

The Old School House Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

300911

Inspection date

09/03/2009

Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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.

Description of the setting

The Old School House Nursery opened in 1990. The nursery operates from two converted buildings on the same site and has use of the scout hut next door, to supplement the space used by the out of school provision. There is ramp access to most parts of the building, although two of the older children's rooms are accessed by stairs.

Children have use of nine rooms, in which they are grouped according to age. There are two fully enclosed areas available for outdoor play. The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 134 children under eight years and of these, 24 places are reserved for children attending the out of school club. Children aged from four to 11 years use the out of school provision.

The nursery opens each weekday throughout the year from 07.30 to 18.30. Children attend for variety of sessions and there are currently 238 children aged from three months to 11 years on roll. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language.

There are 45 staff employed to work directly with the children, of whom 36 hold an appropriate early years qualification and four are working towards this. The nursery received the Investors in People Award in 2003 and is currently working towards 'Quality Counts', the quality assurance award of the National Day Nurseries Association. They receive support from an early years teacher within the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the provision is good. The nursery is warmly welcoming to all families and staff work closely in partnership with parents and others to ensure every child is fully included and their individual needs met. Staff interact sensitively with children and give high levels of attention as they play, helping them plan effectively to support and progress all areas of their learning and development. They are considering ways to augment and enrich independent play choices and challenge in the daily play environment, both indoors and out, and are reviewing the impact of daily routines on children's freely chosen play. Staff are refining systems to evaluate their practice, so that they appropriately identify areas requiring further development to improve the outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- enhance the daily continuous play provision, both indoors and out, and focus the use of observations to enrich opportunities for children's independent exploration and learning
- monitor the impact of daily routines on children's independent exploration

- and opportunity to develop and extend their own ideas
- develop further the processes, involving both staff and parents, to evaluate practice and identify areas for improvement.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Thorough implementation of all required policies and procedures means that children's safety and well being are consistently and effectively promoted. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that adults are suitable to work with children. Staff are well supported, through the induction and appraisal system, to understand their responsibilities and to develop further skills. They enjoy well planned access to appropriate training opportunities. Staff fully understand their role and responsibility within safeguarding procedures. They are deployed effectively to ensure children are always fully supervised and their welfare needs met. Children's awareness of risk and safety is promoted well within their everyday play experiences. Staff have a consistent approach to management of children's behaviour and encourage children to develop safe levels of independence. Risk assessments are very well considered, helping to keep children safe in all activities.

Staff give high priority to establishing a trusting, cooperative relationship with parents. Parents meet with the key worker and share information about children's starting points, helping staff to formulate a clear care plan for each child. Staff are actively seeking new ways to engage parents in planning for their child's future learning. They have established a 'lending library', so that children can take books home to read together with their parents. Staff are sensitive to children's home circumstances and encourage parents to help them bring to life the variety of rituals, foods and artefacts used in other cultures and festivals, like Hanukah. They value linguistic diversity and learn essential words in each child's home language, to enable them to engage more fully where a child's first language is not English. They provide dual language books for children to read and children enjoy French classes in the nursery.

Close working links are established with other professionals, where a particular need is identified, to ensure developmental or health issues do not present barriers to children's progress. Staff have effective working links with other settings attended by children, helping them to promote consistency and continuity.

Positive and supportive leadership and management of the nursery promote and enhance staff commitment to good quality practice. Staff strive continuously to evaluate and improve children's play and learning experiences. Good progress has been made regarding recommendations made at the last inspection, so that observations of children are used more effectively to guide planning and children enjoy much greater levels of independence in the daily environment. Staff meet together regularly to evaluate their practice, helping them appropriately identify areas for improvement. For example, they recognise the need to enhance the planning for 'continuous provision' within the daily environment, both indoors and out, and to extend the accessibility of resources. Senior staff are looking at ways to

strengthen the systems for self evaluation and planning for continuous improvement.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children love attending the nursery. The play environment in all rooms is bright, child-friendly and welcoming. Well planned activities indoors promote all areas of children's learning. Activities and resources are organised to enable children to explore freely and make independent choices. Children enjoy daily opportunity to play outdoors, although staff do not plan consistently to maximise the learning opportunities offered by the outdoor environment. Physical play activities, both outdoors and in the 'hall', are planned very effectively to promote children's good health.

