

St James Cottage Nursery & After School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	144326
Inspection date	23 November 2007
Inspector	Deborah Page
Setting Address	St James's First School, Gaunts Common, Wimborne, Dorset, BH21 4JN
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Registered person	St James Cottage Nursery & After School Club
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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

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 CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Cottage Nursery opened approximately 24 years ago and the Cottage Club opened in 2001. A voluntary parent management committee runs the organisation.

It operates from St James First School, Gaunts Common, near Wimborne. They use a mobile classroom situated in the grounds. The nursery and out of school club have sole use of the building. There is an adjoining garden for outdoor play.

The nursery is registered to provide care for 24 children aged two to five years and out of school care for 24 children aged four to under eight years. They accept children up to the age of 11 years. It serves the village and wider community.

There are currently 32 children on the nursery roll. There are currently 40 children on roll for the out of school club. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery opens five mornings a week during school term time from 09.00 to 12.00 with lunch club from 12.00 to 13.00 and afternoon sessions from 12.15 to 14.45. The out of school club opens from 08:00 to 08:30 and 15.00 to 18:00 term time only.

Nine staff work directly with the children, six of whom have early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted generally well with routine hygiene practices such as, encouraging children to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. They use liquid soap and paper towels. However, at times hands are not cleaned adequately as some children find it difficult to use the soap dispenser.

Tables are cleaned before snacks and lunch with antibacterial wipes. Children are protected from cross infection as notices are displayed for parents regarding sickness and the exclusion period of 48 hours. Children are adequately protected if there is an accident as a record is completed for parents and written consent has been obtained for emergency medical treatment or advice. However, children's health is not fully supported because a staff member qualified in first aid is not on the premises at all times. Staff are fully aware of the procedures for the administering of medication.

Children's health is sufficiently promoted as staff provide a choice of fresh fruit at snack times and either water or milk to drink. Children's independence is promoted as they take it in turns to prepare the snack with staff. Parents provide lunch for the children which includes sandwiches, fresh fruit, cheese and yoghurt. After school children enjoy toast with a choice of spreads. Children's independence is promoted as there is a water fountain available during the different sessions. However, most younger children do not use the fountain, therefore staff cannot be sure that children's fluid intake is met effectively.

New and exciting opportunities for the out door physical play area are being finalised, as a result children's access to out door physical play has been restricted. Children do have some opportunities to get fresh air and exercise larger muscles as they play on the patio with wheeled vehicles, bean bags, play house and sand pit. In doors children have regular opportunities for music and movement. Some children enjoy the opportunities to play football.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are safe as staff ensure appropriate procedures to make sure the premises are sufficiently secure. Staff observe children as they arrive and the main entrance is closely supervised as children leave. Visitors are asked to sign in. Staff ensure a welcoming environment for children including colourful displays, posters and examples of children's creative work. Equipment is appropriate for the age range and well maintained.

Children are sufficiently protected with safety precautions, such as heater guards, socket covers and a safety gate to exclude children from the kitchen. Staff have risk assessed the temporary out door area and have decided not to use it. Fire procedures are displayed and fire drills are

regularly practised. Children learn how to be safe as they cut the fruit for snack time and staff remind children to sit properly on the chairs otherwise they may fall forward and bump their chin.

Children are sufficiently safeguarded as staff have sufficient understanding of child protection issues. However, at times child protection procedures are not effectively implemented which compromises children's safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Most children become immediately engrossed in play when they arrive. Children are happy and settled. There are various activities organised for the children including construction, books, small world, role play, computer, play dough and creative activity. Children are sufficiently interested in the planned activities and some enjoy matching coloured puppies on to coloured trays and they talk about what they are doing. Most activities are adequately organised and children take it in turns at the computer. However, at times they wait for long periods to have their turn. At times some children wander around the room unsure of what to do. Insufficient organisation of resources does not allow children to have easy access to self select and initiate their own ideas for play. Younger children enjoy opportunities to mix corn flour with water and explore the feel with their hands. As they play with the dough they sing songs to themselves, 'roll, roll, roll, the dough.' Children recognise characters in puzzles and are keen to share what they know with others as they name the characters. Staff are close by to provide appropriate support and demonstrate how to tip the puzzle out. Children learn what is right and wrong as they are asked to retrace their steps and walk in the play room. Children arrive after school and are able to choose from a variety of activities which include football, domino challenges, sewing, musical instruments, play dough and computer. Children save the creations they make out of dough to show their parents and others want to take their sewing home.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, stepping stones and early learning goals. However, at times teaching methods are not used effectively to maximise children's learning. Staff recognise that children's learning can be extended by providing easy access to a variety of resources at creative activities, however, at times the planning for this is less effective. Staff use a variety of teaching methods including regular praise and encouragement, questions and demonstration. All staff are included in the planning of activities which includes the six areas of learning, however, the system to evaluate activities is not used effectively to inform future planning. At times the organisation of resources and time does not fully support children as they wait in groups to use the computer which impacts on the time they spend at other activities. There are few opportunities for children to self select equipment to initiate their own ideas or extend their own free play. There is some good organisation of the accommodation which is bright and welcoming with displays of children's colourful creative work and a variety of educational posters. There is some effective use of space including a cosy book area which is well used by children in small groups and on their own. However, some after school equipment impacts on the space used for younger children.

