supported, helping them to remain motivated and build on their professional development. The head teacher monitors and evaluates classroom practice and uses the information well to deploy staff effectively.

Documentation is organised well and is easily accessible. However, the systems for recording accidents requires updating to ensure confidentiality is respected. All records are stored securely.

Leadership and management is good. The manager is proactive in organising events for parents to get to know each other and develop positive relationships with the nursery school, such as trips out, teddy bear picnics. The head teacher motivates staff through regular constructive advice and discussions, drawing on staff interests and building their confidence and self-esteem. Providing a positive working environment and pleasant atmosphere for children and their families.

Overall the range of children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection the nursery has re-evaluated class planning ensuring children have plenty of opportunities to explore activities and interests in small group scenarios. Staff are making the most of everyday opportunities to extend children's calculation skills and use of number. Children work out how many boys and girls have come to nursery each day. They work out how many cups are needed for a group of 5 children at snack time and they are building on their understanding of capacity and quantity as they fill various sized containers with beans, sand and water, all of which provides a positive atmosphere and environment for children to enjoy and achieve.

The nursery has updated their child protection policy to provide information for staff and volunteers regarding procedures to be followed in the event of allegations being made against them. They have also revised their hygiene procedures at snack time to ensure children remain safe and their welfare remains paramount.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There are no complaints to report

## **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 documents relating to the welfare of children are confidentially maintained.

### **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 information technology activities further, enabling children to build effectively on their existing computer skills
- monitor existing planning systems to ensure that activities are adapted sufficiently to meet the needs of the more able and the less able children to

ensure all children remain motivated to learn and make good progress towards the early learning goals.

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