

Maison Dieu Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127363
Inspection date	19 November 2007
Inspector	Beth Kingsland
Setting Address	94 Maison Dieu Road, Dover, Kent, CT16 1RU
Telephone number	01304 203191214951
E-mail	maisondieu@nursery-school.fsnet.co.uk
Registered person	Frank Alan Smith
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.

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?

The Maison Dieu Nursery opened in 1989. It operates from a large house in the centre of Dover. The nursery has access to two floors, an office, toilets, and a kitchen. The nursery serves the local area and surrounding towns.

There are currently 110 children on roll. This includes 50 children who are in receipt of nursery funding.

Children attend a variety of sessions each week. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round, with a two-week break in the summer. Sessions last from 08:30 to 12:00 and 13:00 to 17:30.

There are six full time staff and five part time staff working with the children, 10 have early years qualifications and have attended short courses.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is well maintained because practitioners have a good understanding of health and hygiene policies and procedures. All practitioners have current first aid training, which is renewed on an ongoing basis. Secure systems are in place to deal with accidents effectively, and record these, sharing information appropriately with parents. Robust procedures are in place to administer medication and children stay healthy because practitioners have a good knowledge about their medical history. Children's health is assured in an emergency situation because parents provide written consent for their child to receive emergency medical treatment. Children's dietary requirements are fully met, as written information is obtained as part of the registration process, and all practitioners are fully aware of what children can and cannot have to eat.

Formal risk assessment are completed, which include details of the cleaning procedures throughout the nursery. This ensures that children can play with equipment that is clean and appropriately maintained. However, these routines have not been implemented with regard to the flooring in the older children's play room, for example, the floor is covered in thread bear carpet, which is dirty and unsuitable. As a result, children's health is compromised.

Children have a good understanding about healthy living and talk about why it is important to wash their hands after they have been to the toilet. They wash their hands before choosing to have their snack, and after playing outside, recognising that germs can spread all over their bodies. Children wipe their noses using tissues and throw these away, washing their hands afterwards, recognising the importance of following good personal hygiene routines. They wipe tables, in preparation for snack time, and watch as practitioners use anti-bacterial spray, helping to maintain a clean and healthy environment. Children's understanding of healthy eating is extremely well promoted through the range of healthy options provided at snack times, which include a wide range of different fruits. However, although children are given individual plates, they are not appropriately maintained, for example, they have visible knives grooves within the plastic.

Physical play is well planned both in the outside and indoor learning environment. Children have good opportunities to access the full range of large and small equipment each week and engage in music and movement sessions. They run around excitedly following their peers and throwing and catching balls. Overall, children have an exceptional understanding of why it is important to lead a healthy lifestyle and recognise that personal hygiene, a healthy balanced diet and regular daily exercise are all significant factors, which contribute to achieving this.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children have an exceptional understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Practitioners make good use of incidental opportunities and daily routines to increase their awareness. For example, children talk about why they need to hold the hand rail walking up and down the stairs. They recognise the importance of tucking chairs under the table, when they have finished their snack, and learn how to use tools, such as cutters and knives safely when playing with dough. Children are reminded not to run around with scissors and discuss why it is important to leave them closed when they have finished using them.

Children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe in an emergency situation is consolidated as they talk about procedures for emergency evacuation and practise these regularly, with the school and independently. Their safety is assured because practitioners have an excellent understanding of safety issues and are vigilant. Practitioners conduct daily formal risk assessments on all areas used by children to ensure risks and hazards are minimised.

Children are well protected whilst at nursery because all practitioners have completed relevant training and have an excellent understanding of their role with regards to protecting children in their care. They recognise different types of abuse and possible signs and symptoms that may cause concern and have secure systems in place to share information. Secure procedures are known and implemented by practitioners regarding how to respond to child protection issues, both within the nursery and externally, and practitioners have a secure understanding of how to implement local safeguarding procedures.

