



## **Cuddington Nursery & Network Link Club**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	305035
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<b>Registered person</b>	Network Nurseries Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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?

Cuddington Nursery and Network Link Club is among a number of nurseries and out of school clubs run by Network Nurseries. It opened in 2001. The pre-school nursery operates from one room within Cuddington Primary School and has access to a designated outside play area. The out of school club is based in the dining hall. The nursery serves the local area but the out of school club is solely for children attending the school. A maximum of 24 children may attend each of the provisions at any one

time. The nursery is open each weekday during term time from 09.05 to 11.35 and 12.35 to 15.05. There is provision for children to have full day care by staying through both sessions with a lunch hour between. The out of school club is also open each weekday during term time from 08.00 to 09.00 and from 15.00 to 18.00.

There are currently 37 children from 2½ to 4 years of age on the nursery roll. Of these, 29 are funded 3 or 4 year olds. There are 57 children on the out of school roll. Children mostly come from the immediate locality, although a few in the nursery have parents who live some distance away and bring their children here because it is close to their place of work. The nursery currently supports children who have special educational needs, but there are none who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery and out of school club employ four staff and have a number of designated supply staff. Two of the employed staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. One of the staff is working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because practitioners employ a thorough knowledge of appropriate health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. For example, staff continuously check all areas of the setting for cleanliness and ensure that children wash their hands and blow their noses when necessary. They also ensure that surfaces are cleaned with antibacterial sprays before and after use for meals. First aid is administered skilfully from kits which are taken everywhere the children go and staff are very kind and supportive to children who have fallen or been hurt.

There are robust procedures for recording all accidents, including injuries which have happened outside nursery or club hours. Lessons are learnt from the risk assessments of the accidents which have occurred. For example, a child has his fingers trodden on, so children are reminded again always to put their hands on their knees when sitting on the floor. All staff are first aid trained and some have food hygiene qualifications. These procedures are successfully enhancing children's health in the setting.

Children have a good understanding of simple health and hygiene practices and are reminded to use these throughout sessions. For example, 3 year old pre-school children know where tissues are for blowing their nose and place these in the bin after use. They also wash up their own paint pots after use. Children know that some of them need special soap for their eczema. Some children have good levels of independence in using the toilet, can ask when they want to go, and wash their hands thoroughly afterwards. After school children take a paper towel to the toilets with them so that they have something to dry their hands on after washing them.

Pre-school children enjoy regular and varied physical activity because they play

outside daily as part of the session routine. They run around spontaneously, climbing, sliding, throwing, kicking balls, using rackets and stilts, and moving with increasing control. Pre-school children also have indoor physical sessions in the school hall where they choose activities with the football and work on negotiating space, working in pairs and rolling the ball towards one another. Staff facilitate physical play very well. Out of school club children might play team games and sports in the playground before darkness falls. Children are becoming fit and strong, are practising moving about the setting safely and are gaining control of clothing and fastenings as they get changed or put on coats.

Children are protected from becoming ill because policies inform parents very well about exclusion times for infectious illnesses and about medication administration, head lice and sun protection. After school children have a good grasp of how to stay well. For example, they know that they must not go bare foot if they have a foot infection; that they should drink regularly (they have access to a water dispenser in the dining hall); and that they should not share drinking cups in case an infection is spread.

The welcoming accommodation successfully promotes children's emotional wellbeing because it is within the primary school. This facilitates good links with the reception class for pre-school children and helps them to feel part of the school community from an early age. Out of school club children enjoy the convenience of being adjacent to their usual classrooms without feeling that they are still in a schoolroom setting. They enjoy the space of the school dining hall.

Children are well nourished and have a balanced diet because snacks and drinks given in the setting are healthy and without added sugar. Pre-school children have a choice of fruits with plain crisps or bread sticks and milk or water to drink. After school club children enjoy various fruit, crackers and biscuits with squash or water to drink, but this is not served until 17.00. Staff are well organised and prepare snacks efficiently. However, staff do not involve children in this sufficiently to foster a sense of group responsibility or individual independence. Staff rarely take opportunities to talk about healthy eating to promote children's understanding of this, despite excellent interactive wall displays which they can use. Nevertheless, children enjoy the social aspect of meal times and can talk amongst themselves and with staff.

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

The provision is good.

