

# Mells Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** EY348568  
**Inspection date** 23 May 2007  
**Inspector** Susan June Stone

**Setting Address** Mells Green, Mells, Frome, Somerset, BA11 3QE

**Telephone number** 01373 813978

**E-mail**

**Registered person** Mells Nursery

**Type of inspection** Integrated

**Type of care** Full day 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](http://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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Mells Nursery is a committee run group which opened in 2007 in its current location, however it has been registered with Ofsted since 1992. It operates from its own building on land adjacent to Mells School in the village of Mells in Somerset. A maximum of 22 children may attend the group at any one time. At present there are 31 children on roll which includes 14 children in receipt of government funding. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions operate from 09.15 until 12.00 and from 12.45 until 15.30. Children have the option of extending their sessions to include the lunch time period.

There are five core members of staff employed within the group. The manager and deputy both have suitable level three qualifications.

The setting receives support and guidance from the local authority advisors. The setting also has strong links with the local primary school.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are beginning to learn about their own personal care, and the spread of infection through clear hand washing routines, which are consistently encouraged by staff. The children understand why they need to wash their hands, and do this independently after using the toilet facilities and messy play. They use liquid soap and running water to wash their hands and paper towels are available for hand drying. Staff set good examples for hygiene in their behaviour and practice. They supervise hand washing before snacks and meals to ensure the children's hands are suitably clean. They wipe tables before and after snack with disinfectant spray, and provide children with tissues to wipe noses that are runny.

Staff have a good knowledge of first aid. They ensure that their certificates remain current and the first aid box is regularly checked to ensure the contents are suitable to use. This helps to ensure that medical emergencies can be dealt with effectively. However, there is no written permission from parents to allow the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment.

The daily routine allows the children to experience regular physical play and benefit from the fresh air. They have free access to the outside area where they are able to play with the sand and water or pedal bikes and ride scooters. The nursery is also able to use of the school facilities and outdoor climbing equipment. These activities and opportunities help the children to develop their large muscle skills and co-ordination.

The children enjoy a different healthy snack each day, which could include fresh fruit like banana and apple, or raw carrot and breadsticks. The children sit together at a table to eat their snack. They enjoy the social occasion where they interact and communicate with each other, talking about what they have been doing. They have a choice of milk or water to drink and confidently pour their own drinks. Additional drinks of water are available for the children to help themselves to during the session, encouraging them to take some responsibility for their own needs and requirements.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

The nursery has recently moved into their own building, where a welcoming environment is provided for children and parents. The play space is organised suitably well to create a child friendly environment, where children experience a range of play opportunities. The children can self-select from toys available each day, making their own decisions about play. They freely access the outdoor area, weather permitting. There is sufficient furniture and equipment available to meet the care needs of all children attending. Children enjoy using the toys available to them, which are clean, safe and suitable to use. The staff are well deployed within the setting and appropriate adult to child ratios are maintained. This ensures that the children are supervised closely at all times.

Potential risks to children are minimised because staff check all areas before children arrive to ensure that safety measures are in place. Staff carry out general safety checks each day of the indoor and outdoor areas, to ensure the environment is safe for the children to use. This helps to ensure that the children can enjoy a variety of play opportunities in generally safe

surroundings, thus contributing to the children's safety and wellbeing. The nursery has a defined procedure for the emergency evacuation of the building. However, an emergency evacuation has not been practised since moving into the premises. This means that staff and all children are not fully aware of how to evacuate the building in the event of an emergency. It also means the procedure has not been practised to ensure it is effective. A general risk assessment of the premises and outdoor area was conducted before the nursery opened, to identify any potential risks to children and record any appropriate action to take. As a result of this some areas are still not accessible to the children. For example the garden area that is designated to be a sensory area in the future.

Staff ensure the children's safety remains a priority. The children are well protected by staff who have a good understanding in their role in protecting children. All staff are aware of the setting's child protection policy and procedures. The manager has a clear understanding of her responsibility in the safeguarding of children, making sure the children's welfare is always a priority.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are happy to attend the nursery. They feel settled and secure in the welcoming environment created by staff. Good relationships have been developed between staff and children and there is a calm, relaxed and happy atmosphere. Children enjoy positive interaction from staff, which helps them to learn and make progress in all areas. Children show enthusiasm and enjoyment at the activities available and soon settle to their chosen task. They select from the activities and resources set out each day, confidently choosing what they want to play with. They interact and play happily alongside each other, and are beginning to share and take turns. They take part in the range of activities which address the six areas of learning and encourage them to learn and develop through their play. Children benefit from the activities provided, which allow them to explore and investigate using their senses as appropriate. Resources and space are used suitably well to enhance children's play and provide an appropriate environment for them to learn and develop as they play.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a suitable knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. They plan and organise a range of activities and play opportunities that are fun for the children and cover the six areas of learning. These are linked to the stepping stones to encourage learning and development and to ensure children make suitable Foundation Stage progress. The children's participation in activities is not always effectively monitored though. Written activity plans indicate that children are offered a range of activities across the six areas of learning. Learning intentions of activities, linked to the stepping stones in the Foundation Stage are recorded. The evaluation of activities however is sometimes very general and is for the whole week, not for each separate time the activity was delivered. The evaluation does not always clearly indicate whether learning objectives have been met. Staff know the children well and adapt activities to suit their needs. They are suitably involved in the activities provided and question children effectively. For example, 'What do you think will happen with this?', 'Do you think it is heavy or light?', 'Do you think it will float or sink?' Assessment is used and children's progress is monitored. All children have individual progress folders, however the information contained in these does not specifically link to the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage. It is also not clear how these progress files are used

to inform future planning of activities, to help to ensure all children are suitably challenged and individual progress is continued through the stepping stones.