Children benefit immensely from the bright and vibrant physical environment, which really enhances their independent learning. The room is set up attractively into different workshop areas, which are labelled, and inviting. The layout is effective in helping to promote children's independence, as well as ensuring their safety. Children take themselves to the toilets and secure procedures are implemented to protect children from un-wanted visitors. Children have independent access to an array of equipment and play provision, which is all presented at low level. Secure procedures are in place to ensure this is safe, clean and well maintained, which contributes to keeping children safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive happily. They rush into the nursery and have a quick cuddle with practitioners and chat with their peers as they join in with activities. Practitioners are extremely supportive towards children who arrive less reassured and sit and cuddle them asking for their help to complete tasks, which makes them feel valued and important. Children sit together for circle time and participate in group discussions contributing their own ideas about what they would like to play. Younger children benefit enormously from playing alongside their older peers. They become competent learners helping to set up for snack time and identifying the fruit they will be eating.

Children are extremely familiar with the daily routine and show high levels of confidence and independence. They choose their own activities, which enables them to be creative and imaginative, and receive extremely good support from practitioners who know them exceptionally well. Younger children show high levels of concentration and develop new skills because practitioners show them how to hold tools correctly, for example, and how to use the bat and ball when playing outside. Some of the younger children begin to feel a little anxious and ask for mummy, and practitioners use picture cards, representing a visual time line, to discuss what will happen next. This helps them to feel reassured and settled. Children use their senses to explore a range of media and become skilful communicators talking about the pictures in the book and re-telling stories in their own words. They build on their existing knowledge and learn new skills because practitioners have a good knowledge of child development and plan a wide range of activities and experiences pitched at their individual level. Consequently, children's interest is sustained, they are highly motivated and eager to learn and fully involved in all aspects of the day.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children develop exceptional levels of independence and this is significantly enhanced through the presentation of the wonderful and vibrant learning environment and the daily routine. They have independent access to the full range of equipment and resources and make their own decisions about their learning. Consequently, they concentrate well, show good initiative and persevere with self chosen tasks. Children display wonderful independence choosing when to have their snack. They wash their hands, pour their own drinks and select the food they want placing it on individual plates. They develop a very good understanding of space recognising when there is not enough room for them to sit down, and happily go off to play with something else until a space becomes available. Children are extremely kind towards one another and understand the importance of sharing. They decide to each break off a piece from their dough, when another child asks to join in their play, and this enables all children to have some.

Children confidently handle a range of tools and equipment, including knives, scissors and cutters. They laugh with their peers as they make wiggly worms from play dough. Children count the number of worms they make and recognise they have an extra worm, when one breaks in half. They solve their own problems, for example, when connecting pieces of construction equipment together, and giggle with their peers building imaginative construction, and counting how many bricks they had used. However, opportunities for children to continue to solve simple mathematical problems as part of the daily routine and not fully extended. Children have opportunities to develop their curiosity and investigative skills using magnifying glasses to examine and compare patterns on shells and leaves. Children examine different life cycles and practitioners use familiar stories and props to help increase their understanding. They talk about different animals, where they live and how to take care of them. Children's understanding of night and day is explored and they learn about animals that hibernate. Children benefit from daily opportunities to play outside in the playground and their physical skills are exceptionally well developed as they learn to use a range of large and small apparatus.

Children's early reading and writing skills are extremely well promoted. Children help themselves to an extensive range of writing tools and equipment and enjoy writing letters and posting these to their friends and families. They fetch notepads and pencils to make shopping lists and many children confidently write some recognisable letters. Children's understanding of sounds and letters is promoted through discussions and they recognise the initial sounds in their name. Many children suggest other words beginning with the same sound and all children attempt to label their own work. They have wonderful opportunities to share stories, using a range of puppets, story sacks and props, and learn to use non fiction books to help support their learning.

Their imagination is well promoted and practitioners are effective in helping them to extend their ideas through play. For example, children dress up and pretend to be doctors and practitioners show them how to use the instruments explaining what job they do and how to use them. Children imitate this and pretend to give injections to their peers. They show excellent imagination when playing with cars and trucks as they line them all up pretending they are stuck. Children take part in a range of creative activities. However, these tend to be staff led, with children working to complete pre-created designs or pictures. As a result, children do not experience sufficient opportunities to delight in experiences to explore creativity for themselves.