Pre-school children are cared for in a bright, welcoming, stimulating and superbly laid out environment. All available space is designated into clearly labelled activity and interest areas. Likewise, all wall and storage space is used to convey clear and relevant learning for children. The environment is secure and safe because all equipment and areas are kept clear of hazards throughout sessions and the door to the room is kept locked. For example, sand is always swept up from the floor as children play and chairs are kept tucked under tables when not in use. Children know that numbers are limited in the role play and computer areas to promote everyone's safety. Staff are also vigilant to ensure that children move about the setting safely

and with increasing responsibility for themselves. For example, staff remind children to sit on their bottoms and keep hands on knees when in the quiet room area because space is confined and hands could get trodden upon. Out of school club members enjoy a large amount of space which is also well laid out and welcoming, with large floor and table play areas and a sofa to relax on. Security here is maintained well because the front entrance to the school is kept locked and a bell can be heard in the dining hall when parents come to collect.

Children use a wealth of very well-organised equipment and resources in the pre-school and a good range in the out of school club. Staff invest in new and innovative toys, some of which can be used in both settings, such as the National Park. All resources are clearly labelled with words and pictures to help children to choose things and subsequently put them away. Books, investigative equipment, role play resources, play dough, writing, computer, construction, paint, water and sand are always available in the pre-school and these provide good levels of challenge. Interactive displays about number, letter, calendar, festivals, celebrating differences and healthy eating are available at child height all around the room, but these are underused to link or reinforce children's learning. Resources, including spare clothing, are kept clean and in good working order so that children find them attractive and can use them safely.

Children are secure and comprehensively supervised because staff adopt robust procedures in both settings to ensure that children are unable to leave the premises and are escorted on all movements between rooms. For example, pre-school children are always escorted to the toilets and the classroom door is bolted after every usage to protect the children inside. Daily attendance registers are religiously kept up-to-date and contact numbers for all children and staff are kept inside them. The registers are taken on all movements about the setting in case of emergency. Staff always display totals of children and adults present at each session and quick head counts are done to check that everyone is safe. In addition, emergency evacuations are regularly practised and any problems encountered are noted for dealing with next time.

Children are protected from abuse because staff have a good understanding of their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Some staff have recently undertaken updated child protection training. They are aware of what to do in the event of an allegation being made against them and know who to contact if they are concerned about a child. A thorough policy and easily accessible displays on two parent notice boards explain the child protection process and remind parents of staff's responsibilities in this area. Older children are also well protected because risks such as 'stranger danger' are explained to them through displayed materials and visits from a police officer.

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

The provision is good.

Children use initiative and enjoy their time because staff are supportive and available to them. For example, staff help pre-school children to get into dressing up costumes

and set up a weaving activity in the before and after school clubs. Children show an interest in what they do and are happy and relaxed because resources are excellent and they have time and space to experiment. For example, pre-school children follow design cards to construct things with the Mobilo. They investigate the rain shaker and the Sellotape dispenser and make signs in the stationery area. Out of school children improve their computer skills using the PowerPoint program, or make up an imaginary family game using the dolls house.

School age children respond and interact well because staff talk to them and are helpful and positive role models. They talk to children about their day and the older children assist the younger ones with making towers. Children are also confident to use their own initiative and play alone, perhaps with the toy kitchen range or the mosaic boards. They also improvise and create their own entertainment, creating a horse stud game with the farm and model horses, or dancing to the music that is playing on the CD player.

Children acquire new knowledge and skills because staff provide activities which give them appropriate challenge. For example, boys in the out of school club are pleased that, with staff direction, they can do the weaving activity and produce an attractive picture which they proudly show to their parents. 4 year old pre-school children are learning how to form letters and practise copying their name. Children's confidence and enthusiasm grows as they see their completed work and receive generous praise from staff.

Children make positive relationships in the out of school club because they are in small groups and are encouraged by staff to consider the good of their peers and siblings. For example, they work together to complete the tidying up at the end of the session and enjoy doing tasks for the group, such as fetching an ice pack from the fridge for a child who has bumped his head.

Children in pre-school are creative and imaginative. They paint pictures of rainbows and walls from their imagination. They construct flowers using a construction game and stand these up together to represent a garden. They role play cooking in the microwave and minding the babies in the kitchen and serve plates of fruit and cups of tea to adults and to one another.

Children's enjoyment and achievements are good in pre-school when staff capture their interest and ask them questions to get them involved. For example, children make moulds of feet and hands in the sand when supported by a staff member doing this alongside them, but they lose interest when the adult moves away. Children all join in well with action and singing songs which they know well. They enthusiastically answer questions during their favourite story. However, when too few staff are working with the group, their interest wanes and they fidget, distracting others away from the task.

#### Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are fully committed to providing a welcoming atmosphere; a varied programme of activities; and an approach which fosters happy relationships, self-confidence, good social behaviour and satisfactory

levels of independence. Teaching truly interests children and helps them to focus, persist and resist distraction. This is particularly the case when staff work one to one with children during creative, construction and writing activities. For example, children spend a long time making their pictures and collages of the favourite thing they like to see and many carefully attempt to write their name on their work.

Children are making particularly good progress in 'Communication Language and Literacy' and in 'Mathematical Development' because these are effectively woven into many aspects of the daily routine. For example, children are encouraged to name their pictures; to 'work' in the Post Office area; and to explore the sand using wooden tools. They have a letter of the week and talk about things which begin with the letter and how that letter sounds. They handle books, enjoy listening to stories and some 4 year olds recognise familiar written words. Numbers are used as labels and for counting at registration time. Children count up how many children are present and rehearse how many children are allowed to play in role play and computer areas at any one time. Songs are used to teach children how to take away one from the total and the cups at snack time are counted out to make sure each child has one. Shape, space and measure are regularly discussed during activities of the day and staff assess children's understanding of shape.

Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and activities are planned which cover all aspects of the curriculum. The learning environment is extremely well planned and laid out. It covers the six areas of learning and reflects the community and wider world. For example, there are computer, reading, investigation, mark making and creative areas and numerous accessible displays about cultural and community themes. This ensures that children can make progress in all areas of learning.

Key workers know about children on entry from informative written notes from parents. They build upon this, regularly assessing and recording children's progress and identifying the next steps that individual children need to take. Records give a very clear picture of children's progress because they are dated, are descriptive and include examples. Activity planning is also evaluated after use so that successful methods are reused and built upon, while less successful activities are changed or abandoned. This means that the activities and teaching enable each child to make progress in all areas. However, staff expectations, questions and input during sessions do not always sufficiently challenge children to maximise their learning through play. Staff do not make maximum use of the excellent resources and interactive displays to link children's learning and help them to make connections. They do not continuously talk about the theme and devise ways to extend and consolidate children's learning and independence as they move around the activity areas of the setting. For example, the investigation table is not used to extend the 'senses' topic and the construction, computer and book areas do not support the theme either. In addition, time is sometimes lost through lining up and settling the group to move to another room or prepare for toilet, snack or home time.

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

The provision is good.

Children join in well, take responsibility and have a sense of belonging in the pre-school setting because staff help children to feel at home from the outset. They warmly greet them and show interest in where they have been on holiday or what toy they have brought with them. Children help each other to find their name on the table and attach it to the attendance board. Then they settle straight down to play, using the construction toys, role play and other games which have been set out ready for use. After school children come to the dining hall to find activities all laid out ready to use, including the computer.

All children are included fully in the life of the setting by staff who are vigilant and work well together. For example, the pre-school deputy and supervisor shout across to alert each other when a child has achieved something new or is wanting others to watch. They shout out "go, x, go!" to encourage the child and attract everyone's attention. This encourages and delights children because they are feeling special. It also helps the group to learn how to consider, praise and respect their friends' achievements. Pre-school children receive appropriate support to gain in confidence and stay focussed upon the session. For example, staff skilfully help children when they miss their parent or carer. Staff reassure children that they too would like their mummy, but that it won't be long. Instead, they give them a choice, perhaps of the next song, so that they are distracted away from their worry.

The individual needs of children with concentration, behaviour or other special needs are met well because staff skilfully use their time to encourage children to join in with group activities as much as possible. Staff model appropriate play skills, use short and simple language, and skilfully distract when appropriate. Key workers know what individual children need to learn next by using their observations and records of children's progress to good effect. For example, they give extra reading and writing work to a child who is well ahead in this area. Staff also make it easier for children to conform by warmly praising wanted cooperation and ignoring non-participation as much as possible. A few children in both out of school and pre-school opt out of activities because they are in a bad mood. Staff leave them for appropriate, but different amounts of time before trying to coax them to participate. They use different approaches according to their knowledge of each child's needs. However, some children who conform quietly and do not have particular needs are missing out on the attention and input of staff. These children do not have equal access to all the resources, activities and facilities of the setting because they are not receiving individual attention so often. As a result, their progress in independence and learning is being held back.

Children receive appropriate support to behave well because they have simple and well rehearsed ground rules to follow. Out of school children know that it is not the winning, but the taking part that matters because this is one of their rules. Pre-school children in group time know that it is time to listen to adults when staff wear their large home made pendants with the hand facing. Children can talk when the smiley face side is showing. Staff manage behaviour well with the back up of good recording systems for Physical Intervention and Behaviour Management. They use these appropriately when significant issues arise and also liaise tactfully with parents.