Staff routinely observe and record children's progress and parents contribute information about home experiences. Planned activities are well resourced. Resources are mostly selected by staff, as there is limited accessible storage space to allow children to select freely. Activity planning is based on observations and key staff work closely with individual children, using workbooks and small group times to develop their skills and knowledge. Activities are clearly differentiated to reflect each child's planned next steps. Planning for large group times is clearly focussed, for example, using Jolly Phonics and staff are alert to the needs of individual children so that they are fully included. Staff do not, however, fully utilise their knowledge of planned next steps to maximise the learning opportunity presented in daily routines and in children's free play. The impact of routines, like snack and group times, as they interrupt children's opportunity to become fully absorbed in independent exploration, is not always clearly evaluated. These factors influence the challenge and potential for independent learning within the 'continuous provision' of the daily environment. Staff are reviewing the ways in which space is used and how to enhance the range of resources and tools more readily available to children in the continuous provision, both indoors and out.

Children are highly motivated and enthusiastic in their play. Staff support their needs with sensitivity. Babies gurgle and 'talk' together, interacting and communicating happily. They enjoy lots of sensory and tactile play with treasure baskets. Staff observe closely, allowing babies time to explore, intervening minimally but very responsive to their needs. Toddlers become utterly engrossed in painting their hands, wriggling through the tunnel and bouncing on the soft play mats over and over again. The atmosphere is calm and relaxed, staff are attentive to children's body language and early communication sounds, so that they are content and secure. Older children are confident of staff support, contribute actively to routines, enjoy lots of varied activities and develop independence in their play. Children in the after school club, after an energetic time of physical activity in the scout hut, have noisy fun and time to relax after their busy school day.

Children are very confident communicators and love sharing their experiences. They contribute confidently at group times, for example, as they learn the French names for different foods, parts of their body and the days of the week. They are

interested in sounds and recognise the letters in their name. They enjoy reading stories and older children develop keen listening skills, as they listen to the talking book and carefully follow instructions in the music class. They learn to use factual books, to find out more about things they are interested in and the wider world. Older children have free access to mark making resources but these are less consistently available in the toddler rooms. Children sort and order shapes in their construction play, match blocks to patterns and estimate what will fit where. They enjoy counting rhymes and clap out the rhythm to songs in music class. They learn to recognise numbers and count out money in the shoe shop.

Children learn about animals and the natural world, as they observe chicks hatching and see a baby lamb being fed. They explore their own creativity, as they mix paints, design their own models and make observational drawings. Their work is valued and displayed for all to enjoy and is used well, along with photographs, to share their 'past' and 'present' activities. In all rooms children act out their own experiences, as they enjoy dressing up and role play activity. Younger children enjoy making tea parties while the older ones play at shoe shops, dress up in Disney outfits and make a train out of chairs. Music and movement activities inspire much enthusiasm and excitement, as children shake the instruments and move their bodies in time to the music.

Children enjoy lots of activities to help them think about being healthy and how to stay safe. They thoroughly enjoy active play and time outdoors in the fresh air. Children learn to use the climbing equipment safely and manage risks with care, as they play chasing games and race around obstacles with confidence. They talk about their heart beat, as they move energetically, stretching and wriggling their body in different ways. They develop skills of coordination and balance, as they climb, jump and roll on the soft play mats. Children participate enthusiastically in music and movement sessions and PE activities. They know they must walk sensibly on the stairs and think about road safety when on outings to the library, park or local shops. Children make good friendships, learn to share and cooperate in their play, behave well and become sensitive to the feelings of others.

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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