



Stockton House School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY299577
Inspection date	10 January 2006
Inspector	Lynne Elizabeth Lewington

Setting Address	Stockton House School, Stockton Avenue, Fleet, Hampshire, GU51 4NS
Telephone number	01252 616323
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Registered person	Stocktonia Ltd
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 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?

Stockton House School first opened in 1968. It operates from 6 classrooms on the ground and first floor of a mansion house, in Fleet, Hampshire. The nursery uses the first floor and the kindergarten and reception class the ground floor. A maximum of 54 children aged between 2 and 6 years attend the school. The school is open each weekday in term time between 08.50 and 15.00 hours. All children have access to a large secure outside play area.

There are currently 61 children on roll, of these 40 receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from a wide area. The school supports children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The school employs 14 staff to work with children and additional staff to teach French, dancing and to cook, clean and maintain the premises. The staff have a range of appropriate qualifications including teaching qualifications and child care qualifications.

The school is accredited by the Pre-school Learning Alliance, has regular meetings with other local early years providers and uses the Early Education and Child Care Unit services including Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children have an excellent balanced and varied diet of freshly cooked food each day providing them with good nutrition and easy access to drinking water. Thought and consideration has been given to the children's diet taking into consideration and meeting individual special dietary needs. Meal times promote pleasant social interaction between the children and staff where they have opportunities to develop independence skills, talk about the food they eat and develop fine skills as they learn to use their knives and forks. Posters, informal conversations and planned activities increase children's understanding of the importance of what foods are good for them

Children's good health is encouraged by positive simple hygiene routines. Children wash and dry their hands using easily available soap, water and paper towels. Staff encourage and supervise the children enabling them to develop their independence and learn why it is important to wash hands before food and after toileting. The clean, light classrooms are maintained at a suitable temperature enabling the learning environment to be pleasant and welcoming.

Children take part in excellent daily regular physical activity. Outdoor activity is undertaken every day in the large secure garden, where children competently use the outdoor equipment. They climb, run, peddle, build, dig, hide, shout and sing, in an outdoor environment that is well maintained, safe yet remains very natural. Climbing apparatus, push along and pedal toys increase their physical strength and abilities. They build with large bricks, dig in the soil, and hide in the play house. Children enjoy the outdoor opportunities; most staff interact well with the children in the garden encouraging activity, singing and playing ring games, involving skipping, jumping, balancing and stretching. Children develop small movements through the variety of activities they access. They use scissors, paintbrushes, pens and pencils, with increasing control. Young children rest when they become tired. Ensuring physical needs are met enables the children to make good use of the play opportunities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

A good clear child protection policy and procedure ensures staff and parents understand the role of the setting on the issue of child protection. The manager has a clear understanding of the action she would take if concerns were raised and is proactive in ensuring her knowledge is up to date.

Excellent measures are taken to ensure the children's safety. Daily risk assessments of the play areas ensure the environment and equipment is suitable for the children's use. Comprehensive risk management is undertaken to ensure outings provide the children with well organised enjoyable experiences with high adult to child ratios. Staff encourage children to be aware of how to behave safely, for example children hold the handrail and negotiate the stairs with care and they remind each other not to run indoors. Fire safety equipment is professionally checked and fire practices are undertaken. The large premises are secure and everyone signs in and out enabling a clear record to be maintained of who is on the premises.

Children use safe good quality toys and resources suitable for their ages and stages of development. Staff and children can easily access the toys and equipment. Close supervision of the children's play ensures the children use equipment appropriately.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The school provides children with an extremely happy and secure environment where individual needs are recognised and developed. The uniform encourages the children to feel a part of 'a family', encouraging their sense of belonging to the school. Children benefit from the small classes where they develop good relationships with staff. Excellent settling in procedures enable children to settle and enjoy the experiences the school has to offer.

The children show interest and confidence as they participate in the activities. Routines enable the children and staff to make excellent use of the time available. When spontaneous learning opportunities arise, staff confidently utilise these opportunities.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding.

Children have excellent opportunities throughout the school to develop their learning and skills in all areas of development. They show appropriate and growing self confidence and self esteem as they undertake the planned activities which stimulate their imaginations. Children confidently try new activities and are interested and motivated to learn. They speak confidently, ask questions and make suggestions as they play. for example, children sitting together with the teacher enjoying a story offer ideas and comments regarding the pictures in the book relating to the story they are listening to.