Children's progress is really enhanced because teaching is rooted in a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and practitioners recognise how children learn most effectively. High priority is placed on individual learning, although children also benefit from opportunities to work and play in large and small groups. These activities are tailored to meet the individual needs of the children in each group and practitioners adapt their teaching techniques and

questioning to ensure effective support and sufficient challenges are provided. Systems to plan the educational programme are secure and ensure that all aspects are sufficiently included. Procedures to continually monitor and assess children's individual progress towards the early learning goals are robust, and assessment takes place through a variety of ways. Practitioners talk confidently about children's next steps for development. They update children's assessment records regularly and use this information to help plan for the following week. Consequently, activities are pitched at the appropriate level and children develop at their own rate.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children really learn to value themselves and their peers and recognise the differences and similarities between themselves and others. They discuss their family units, bringing photographs in from home, and talk about who lives in their house. Children's understanding of diversity is well promoted through everyday discussions with practitioners, use of stories and access to a range of play resources reflecting positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. Children discuss how they celebrate their own birthdays and other special events. They listen to stories about traditions and customs and take part in activities that allow children to learn about the views and feelings of others.

Children's behaviour is extremely good. Practitioners are highly effective in the way in which they help children understand the effects of unwanted behaviour, through the use of displays and discussion around the nursery rules. Consequently, children have an exceptionally good understanding of what is right and wrong, and learn to value themselves, and other children, praising them for their individual achievements. As a result, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children flourish because they are exceptionally well supported by qualified practitioners who have a good knowledge and understanding of their individual needs and home and family circumstances. They are cared for in a fully inclusive environment where each child is treated and valued as an individual. Children benefit enormously because extremely strong links are in place between home and the nursery and practitioners and parents build positive informal relationships. Parents are invited to be involved with the group through a variety of ways and receive detailed information through a prospectus, parent pack and regular newsletters. Flexible settling in and registration procedures help ensure practitioners have a good knowledge about each individual child, which impacts on the relationships they build. The implementation of a successful key worker system really helps to develop children's sense of security and belonging. They have access to all nursery policies and procedures.

The partnerships with parents of children who receive nursery education are good. They are welcome to discuss their child's individual achievements and progress at any time with their child's key worker. Parents are actively encouraged to share what they know about their child, valuing the role they play as early educators. They are well informed about what their child is involved in on a daily basis, for example, through regular newsletters, and planning is displayed on the notice board. Parents learn about children's progress within the Foundation Stage through regular written reports, which identifies children's next steps for development, and how parents can help support this at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children thrive and have a wonderful time at the setting because all practitioners have a good understanding of how children learn and how important play is in their development. They work well as a team and communicate effectively through informal discussion and formal meetings to ensure the setting is well organised and the operational plan implemented in practice.

Children make good progress in their learning because the leadership and management of nursery education is good. The system for planning and assessment is extremely secure and high priority is placed on continually monitoring teaching, the educational programme and the impact this has on children's learning. All practitioners are involved in the overall planning and each key worker updates their child's assessment records weekly, which helps them to tailor their teaching and plan accordingly. Management clearly recognise the strengths within the group and continually monitor and evaluate every aspect of the provision to identify areas for improvement. Children's learning is significantly enhanced because all practitioners have an expert knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and recognise how young children learn most effectively. They plan and implement a varied and exciting educational programme, where every child is able to consolidate their learning and develop new skills and knowledge.

Children benefit because robust and rigorous systems are in place to recruit, appoint and induct new staff, ensuring they are suitable to work with children on an ongoing basis. Effective systems are in place to support and monitor all practitioners continually through the implementation of a secure induction programme, regular supervision meetings and the identification of ongoing training needs. Records are satisfactory maintained, and effective systems are in place to monitor these. However, permission for children to be transported in a vehicle has not been obtained. Deployment of staff is highly effective helping children to develop secure relationships and self assurance. As a result, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery were asked to, develop staff's knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities issues, devise and implement procedures which enable parents to share what they know about their children and ensure privacy and dignity for children when using the toilets. All the recommendation have been achieved. Children play in a fully inclusive environment and parents receive good opportunities to discuss with staff their children's progress and achievements. The toilets have been adapted to ensure children's privacy is maintained and respected.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have 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

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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):

- develop appropriate steps to ensure that flooring is suitable and hygienic for children to play
- obtain permission for children to be transported in a vehicle

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):

- continue to develop opportunities for children freely experience a range creative activities that allow them to explore for themselves
- extend opportunities for children to solve simple mathematical problems

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