



## **Malthouse Nursery**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	199406
<b>Inspection date</b>	07 November 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Nikki Whinton
<b>Setting Address</b>	Malthouse Nursery, Charlton Park, Malmesbury, Wiltshire, SN16 9DG
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<b>Registered person</b>	Alison Ayrton
<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?

Malthouse Nursery first opened in 1987. It operates from a building within the Charlton Park estate, near Malmesbury, Wiltshire. A maximum of 24 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The setting is open from 09.00 until 14.45 throughout the school term. Children have the opportunity for outings into the surrounding parkland.

There are currently 24 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 18

children receive funding for nursery education.

The nursery employs five staff. Of these, three of the staff including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children develop their awareness of healthy eating through topic work and the good range of nutritious snacks they enjoy whilst in the provision. Allergies and preferences are discussed with parents prior to a child commencing in the setting, recorded and accommodated. Children freely access drinking water in sufficient quantities to meet their differing requirements. Children's varying dietary needs are successfully met.

Children manage self-care skills well and understand the importance of good hygiene routines. For example, a child reminds her peers to wash their hands, after a walk in the parkland to collect leaves. They benefit from the staff's secure understanding of first aid and the correct administrative procedures to be followed if accidents occur.

Children lead a healthy lifestyle whilst at the nursery. They have daily opportunities for fresh air and physical exercise whilst playing in the parkland. Children move freely, confidently and safely whilst demonstrating good spatial awareness. They develop their large muscle skills through activities including balancing on stepping-stones and using a climbing frame. In addition, children frequently go on walks within the park, where they have the chance to explore climbing and balancing apparatus that offers sufficient challenge to older and more able children. Children gain very good small muscle control and coordination by the safe handling of an extensive range of easily accessible tools and materials, such as hole punches, pencil sharpeners, glue sticks and pencils.

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

The provision is good.

Children play and relax within an environment that is clean, well maintained, warm and welcoming to parents and children. They benefit from the staff's good understanding of safety issues and the importance of taking positive steps to prevent accidents. For example, socket covers are fitted to all exposed electric points, the premises are secure and staff are effectively deployed to support children's care and development. Children are learning to help share responsibility for their own safety through activities including taking part in emergency evacuation drills and tidying away resources before meals, to reduce the risk of trip hazards. Children move around the playroom confidently and safely.

Children freely access an extensive range of clean, well maintained, age-appropriate equipment. They benefit from the staff having a clear understanding of safety issues

regarding the purchase and maintenance of resources. As a result, children play with toys that are safe and suitable.

Children's welfare is supported by staff that have a very secure knowledge of child protection issues. There are good procedures in place for making parents aware of the provider's responsibilities. Children's wellbeing is actively promoted.

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

The provision is good.

Children are confident, very enthusiastic and well motivated to learn. They enter the provision willingly, separate easily from their main carer and interact immediately with the welcoming staff. Children show good self-esteem, quickly making decisions for themselves regarding the activities and resources they wish to explore. For example, a group of children decide to investigate mobile, whilst others choose to make three-dimensional craft pictures. Children are consistently well occupied. They demonstrate good self-control and are able to sit and concentrate for short periods, such as when listening to stories or sharing their news at circle time. Children are developing their social skills. For example, a child pours a drink of water for a friend when she says she is thirsty. They are able to successfully share resources and to take turns. For example, they realise they must wait their turn to be the 'table monitor' and patiently await their turn to select their snack time fruit. They are learning to be independent and are developing their self-care skills through activities such as self-toileting and hanging up their coats after outside play. Children speak confidently in a familiar group and are learning to listen to others, such as during music sessions, which helps to develop their listening and responding skills. Children form warm, positive relationships with staff and their peers. They benefit from the staff knowing them well and having a good awareness of their home circumstances.

### **Nursery Education**

Activities are not planned separately for the youngest children in the setting, who have not started on the Foundation Stage curriculum. However, opportunities are successfully adapted by staff to ensure every child has the chance to take part and achieve. All children benefit from the individual care and attention they experience whilst in the nursery. They are listened to and valued, thus increasing their sense of belonging and confidence to learn new skills.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. They plan and provide a wide variety of stimulating, age-appropriate, practical activities to support children's progress towards the early learning goals. Staff work extremely well as a team, act as very good role models, know the children well and have a positive relationship with them. They actively support children in developing their confidence, independence and self-esteem. They are aware of each child's stage of development and ask searching, indirect questions to make children think, reinforce and extend their learning. Staff complete regular written observations and assessments of the children. However, assessments are not consistently evaluative or used to regularly plan activities across all aspects of learning, to support individual children's future learning. As a

result, children's potential is not fully maximised.

