

St Michael's Community Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	122677
Inspection date	23/05/2011
Inspector	Kerry Iden
Setting address	The Village Hall, Dell Close, Mickleham, Dorking, Surrey, RH5 6EE
Telephone number	01372 361021
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

St. Michael's Community Nursery was registered in 1993. It operates from the back room in the local village hall within the village of Mickleham, near Dorking, Surrey. It has been purpose built within the existing area of the hall. Children have access to a covered outside space and garden area which are both secure. The nursery mainly serves families from the local area.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 24 children between two and under eight years may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 37 children on roll, the setting receives funding for nursery education. The provision welcomes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens each week day morning during school term time from 9:15am to 12.15pm with a lunch club available to 1:15pm. There are eight members of staff and five have suitable early years qualifications, with four staff working towards a level 3 and above qualifications. The setting receives support from the local early years network.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The nursery is extremely well organised and thoroughly supports the needs of individual children and their families. There is a lively, positive atmosphere within the setting and an excellent level of opportunity for child-initiated learning which is constantly and effectively supported by staff. The highly positive relations with parents and the majority of others involved in children's care support their time in the setting. Reflection and evaluation is robust and implemented by all staff, parents and children. Leaders have a clear and accurate awareness of what has been needed to improve the setting. As a result actions taken are well targeted and have had a positive impact in bringing about improvements within the setting. Continual evaluation and consultations with parents will ensure further developments of the setting are considered by all those associated with it.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- further developing the arrangements with early years providers not yet in place to consistently offer an exchange of children's progress and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are protected from harm within the setting. All staff have a comprehensive awareness of the correct procedures they must follow if they have a concern about a child's welfare and the manager acts as the designated person for this role. The parents are made fully aware of the setting's commitment to safeguarding children through the policies of the setting. Clear systems are in place for the recruitment of new staff which the committee maintains overall responsibility for. The setting is safe and secure with doors well supervised at drop off and collection times to ensure children's safety. Risk assessments are completed formally by the staff in the setting as well as frequent checks made by the hall committee for the up keep of the building. Staff monitor all areas and resources used by the children throughout the day and complete daily checklists to ensure children's safety. Children are actively encouraged to complete risk assessments for themselves and have an excellent understanding of safety rules applied. Children's safety is paramount to the staff in the setting, high ratios of staff and good deployment through the session ensures effective supervision of children. Clear and robust systems are in place to monitor and evaluate risks in the setting for example, evaluation of accident books which staff transfer relevant information into the risk assessments.

The manager is an excellent leader who has vision and is excited to share and bring about change within the setting. She leads a team of staff who are all very motivated, enthusiastic and passionate about their work with children. Reflection and evaluation occurs throughout the setting and improvements have been made since the implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage with additional plans ahead. Morale is very high amongst the staff team, who are supported by the parent committee. Parents and children are also able to evaluate and reflect on the setting. Children are fully involved in decision making on a daily basis and through reflection, identify the best bits about their morning. Parents give their views either directly to the approachable staff, through the committee or by adding their comments to effective parental questionnaires. Staff value contributions made by the parents and consult them on changes within the setting for example, changes in the layout of the outside space. Staff and managers continually discuss training needs for individuals and formalise these through appraisals with the committee. There is an interest in professional development amongst staff members who are keen to extend and build on their skills and knowledge which will enhance children's time in the setting. As a result, outcomes in children's achievements and well being are high.

The nursery is exceptionally arranged and resourced and staff are meticulous in the attention to detail when setting up the equipment prior to the children's arrival. For example, through the introduction of the research science lab within the role play area, staff add light boxes, bugs, magnifying glasses and x-ray pictures for the children to study and compare, relevant reading materials to promote books for different purposes and note pads and pencils to encourage list writing and mark making. This attention to detail continues throughout the nursery and in the

garden ensuring children's learning in all areas is fully promoted wherever they choose to play. The resources within the nursery are high quality and robust ensuring good sustainability. The staff also make excellent use of the natural resources in the garden as children are keen and show interest in the trees, leaves, bugs and chickens. Resources reflect positive images of the diversity in society throughout the provision. Children are fully encouraged to understand differences and respect for each other through many group discussions. Staff have developed positive relations with the whole family to help them understand each child fully enabling them to support every child individually. Staff identify a child's need for additional support as early as possible, they share information with colleagues and parents and where necessary with interagency teams to ensure that each child gets the support they need.