Children demonstrate good behaviour and self control appropriate to their development. Their ability to express a range of feelings is developing well, they express concern for others, annoyance when things go wrong and happiness and delight as they complete a task. Good opportunities enable children to develop appropriate respect for their own and other cultures and beliefs. Children learn to share and take turns enabling them to participate in group activities.

Children listen and respond with great enjoyment and attention to stories, songs, rhymes and some make up their own stories as they play. Poems, stories, rhymes and action songs are used extremely well to extend their vocabulary, and explore the meaning and sound of words. Children use speech to organise and explore real and imagined experiences, ideas and feelings extremely well as they go about their play in the home corners, igloo and in the garden.

Children learn to count in their play and activities, they sing number rhymes, count numerous items as they play and count in practical everyday activities as they help at snack and lunchtimes. Their understanding of numbers, quantity, size, position and shape is developing well through practical activities and discussion. Children begin to use their mathematical ideas to solve practical problems, for example they recognise the pedal car will not fit through the space between the people and the sandpit.

Children investigate objects and materials with enthusiasm using all their senses. They touch the ice and talk with adults about how it feels recognising its cold, wet and changing shape. Children have good opportunities to observe, find out about and identify features in the natural world as they use the extensive garden each day and care for Bubbles the goldfish. Information technology assists the children's learning; they competently use the mouse to play simple games, gaining an understanding of the effects of their actions on the computer screen.

Children move confidently, imaginatively and safely both in the extensive outside play area and indoors. They competently use small tools, negotiate around furniture, and climb stairs. Some children recognise the importance of staying healthy, the changes in their bodies when they take part in physical activity and they know that they need to put their coats and hats on to keep their bodies warm when they go outside.

The wide range of activities on offer provides the children with opportunities to experiment with coloured paints, make models with dough or clay, and express themselves through imaginative play and music. Each week children undertake dance activities improving their expression, balance and co-ordination. Attractive displays of the children's work illustrate their creativity.

The effectiveness of curriculum planning is very good. It indicates the children undertake a variety of activities covering all areas of learning, and recognises the potential of extending some children to enable them to develop further. Learning is consolidated and parents encourage the learning process by helping the children select objects from home to bring, share stories and learn simple sounds and words.

The children have a wide variety of excellent learning opportunities; they learn at their own pace and are not rushed. Their natural interest is encouraged and spontaneous play opportunities are utilised.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Staff act as excellent role models behaving in a caring and considerate manner at all times, consequently the children behave in a similar way. Behaviour is managed in a consistent way enabling the children to develop an understanding of appropriate behaviour.

Children learn about the environment they live in, creatures, the weather and cultural events. This increases their understanding and awareness of the world around them.

Children have good opportunities to learn to value diversity. Toys and resources reflect a diverse society, and plans indicate opportunities to meet police officers, firemen and look at cultural celebrations such as Easter, Christmas, and Diwali, improving the children's knowledge and understanding of the wider society. They learn French which increases their understanding that some people use different languages.

All children are included and good provision is made for children with special needs. The small groups and caring environment enable children's confidence to increase and individual needs to be met well. The school in partnership with the parents obtains suitable advice and support from outside services as required to enable children to achieve their potential.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Parents speak very highly of the service offered, they comment on the warm friendly environment, and the approachability of the staff and manager. They know what their children do in the setting; newsletters and daily contact with staff keeps them well informed on what their child will be learning and how they can consolidate and assist the learning process. Parents comment how easily their children settle in the school and are confident, happy and responding well to the learning opportunities available.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Leadership and management is outstanding. The manager has a clear understanding of her role and responsibilities. Regular staff meetings, and inset days enable the staff team to plan and build on their knowledge, and understanding. Good self evaluation of the service offered enables the setting to clearly plan what they want to improve and how they can achieve their aims. The manager is aware of weaknesses and makes clear plans of how to make improvements.

Staff hold suitable qualifications and use appropriate training opportunities to develop their skills. They have a clear sense of purpose and undertake their responsibilities with good humour and enthusiasm. On going evaluation of activities and plans enables the setting to continuously improve. Staff use their time extremely well to provide the children with warm, caring happy experiences where they can learn and

develop at their own pace.

Excellent use is made of the available resources to provide the children with interesting activities in the spacious accommodation. Children access a variety of rooms for their activities, where good quality educational toys and equipment suitable for their ages and stage of development is easily accessed.

All documentation is maintained and easily accessed when required enabling the setting to work efficiently. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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.

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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 *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk