

Inspection report for early years provision

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Type of inspection Nursery Education

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 NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Joseph's School is an independent school situated close to the town centre in Launceston in Cornwall. The nursery operates from two large rooms with direct access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The reception class is adjacent to the nursery. The nursery is open from 08.30 to 15.30 Monday to Friday during school term times. Both classes operate during school terms. There are currently 17 children on roll who receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area and the school supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding. Nursery education

Children are extremely confident and motivated learners who concentrate well at self chosen activities. Children have exceptional levels of personal independence. They see to their personal needs such as dressing and undressing, visiting the toilet and washing hands. Before snack the children help to clean the tables and after snack they wipe their mats and put them away. Children are enthusiastically encouraged to work together to plan their play. At the stickle brick activity the children play cooperatively; they negotiate with each other to agree how to build the construction. Children are unquestionably developing good relationships with peers and adults. They clearly understand the need to share and take turns when playing together.

In the role play area the children are deciding which role they will take and what the rules for the game will be. Children use an extensive range of spoken language that is successfully supported and extended through the unmistakably high levels of interaction. Children use language to successfully negotiate the rules of their games. Children are confident writers. They have examples of letters and their names to copy and they are prolific in practising their writing skills. Children write during role-play and are clearly delighted in writing their names at the letter writing activity and on their own work. Children enjoy books and handle them with great care. They spend time 'reading' and sharing books with friends and adults and can relate well-known stories by looking at the pictures. There are lots of examples of text around the room resourcefully supporting children to link spoken and written language. Children's listening skills are excellent and at group times they are actively encouraged to listen and take turns to speak.

Children are developing a clear and comprehensive understanding of math concepts.

They can say what is one more or one less and attempt to add two groups of objects at matching and sorting activities. At the sandwich activity children take delight in sequencing and counting with confidence. There is a magic number for the day which is the number of children present. Children join in with the teachers to count the number of children throughout the session. Children's understanding of space, shape and measure is very well developed through the activities they take part in. They use appropriate mathematical language during free play activities, they talk about taller and shorter and more and less.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the wider and natural world are being imaginatively and successfully nurtured. The Noah's ark story has been used to help children look at different animals from around the world. Children have made collage pictures of a storm at sea showing the different colours of the water and sky. In the sand play there are natural objects such as shells and branches which the children are using to explore and investigate. At show and tell the children get a chance to talk about home which is instrumental in linking home and school. They talk about the objects they have brought, where and who they came from. Children take part in activities that help them learn about different countries and cultures and different people's lives. They have visited places and had a visit from a helicopter in the school field.

There is a creative area and all the resources are freely available to the children at free play time. Children's creative art work is an excellent balance between free and themed activities. Children have made caterpillars and butterflies with pegs and kitchen roll. The artwork is beautifully displayed with great care that shows each child's work is valued and admired. There are abundant opportunities for children to use their imagination and develop their play in the role play area in the garden and with the small world toys. At the circle time the children sing with gusto and do the actions enthusiastically. Children have direct access to their own garden space and also use the grounds of the school. They have use of the field and the large hall on wet days. Children take part in both structured and free play sessions. Children run and balance successfully and clearly enjoy the parachute game which they are thrilled with. Children are versatile at using small physical movements and they use tools with skill and control.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. The early years team works exceptionally well together to effectively deliver the Foundation Stage. The whole team has a comprehensive knowledge of the Foundation Stage and a very clear understanding of how children learn. Each individual child's development is carefully and successfully nurtured and supported. The planning is very effective and clearly provides children with an exciting and stimulating environment and daily access to a wide range and balance of inspiring activities and experience. The range of observations and assessments extensively reflect children's individual learning needs. These are used to inform the team's planning for differentiation for younger and older children. Children have an abundance of free play time with the time and space to explore and investigate and to use their imagination to develop their play. Children are delighted, excited and animated at play. All staff interact with the children with enthusiasm and concern; carefully supporting their learning through appropriate challenges.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding. Partnerships with parents is outstanding. Parents contribute to an initial assessment of their child which provides staff with an extensive knowledge of individual needs and achievements. There is an 'all about me', book which parents complete with their child and these provide a comprehensive range of information about individual children's learning needs and interests. Parents receive comprehensive information about the Foundation Stage and how learning is planned in a variety of formal and informal ways. There is a notice board, the weekly planning is displayed and parents have newsletters every half term about the topics that will take place. Parents are invited to a range of outings and events throughout the year. The school actively acknowledges and encourages parents' role in the children's learning and development. Parents are continually supported to take an active part in school life.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are happy and comfortable in the calm, relaxed atmosphere. They are clearly exceptionally well supported by the warm and caring relationships they have with the staff. Children are very well behaved and the excellent levels of independence unmistakably support them to be joyful learners who are able to concentrate very well at self-chosen activities. Positive behaviour is successfully supported by the staff and children are actively encouraged to think about the feelings of others.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding. Leadership and management are outstanding. The Foundation Stage staff are a committed and self motivated team who are exceptionally well supported by the early years coordinator. The early years coordinator works closely with the Foundation Stage team to foster a clear vision for the development of the Foundation Stage in the transition to the Early Years Foundation Stage. The Foundation Stage is also very clearly a valued part of the school family and included in many whole school activities. There are highly effective systems in place for the evaluation of activities to ensure continual development and improvement. The school actively supports the continuing professional development of the Foundation Stage staff.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide education.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Nursery education only not applicable

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

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 *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website:
www.ofsted.gov.uk