The setting is highly committed to working in partnerships with parents and others that are involved in the children's care and well being. Systems are in place for sharing information with most other early years providers children attend, although the setting has found some difficulty in establishing successful links with some. The relations with the local school are excellent with consultations around transition, enabling children to make a smooth and successful move to school; with continual development to ensure effective systems with other schools children move on to. There are committed and well supported partnerships in place with the parents, who highly recommend the nursery and show total satisfaction in all areas of the provision. Parents share all information through discussion and completed documentation when their children start in the setting. Home visits and individual settling in arrangements ensure all families receive a start to nursery that suits them. Parents attend meetings with key persons to share children's progress and fortnightly newsletters and daily information keeps parents fully involved in what their children are learning, enabling them to continue at home. Therefore the highly positive relationships with all groups of parents, fully supports the individual needs of each child.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children enter the nursery enthusiastically, showing an eagerness to be in the setting. They confidently chat with staff and unfamiliar adults and check out the resources that have been set up before grouping together on the carpet. This brief, whole group time is managed well to introduce children to the day, informing them of any plans and activities available and also reinforces children's awareness of each other. All children consistently show high levels of independence, curiosity, imagination and concentration. They are effectively involved in purposeful play throughout the morning both inside and out of the provision. The free flow arrangements to the garden inspire children's learning further. Staff skilfully extend children's ideas for example, as they spontaneously build dens at the bottom of the garden followed by a study of bugs and the natural environment around them. Adult led activities compliment children's learning although the play led by the children and extended by the staff is what the children remember when they reflect at the end of the session as they write up the board for parent's

information. The highly motivated staff team have an excellent understanding of each child's individual needs and interests and use this knowledge to support each child effectively. Individual, family friendly journals are in place to share children's progress towards the early learning goals. Through well organised systems, key persons identify next steps for each child. These are shared with parents and details are included within the planning to ensure activities and experiences can be tailored towards individual children.

All children are extremely secure and feel safe within the nursery. They enter and dismiss their parents promptly as they eagerly want to get involved in their morning. Children take on responsibilities within the nursery routine. All help with daily tasks and special helpers assist staff in additional tasks including preparing snacks and collecting the eggs from the chickens in the garden. The children show an excellent understanding of the safety rules and confidently express them to those who are unfamiliar with them. For example, they explain bikes and not allowed past the no bike sign because the slope makes the bikes too fast, also what the happy and sad faces mean on the gate and how you have to wash the germs of your hands before you can have snacks. Staff skilfully use snack preparation to include the development of number and extend some children as they introduce division as they cut bananas in half giving them two, before chopping them into smaller pieces. Staff use clear explanations about the safe use of knives allowing children to use appropriate tools for the job. Children access snacks when they want to through the session although staff offer reminders before snack comes to an end. Children do not need reminders about hand washing and show high levels of independence in using the bathroom and washing hands. Through spontaneous discussions and activities, children have an excellent understanding of healthy eating. At lunch time they continue to discuss with staff members the healthy items in their lunch boxes. Children have innovative opportunities to engage in a wide range of physical activities both inside and out of the nursery. Den building, treasure hunting, digging in the soil and spontaneous hurdling organised by the children all compliment the physical resources that are in the garden.

Children are making excellent gains towards the early learning goals, especially so in their communication language and literacy. The children are very articulate and most are confident speakers in front of a group. Through activities and general discussion the staff skilfully extend children's knowledge of letters sounds and match these to the written letter. Group time is used to continue this thinking through resources such as the sound box when children are eager to identify a word from the letter shown. Children show high levels of curiosity and investigation, they are keen to understand how things work and develop their understanding of the world around them. Some are inspired by the discussion of life cycles of frogs to extend their study to search and find bugs in the garden. They compare the seeds and leaves they find on the ground to the trees above them and study the bug hotel as they look at the natural habitat of mini beasts. Children use the bug pictures on the fence to compare to what they have found as staff continue to extend their knowledge through excellent open ended questions, challenging their thinking further. Throughout the morning, all children demonstrate high levels of confidence and self esteem. They work exceptionally well independently and with their peers showing excellent negotiation and co-

operation skills. They know the sand timers are used to help them share and take turns and children are able to use these and organise turns between themselves. All children are highly valued; this is promoted by the staff especially at group time when children listen to each other's comments. Staff know the children very well and are able to adjust their style of teaching and questioning to challenge on an individual level allowing every child to make a positive contribution to the setting.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met