

The Cottage Nursery

Alexander Hall, Faringdon Road, Watchfield, Nr Swindon, Wiltshire, SN6 8TS

Inspection date	20/01/2014
Previous inspection date	19/05/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Staff monitor children's progress accurately and plan challenging activities that help them progress well in all areas.
- Staff support children's language development especially well so that children, including those who do not speak English at home, become confident and fluent talkers.
- The nursery's good practice helps keep children safe and emotionally and physically healthy overall.
- The management team and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to provide good quality care and learning, and to maintain continuous improvement. They achieve this through routinely reflecting on their practice and embracing new ideas.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Although systems for managing staff performance are generally effective they are not fully developed to monitor the quality of teaching to help achieve the highest standards of practice.
- Arrangements for settling new children are generally successful, however, staff do not always plan them well enough to help children feel secure as quickly as possible.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed staff interacting with children throughout the nursery and in the outdoor play areas.
- The inspector spoke with children and staff, and held a meeting with the management team.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents spoken to on the day and their written comments from nursery questionnaires.
- The inspector looked at a sample of documentation including the self-evaluation, planning, children's records, policies and procedures and evidence of staff's suitability.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the nursery head of childcare.

Inspector

Rachel Edwards

Full report

Information about the setting

The Cottage Nursery opened in 1987 and moved to its current site in 2000. It re-registered when it became a limited company with three directors in 2008 but remains a registered charity. The nursery operates from a single storey building attached to the community centre in the village of Watchfield, near Faringdon on the Wiltshire/Oxfordshire border. The building is owned by the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, which is located at Watchfield and takes military personnel from all over the world. Most children attending the nursery come from military families and reflect the cultural diversity of the Defence Academy. Most children from military families stay for short periods only. Children attending from civilian families come from Watchfield and its surrounding villages, together with the nearby towns of Swindon and Faringdon. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 116 children aged from seven months to under five years on roll. Children are accommodated in one of five rooms. There is ready access to outdoor play areas with varying surfaces. The nursery opens each weekday from 8am to 6pm, all year round, with the exception of a week between Christmas and New Year, and a week in August. The nursery is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two-, three- and four-years-old. The nursery supports children who learn English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery employs 31 staff in total, 19 of whom hold appropriate qualifications at level 3. A further three hold appropriate qualifications at level 2.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- introduce regular planned and informal observations of teaching and its impact on children's learning

- strengthen the key person system to support children settling in the baby room.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Staff have a good understanding of how to support children's learning through play. They provide interesting activities and a stimulating environment, which help children become active independent learners. The bright and spacious playrooms are appealing to children. Staff have clearly labelled the low storage units with words and pictures so that children can easily find and put away the things they need. This encourages their independence, helps them think creatively and use their imagination. For example, they move vehicles

into the sand tray and add animals as they develop a story. They find different ways to roll, move and build with the different objects. Throughout the nursery staff give children plenty of opportunities to explore 'messy' materials using all their senses. Babies enjoy the sensation of scrunching shredded paper and delight in finding buried objects. Toddlers are intrigued by the way corn flour paste drips from their fingers. They draw patterns with forks and watch fascinated as the lines disappear.

Staff support children's communication and language development well. They sing and talk to babies and respond to their babbling and gestures. The staff encourage toddlers to imitate sounds and introduce new words to build sentences. Staff challenge older children's thinking as they talk with them about what they are doing and give them time to think and express their ideas. The older children are making good progress with early literacy skills. Staff put name cards and letter shapes near writing materials, which encourages children to have a go at writing. They have attached pencils to the easel so that children can attempt to write their name on artwork and children write shopping lists in the make-believe shop. Staff help reluctant writers to develop skills in more practical ways, such as drawing in the mud or sand. Children develop a sound understanding of mathematical concepts. Staff use everyday activities such as counting and cutting fruit to develop children's knowledge. Children acquire the skills they need in preparation for moving on to school or other settings.

The nursery has improved the outside play areas since the last inspection so staff can better support all areas of children's development. All the children, including the babies, spend time outdoors each day. The nursery provides wet weather clothing and has covered areas so that children can play outside comfortably throughout the year.