Children's progress is monitored by their key worker who uses observations to inform children's assessment records. However, at times it is not clear how observations are used effectively to inform future planning and help individual children progress. The systems to assess children are currently being reviewed.

Children behave well and make a positive contribution to their own behaviour including co-operating as activities change and supporting each other as they clear away activities

Most children are confident and happy as they separate from their main carer and those who are less confident are well supported by staff. Some children show concern for themselves as they inform staff as they wash their hands, 'there are no paper towels.' Some children use their initiative and use the dispenser in another toilet. Children concentrate well as they complete puzzles and are proud of their achievements. For example, children call out when they have completed a fish puzzle and discuss fish with a staff member. Children talk freely about their home and family. Children are forming good relationships and help each other. A child feels secure as they join in an activity with another child and, with a smile of satisfaction, they hug the other child who returns the smile and they carry on playing. As a container of pencils is knocked on to the floor children automatically help each other to pick them up. Children offer to find their friend's missing shoe. They know how to behave well as they sit for activities, such as story time and wait for others at snack time. Children carry out tasks, such as collecting their own apron for creative activities, and good organisation in the cloak room area ensures children have easy access to their belongings to enable them to independently change their own shoes and slippers.

Some children talk about familiar people in their lives. All children join in tongue exercises which include 'cleaning the windows,' when children clean across their teeth with their tongue. Some children are able to recognise the initial sounds of their name and all children participate in making different sounds to exercise their mouths. Children are keen to use the paint brushes with water to make marks on walls and fences, however, at times clip boards with pencils are less effective. All children make good use of the well organised book area. Some children choose to relax on soft furnishings and look at their chosen book and other children look at books in small groups supported well by staff. Stories are read enthusiastically by staff. Children also have opportunities to show interest in print with labelled objects in the environment. Children are keen and look forward to finding out which resources are to be chosen from the, 'choose a nursery rhyme box.' Humpty Dumpty appears and sits on the box. All children join in the nursery rhyme. Children sit in anticipation as they listen carefully to sounds created in a purple bag. They are confident in which sounds relate to the different instruments.

Children show an interest in sustained construction as they build with the duplo. Some children are able to describe what they have constructed. There are routine opportunities for children to show an interest in numbers and counting as a puppet is used to count the number of children and the children join in. However, there is limited opportunity in routine activities for children to count individually to show what they know. Individual children are able to count one to six as they decorate their own egg box in a creative activity. Some children show an interest in different shaped bean bags and name them correctly before aiming and throwing them in to a container. Children talk about the different smells of fruit and vegetables as they prepare them to make patterns. They enjoy making patterns as they dip the fruit and vegetables into different coloured paints and make marks. Children recognise that the celery print is a moon shape. Some children are excited as they realise they can create new colours. Some children concentrate well and are well supported by staff as they listen to the instructions on activity cards and match sequences of number, objects and colour.

Some children show an interest in using the computer and are able to complete a simple programme. They are able to click on the colour and then the picture. However, several children wait long periods for their turn and this impacts on the time allowed for other activities. Some children realise tools can be used for a purpose. For example, children smooth the sand with a

trowel in the out door sand pit. Their friend offers to tip more sand from their bucket and they work together. Children have opportunities to show an interest in the world they live as they observe tadpoles.

Children are learning to use tools safely as they prepare the fruit for snack time. They realise bananas are easier to cut than apples. Children have opportunities to explore malleable materials, such as play dough as they mould it into different shapes. Children are able to negotiate space and fit into confined spaces when sitting in a large group. There are opportunities for children to respond to rhythm and music. Children have several opportunities for using one handed tools, including paint brushes, tools in the sand pit, glue sticks and play dough equipment. However, planning for the use of pencils, crayons and scissors is less effective.