The quality of partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents of pre-school children receive very good quality information about the early learning



goals and the educational provision. This information is also attractively displayed in the room for reference. All policies are readily accessible and parents are kept very well informed about their child's progress and achievements. This is done through verbal feedback, regular written reports and open evenings when their child's detailed progress records and evidence can be scrutinised.

Children receive very good consistency of care because staff work well together with parents. Staff are approachable and interested and make time to speak to parents in both settings. In addition, pre-school enrolment forms request information about children's starting points and preferences so that the program and approach of staff is tailored to individual needs from the outset. The setting also actively encourages parents and carers to be involved in their child's learning at home. Activity sheets suggest ideas to use at home which support the theme and tie in with the activities undertaken in the setting.

The setting makes good efforts to seek and act upon parents views about the service. Parents with children in both after school and pre-school express high levels of satisfaction with their children's progress and the quality of the setting and staff. Many of their comments are put in display books for all to see, along with copies of inspection reports and relevant general information about child care and community events.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

Recruitment and vetting procedures work very well to ensure that children are well protected and cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child development. Staff files are accurate and up-to-date and show that training and supervision regularly take place. The manager in particular has good opportunities to improve her knowledge by attending courses and workshops. She uses this knowledge effectively to share with other staff and provide children with a wide range of learning experiences. For example, specific training on Persona dolls, equality, child protection, playing with sounds, health and safety, numeracy, and special educational needs has been incorporated into the working practices of all staff.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The manager and registered body have a clear vision for the nursery education and a good focus upon ensuring that planning and assessments provide a sound structure for the personal achievement of all children. They devise all the themes and planning for their nurseries to use which ensures that all the stepping stones can be covered and children can progress towards the early learning goals.

The manager sets her staff clear directions and is able to evaluate the setting's strengths and weaknesses well. She is open to suggestions about how to improve the setting further. She is actively involved and motivates staff well so that they can act as good role models to children. For example, she and the deputy ask questions

of each other about what is happening next and why. By answering these questions, children hear and know what they should do by example rather than just direction.

The manager thoroughly inducts new staff and promotes the professional development of them all, whilst making solid professional and caring relationships with them. She is extremely well organised with all aspects of the record keeping and the presentation of an accessible and stimulating environment. This gives staff, parents and children confidence in all aspects of the pre-school.

The organisation of the day care actively contributes to positive outcomes for children. This is because adults have a clear sense of purpose and direction; work in ratios of approximately one adult to five children; and maintain an exceptionally well-organised, safe and stimulating environment. For example, attractive, inspiring and informative displays convey important information to parents and can be used by children to consolidate their understanding about matters such as child protection, equal opportunities, healthy eating, or the rules of the out of school club.

Policies and procedures are first class and work extremely well in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. For example, previous injury, physical intervention and behaviour management records are comprehensive and are used both to provide consistency of care to children, and to support effective communication with parents.

Well-maintained daily registers, fire drill records and risk assessments ensure that children are safe and accidents minimised. Detailed and accessible staff and child records ensure that appropriate care is given by staff who are able to do their jobs well.

The provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

There was one recommendation made at the last care inspection in October 2003. Two key issues were made at the inspection of nursery education in March 2005:

The recommendation to ensure that the child protection policy is consistent with latest information and complies with requirements has been met. The policy has been updated and includes more detail so that staff clearly know what to do if they are worried a child is being abused. In addition, the policy is available to parents along with relevant child protection information. Children are now better protected from abuse because staff and parents have an improved awareness and better information about the policy.

The nursery education key issue to deploy staff more effectively to support large group activities and children's independence in snack time has been partially successful. Staff are sitting with children to support listening and concentration skills at story and group times and are encouraging children to pour their own drinks at snack time. This is improving the outcomes for children. However, staff are still not always deployed to best promote children's learning and independence.

The nursery education key issue to improve children's own creativity when exploring colour, texture and form has been met. This has been achieved by improved planning and setting out of creative activities. For example, children may paint at the easel using a number of colours; they may go to the play dough table; and they may create pictures of their choice using a number of craft materials, pens and pencils. Children are enjoying these activities as well as regularly exploring texture and form using the sand and water trays.

### **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.

## **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 that all children have equal access to all resources, activities and facilities and that each individual child is treated with equal concern, in order to maximise their independence and potential.

#### **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):

- ensure that staff expectations and input challenge children to achieve as much as they can. Make best use of time, resources and the accommodation to help children make as much progress as possible.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)