Children are confident to attend the nursery and they understand the daily routine. They respond well to the praise and encouragement from staff. They sit quietly as appropriate, such as at story time when they sit sensibly and listen to the story, and at register time when they wait for their names to be called. They are developing personal independence, children select resources for themselves and choose from activities on offer.

They use language well to communicate and express their thoughts and ideas. They confidently initiate conversations with adults and each other, and eagerly talk about what they are doing or what they know. They are able to recognise their written name and some can recognise the names of others. Some children are able to write their name and do so to label their work and pictures. Children's writing skills are being further developed through planned activities and opportunities to mark make. They use chalks during outdoor play, making marks on the playground floor.

Children show an interest in numbers and counting, and they regularly count in daily routines, such as how many children are present at register time. They are able to recognise numbers in their digit form. Finding the correct numbered parking bay chalked on the playground floor. Children name a variety of shapes and use different shapes to create patterns and different house designs on paper. During the water activity the children predict if things are heavy or light and whether items will float or sink.

Through topic work and themes children are learning about different festivals, cultures and beliefs. They are learning to value and respect the views and beliefs of others. They are developing their computer skills and use the mouse to successfully control a simple computer program. They learn about their natural environment and have planted seeds, watered them and watched them grow.

Children enjoy many creative activities like role-play, collage, play dough and crafts. They use their imagination well in role-play and games, re-creating familiar scenarios, such as caring for babies, or being policemen or firemen rushing to emergency situations like house fires. The children enjoy music and singing, they confidently match actions and movements to songs and rhymes.

The children have regular exercise and play outside in the fresh air daily and this helps to keep them fit. The children enjoy the freedom of space and eagerly run around creating their own games. They confidently pedal on the bikes and balance when using the scooters. The children show good control and coordination of their movements and a growing awareness of space. They move around the setting both inside and outside, with confidence, they successfully negotiate space. They use a variety of tools and equipment with increasing control and dexterity, such as rolling pins and cutters when using the play dough, scissors and glue sticks when creating collages and scoops and spades when playing with the sand.

Overall, the children are making good progress in all areas.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are building good relationships with staff and peers. They play well individually or together in small groups. They know the levels of expected behaviour and they behave well. They are aware of the realistic boundaries that have been set and respond effectively to staff direction. Staff use lots of praise and encouragement, show a united approach and are positive role models for the children. The children demonstrate good manners and are polite, saying 'please' and 'thank you' when appropriate, such as at snack time. Staff know the children well; they effectively monitor and support children's individual needs. Discussions indicate suitable support is offered for children with learning difficulties or English as an additional language. The group liaise with other professionals and agencies to ensure a consistent approach is offered and children's specific needs are identified and addressed.

Through planned activities children are offered opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the wider world around them. They go on nature walks within the local environment and have planted seeds to watch them grow. The children celebrate a variety of festivals and have access to a range of resources which help to promote positive attitudes to diversity. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the staff's friendly relationship with parents. This helps to contribute to the consistency in the children's care and wellbeing in the setting. Staff are available to talk with parents each day. Information about the provision is regularly shared with parents through written reports, newsletters, a notice board, the prospectus and talking to staff at the end of each session. Parents spoken to, expressed that they were very happy with the care and education that is provided for their children.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's care is appropriately supported by good organisation. The daily sessions are organised by the manager and nursery staff who have appropriate experience and knowledge of childcare. They work together to provide a welcoming environment for the children and ensure sessions run smoothly. The children benefit from a well organised environment with a balance of free play and adult led planned activities. They experience a variety of different play opportunities which support their development and learning and which enable them to play and explore freely. Staff are deployed well within the setting, so children receive appropriate adult attention.

The leadership and management of the setting are good. Good relationships have been developed between the current committee and staff. The nursery is managed by a committee of parent volunteers who have worked tirelessly to raise funds and provide the nursery with their own premises. Recently their main focus has been on this project and unfortunately systems have not been entirely effective to monitor and evaluate the nursery provision of care and nursery education to ensure the outcomes for children are effectively promoted. Appraisals have not been conducted for all staff.

Most of the required documentation relating to the children's education, care, health and safety is in place to ensure that they are cared for appropriately and the outcomes for children are promoted. However, written permission from parents for seeking any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment has not been obtained. All documentation is suitably maintained and stored to ensure confidentiality.

Overall, the nursery meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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**

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

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### **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 that emergency evacuation procedures are regularly practised
- obtain written permission from parents for seeking any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment
- further develop systems for the monitoring and evaluation of the provision of care, nursery education and outcomes for children, including the monitoring of children's participation in the activities provided (also applies to Nursery Education)

#### **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):

- develop children's progress records to ensure evidence of achievements is suitably recorded; use children's progress records as an aid to inform planning, to ensure children are suitably challenged and moved through the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage and individual needs are met
- make sure that activities are evaluated against learning objectives to identify if learning intentions have or have not been met.

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