Some children are able to differentiate between colours as they choose which tissue to decorate their egg box. Children's learning is restricted as planning to provide a choice of resources to maximise children's learning in some creative activities is less effective. Children are eager to join in favourite action rhymes and songs. Some children enjoy the role play area and talk about similarities in the microwave and the washing machine. Staff demonstrate how to dress a doll in a sari as children talk about their own families.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are sufficiently met as staff make sure children are well supported as they arrive at the setting. Children have a greater awareness of the world as they celebrate different festivals and provide positive images of different cultures, such as dolls and dolls clothes, puzzles, instruments, books and posters. There are some opportunities for children to learn about their own community. Staff work closely with parents of children with specific needs and other professionals, however, at times some children are not fully supported in activities. Children's privacy is well respected as they change clothes to play football. There are systems in place to ensure children with English as an additional language have appropriate support.

Children behave well and staff regularly praise them in their activities. Staff manage children's behaviour well. For example, two children are supported by staff and they decide to share the duplo. Children are praised for, 'kind hands at nursery,' 'good peeling,' and 'excellent computer work.' Children are reminded about their manners at snack time. A list of rules are displayed for older children and a poster displaying different emotions. Children respect each others wishes and relate well as they participate in activities together, such as air hockey. Older children support younger children for example, helping with their football boot laces. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

There is a satisfactory partnership with parents and carers. New parents receive a detailed prospectus, including information relating to the Foundation Stage Curriculum and how to access policies and procedures. Staff have recognised that systems to find out about children's starting points for care, teaching and learning could be improved and this is being reviewed. Parents and carers are invited on to the committee and annual general meetings and, are welcome to visit the group. Children have allocated key workers, however, some parents have less opportunities to talk to key workers about planned topics and learning activities, and children's responses to activities in both the family and the setting. Parents and carers receive written reports about how their children are progressing and are able to add their own comments.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are sufficiently cared for by staff and the committee as a recent review of recruiting and vetting procedures now include arrangements to gain the health of staff. Staff and committee are pro-active in making sure that adult to child ratios are maintained at all times with good contingency plans for emergencies. Children benefit from a regular review of the operational plan, including policies and procedures. However, a staff member qualified in first aid is not on the premises at all times, therefore, children's health is compromised. Staff are addressing this issue as a matter of urgency. At times children's health is not fully supported as children are at risk from germs. Child protection procedures are not implemented effectively therefore the safeguarding of children is compromised. Documentation is sufficiently maintained, however, at times the attendance record is not accurate. The setting meets the needs and education of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The staff and the committee have a good partnership. They are pro-active in looking at how improvements can be made in the care and learning opportunities they provide for children, which includes questionnaires for parents. Staff work well with the management committee to implement changes to benefit the children's learning and well being. For example, the re-organisation of the out door area which is currently taking place. Although it is good that the staff and management committee have recognised some areas that need improving, such as reviewing systems to find out about children's starting points in their learning, the judgement of the systems to assess children, at this time, is no more than satisfactory. Systems are not always effective in evaluating the nursery education provision and need improving to maximise children's learning and support them in their next stage of learning. The special needs co-ordinator works closely with parents, staff and other professionals to ensure appropriate care of children.

Staff have regular planning and team meetings with brief hand written notes recorded during discussions. Appraisals are used to discuss staff's future training needs. Training is encouraged by the person in charge and fully supported by the management committee. Team meetings are used to cascade training information to staff.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the staff agreed to make sure all relevant information is included in policies and procedures in line with the National Standards. Staff and committee have reviewed policies and procedures including child protection and complaints. This contributes to the care and welfare of children.

Staff also agreed to make sure activities provide sufficient challenges for all children in the nursery. Steps have been taken to ensure children have appropriate challenges, however, this area still needs further development to allow independent choice of resources to initiate children's own ideas in play.

At the last education inspection staff agreed to ensure children's progress is effectively monitored and assessed to ensure that they are appropriately challenged and given opportunities to extend their learning. Staff have implemented systems to monitor children's progress. However, this area needs further development to make sure observations are used effectively to help children progress in their learning. Staff also agreed to ensure children's progress is effectively monitored and assessed to ensure that they are appropriately challenged and given

opportunities to extend their learning. All staff are now included in the planning of activities and systems have been implemented to monitor and evaluate activities. However, at times evaluation systems are less effective and areas for improvement are not identified.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- make sure a staff member qualified in first aid is on the premises at all times
- make sure children are supported in preventing germs when washing their hands
- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures
- develop clear attendance records of children and, make sure accurate times are recorded

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 are deployed effectively and resources are used appropriately to support choices in children's learning
- develop systems to ensure the nursery education provision is effectively monitored to ensure children are progressing in their learning
- ensure parents have opportunities to discuss children's progress and share what they know about their children's learning

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