The children count confidently, use mathematical language appropriately and are learning to recognise numbers as labels. They enjoy solving simple mathematical problems, such as comparing the number of boys and girls present or the number of 'naughty monkeys' jumping on a bed, during a music session. Through practical activities, such as measuring daffodil plants or sorting coloured wooden shapes, children learn about shape, space and measure. The children have a wide range of vocabulary, which they use very confidently when talking to adults and peers. They successfully recognise their names in print and through use of the 'jolly phonics' scheme are learning to link sounds and letters. Children enjoy exploring books individually and listen attentively to planned whole group stories. They have wide-ranging, meaningful opportunities to practise and develop their early writing skills.

Children enjoy varied, exciting opportunities to learn about their local environment. For example, they take part in daily walks around the parkland and visit Friday Island. In addition, they welcome meaningful visitors to the setting, such as a father in his pilot's uniform, the police and staff from the Great Western Hospital, to help them increase their understanding of the wider world. Children are gaining an awareness of time as they confidently discuss past, present and future events in their lives. Through stimulating opportunities, such as taking digital photographs or using a calculator, children develop their information and communication technology skills. They thoroughly enjoy initiating and developing their own creative ideas whilst exploring media or materials and love using role-play to extend their imaginative ideas.

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

The provision is good.

Children are fully included within the setting. They are acknowledged and valued as individuals. They access a wide variety of resources, including dressing-up clothes, books, puzzles and small world toys, to help them increase their awareness of diversity.

Children behave well. They benefit from the good role modelling provided by staff that have a good understanding of effective strategies to promote positive behaviour. Children relate well to each other and are successfully developing their awareness of right and wrong whilst in the provision.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are confident, independent and show good self-esteem. They enjoy sharing news about their home lives and are learning to listen to others. For example, during register time children enjoy telling others about bonfire night. 'I saw a lady eating fire'. They are beginning to understand and express their feelings 'I don't like it when it goes bang. I said to my mum, I wish I had earmuffs'. Children increase their awareness of other cultures through practical activities such as craft and food sampling.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are made to feel very welcome and

freely discuss their news, such as a recent family house move. This positive relationship supports children's developing self-assurance and helps to ensure a consistent approach to children's care. Parents are provided with good quality information about the provision and the early learning goals. They are kept up-to-date through daily diaries, frequent newsletters and informative notice boards. Parents are invited to attend twice-yearly parents' evenings, where they have the chance to speak to their child's key worker and view children's progress records. There are varied, practical opportunities, such as the book-sharing scheme, for parents to become involved in their child's learning. Parents are encouraged to share with staff what they know about their child to aid ongoing assessment. However, they are not invited to contribute to initial educational assessments and thus aid staff in the initial planning of activities to support children's progress.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's wellbeing and education is supported by staff who are well qualified and experienced in caring for young children. There is an effective operational procedure in place which helps to ensure sessions run smoothly and children benefit from stable routines. There are thorough systems for recording the attendance of children, staff and visitors, which has a positive impact on promoting children's safety. Most required documentation is carefully maintained and securely stored. However, parents do not always sign the record book to acknowledge when children have been given medication. As a result, their good health is at risk.

The leadership and management are good. The group's delivery of the early years curriculum is enhanced by the training and experience of the manager, combined with the commitment and ability of the staff. There are regular opportunities for staff to meet together to plan the educational provision and discuss any childcare issues. Currently the manager does not always effectively monitor the key worker assessments. Due to the small numbers on roll and the fact staff are aware of children's stages of development, this omission is not currently affecting their progress. The group correctly identify strengths and areas for development. It has a genuine commitment for improvement and has strategies in place, such as enrolment on the Pre-School Learning Alliance accreditation scheme and welcoming Wiltshire Early Years advisors to the setting, to help further develop the quality of care and education offered to the children.

Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

As a result of the last combined inspection, the group was given recommendations and points for consideration, to help develop the quality of the provision.

The care inspection report recommended the extension of resources supporting equal opportunities, improving the structure of snack and meal times and developing staff's participation in relevant training, including health and safety.

Children are now able to access a good range of resources reflecting positive images of diversity. Staff have undertaken relevant professional training and have reviewed the structure of meal times to enable children to develop their self-care skills. All these improvements have had a positive impact on the quality of care offered to the children.

The education report suggested developing children's self-care skills, planning greater opportunities for children to develop their understanding of a range of cultures and beliefs and daily opportunities to participate in physical activities. It was also recommended that the system for planning and assessment be improved to make more explicit links between observations of children's progress and the six areas of learning.

Children now have varied opportunities to develop their self-care skills, take part in daily physical activities and increase their understanding of a variety of cultures and beliefs. These improvements have had a positive impact on the quality of education offered to the children. Whilst the assessment procedure has been developed, assessments are not consistently evaluative or used in planning activities across all aspects of learning, to promote individual children's progress. As a result, children's potential is not fully maximised.

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

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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 parents sign the medication record book to acknowledge when children have been given medicines

### **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):

- further develop the programme for monitoring and assessment, to ensure assessments are evaluative and are used in regularly planning activities across all aspects of learning, to promote individual children's future progress
- develop the partnership with parents, to ensure parents are encouraged to share with staff what they know about their child, to aid initial assessment.

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