Staff monitor children's development accurately. They routinely observe children's play and behaviour and use this to plan experiences that will interest and challenge them so they progress well overall. Where children's starting points are below those of others their age, staff provide additional support so that gaps in learning are closing. A significant minority of children are from overseas families and are learning English as an additional language. Staff support them well, for example using visual aids and bilingual books. They keep parents well informed of their children's progress and help them support their children's development at home. For example, they provide advice on potty training and managing behaviour. As part of a topic on weather, pre-school staff suggest parents watch the weather forecast and collect rainwater with their children at home to help their child learn more about the natural world around them.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Each child is assigned a key member of staff, who has special responsibility for the child's well-being and development at the nursery. The system generally works well, and over time children form close attachments to their key person. Staff get to know children very well and plan for their individual learning successfully. Staff are supportive during family difficulties, for example, they understand the stress to both children and partners when military personal are away on service. However, on occasions when children first start in

the baby room, staff do not give full attention to building close bonds from the outset. Some settling visits are not completely well planned. This means that staff do not always spend good amounts of time with new children to fully support their feelings of security.

Staff supervise children carefully indoors and outside, for example, checking thoroughly that all children are accounted for at all times. They help children learn to keep themselves safe by reminding them to eat slowly so they do not choke. Older children understand why they cannot play outside while it is still icy and slippery. Children behave exceptionally well. Staff focus strongly on developing children's social skills and from a very young age they learn to share and take turns. Older children are polite and kind to each other and able to resolve minor disputes amicably. Staff have consistent expectations and use positive rewards such as a 'reach for the stars' chart, to help children understand what is expected of them. These good social skills help them make friends and settle happily as they move on to school.

Children lead healthy lives at nursery. The nursery provides healthy snacks and meals and staff give parents nutritional advice for their children, such as recipes for weaning babies. Children help grow vegetables which extends their understanding of healthy eating. Children are physically active every day and begin to develop an interest in sport through football sessions with specialist teachers. Children also recognise when they need to rest and most of the younger children willingly settle for a nap after lunch. Staff are good role models showing children how to manage their own personal hygiene. Children wash their hands after using the potty or toilet and before eating, and understand why this is important to their good health.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The management team has a good understanding of its responsibility to meet the safeguarding and welfare, and learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Effective policies and procedures are routinely reviewed and systems are in place to ensure all staff implement these fully to protect children's welfare. Managers and staff have a strong focus on safeguarding children in this large and busy nursery. Staff receive regular training on safeguarding, first aid and the use of specific equipment to support children's health needs. They use risk assessments very effectively, including daily check lists, to identify potential hazards and take action to minimise these to help keep children safe in all areas of the nursery. Senior management have attended safer recruitment training and robust procedures are followed to ensure staff's suitability to work with children. Checks are carried out on regular visitors to the nursery. There are extremely rigorous security arrangements, including closed circuit television and multiple checks on children's attendance so that staff are aware at all times of the children in their care.

Staff monitor individual children's progress closely and managers track these records to ensure they are accurate and consistent. As a result staff promptly identify children needing additional support and provide the appropriate help to close any gaps in learning.

The nursery values feedback from parents and uses it to enhance its practice. For example, pre-school staff increased the amount of information on the day sheets so that parents are better informed of their child's day. Managers and staff use a nationally recognised scheme to evaluate the environment throughout the nursery. This helps staff identify areas for improvement, such as putting musical instruments where children can reach them. Frequent formal team meetings focus specifically on how the management and staff can improve the quality of care and teaching. Staff discuss their practice in room meetings and through performance management meetings. However, they do not routinely take time to observe one another's practice to strengthen the culture of reflection and professional development in order to develop the quality of the provision further.

The managers and staff use generally effective systems for sharing information with parents, although there are minor areas for improvement when children first start. The nursery works well in partnership with local schools and other professionals, which enables it to meet children's individual needs successfully.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY381532
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	918616
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	150
Number of children on roll	116
Name of provider	The Cottage Nursery
Date of previous inspection	19/05/2009
Telephone number	01793 314461

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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