

Butcombe Clifton College

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Dawn Biggers

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Type of inspection Nursery Education

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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 provider must give a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must give a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Day Care and Childminding (inspection) (England) Regulations 2005 No 2300 Regulations 5 and 6).

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?

Butcombe Pre-Preparatory School is part of Clifton College, an independent school. It opened in 1991. It operates from two large, converted Edwardian houses. The

nursery is on two floors of one of the buildings and the reception children are on the lower ground floor of the other. It is situated in Clifton, in the city of Bristol. The school serves the Bristol area. A maximum of 247 children attend the Pre-preparatory School at any one time. The school opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 08.30 until 15.30. There is before and after school care, provided between 08.00 and 18.00. There is an enclosed outside area with fixed play equipment.

There are currently 91 children from three to five years on roll. This includes 64 children receiving funding for early education. Children attend for a minimum of five sessions. The school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The school employs 34 staff and of these 13 have early years qualifications. There are five specialist teachers who support the children's learning. The group achieved the Bristol Standards accreditation in 2003 and receives support from a mentor/teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children make excellent progress in all areas of learning as teaching is consistently inspiring and challenging for children. All staff have a thorough knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and have a very clear understanding of how to promote and support children's learning. Teaching highly motivates children through a wide variety of interesting and innovative activities, resources and approaches that capture children's interest and imagination. Planning for learning and development is highly effective and well informed through very good levels of communication between teachers and assistants. A clear evaluation of each child's achievements and progress along the Foundation Stage curriculum is made through a combination of both verbal and written observation, such as, learning diaries and stories. Very good planning of resources and the layout of the inside and outside areas of the nursery and reception classes ensures that each area of the curriculum is covered. As a result, children have choice within activities and easy access to an extensive range of resources. This strongly enhances children's independent learning. Consequently, children are motivated to investigate and to try out new experiences. They are eager to learn and self-assured in their play in a vibrant learning environment.

Children make excellent progress in mathematics. They count reliably from one to 11 and beyond in a host of meaningful situations throughout their day. They

spontaneously count the calendar days and identify the numerals related and display these on the board. In their work books they develop a story and recognise objects and numbers for, instance, by drawing one crab and two shrimps and are supported with excellent resources. Therefore they spontaneously count whilst making a pattern with the shapes and match different shells to the number cards during a small group adult-led activity. Experienced teachers and assistants skilfully manage children of differing abilities. A more able child recognises some larger numbers, for instance 100 and is supported with visual aids and resources. Children solve simple problems, such as, after re-telling the goldilocks story they identify they need a cottage and draw one.

Children establish excellent relationships; they play in small groups as well as independently, for example, they show each other their picture in their work books. They negotiate their roles during imaginative play saying, 'I'm the mummy' and discuss superhero characters, which then leads to the role play area becoming Darth Vader's palace.

All children use marks readily, older children are skilled at writing their own names and the most able children write correctly formed letters and words. They attempt writing for a wide variety of purposes throughout the nursery, such as, on clip boards in the shop and travel agents. They are strongly supported in their development of writing skills, as guided writing and independent writing skills are closely recorded and monitored. Children enjoy the fun and use of sounds whilst discovering words that rhyme and refer to the prompts on display to help them build letters and sounds into words. They thoroughly enjoy the many opportunities to handle and read books, and these are used exceptionally well to support activities, such as, the visit to the farm. Children, therefore, have very good access to reference books throughout the nursery. For example, during a creative activity they refer to the wave pictures before painting their own.

Children have very good opportunities to take their learning outside. The outside area is an extension of indoors. For instance, children explore natural resources, build, participate in a games, such as the 'marble run' and role play with the tents, dolls and pushchairs and shop. Children thoroughly enjoy the opportunities to interact with the natural world. For example, they enthusiastically discuss the farm visit, drawing a plan. They confidently use the computer to print their farmyard picture and use photos and drawings of their wonderful adventure. They confidently use language really well, whilst using the interactive whiteboard. For example, saying 'the sting ray has wobbly arms', 'the crabs might pinch you' and 'I think the chickens are laying eggs'. They help to plant many items, such as, runner beans and pick and eat these. They look at the reference books on display to share what they have found out. Children have rich experiences in which to engage their imaginations. Role play areas are well resourced with a number of good quality props to create realism that successfully fire children's imaginations, such as, the ship and grocers. Children's creativity is highly valued, therefore activities, such as, painting allow their free expression as they make circular and straight movements manipulating the brush well, whilst creating the waves. They use descriptive language very well, such as, splash and crash and imitate a wave by listening to the music and raising their

arms. They experiment with the colours and identify changes, such as, 'mines getting bigger' and 'it's changing colour'. Activities are well presented for children to explore both through pre-planned activities and through child initiated free play.

Children's physical development is strongly promoted through the effective planning of physical play sessions and spontaneous opportunities throughout the day. Children use a wide range of apparatus with increasing control, for example, they develop their balancing and climbing skills. They access a good range of equipment to develop their large muscle skills, such as, the beanbags and hoops. They confidently manoeuvre the bikes and pushchairs with ease outdoors and stretch and reach whilst building towers inside and out with the plastic and wooden bricks. Children thoroughly enjoy the opportunities to sing and to move to music. They quickly grow in confidence and very enthusiastically follow instructions and use rhythms whilst tapping the syllables of the sea animals' names on the drum. They demonstrate very good speaking and listening skills. At circle time, children confidently share their object from home, for example, a purse, saying 'I've got to save money for an electric guitar'.

Children are very well behaved and respond well to the high expectations of staff. Effective strategies, used throughout the school, such as, reinforcement of the 'golden rules', have the desired effect and children listen carefully. Staff provide very high levels of positive affirmation for children throughout the day. This underlines the expected behaviour and provides children with lots of opportunity to have their self-esteem raised and their efforts acknowledged. Children practise taking turns in a wide variety of situations. They spontaneously help each other, for example passing the board and elastic bands. They work cooperatively together, sharing resources and help to carry boxed toy resources to be put away.

Children strongly benefit from shared planning of the outside area; from the close working relationship between the nursery and the reception class staff; and with the wider school through shared events used in a number of ways to all children's benefit. Children make a seamless transition when moving from the nursery to the reception class, because they are very well supported and prepared.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents are extremely happy with the high quality care and education provided. They comment very highly about the friendliness, professionalism and approachability of the staff. Excellent procedures support children settling-in, which include an introduction visit, information evening and a comprehensive parents prospectus. Very good liaison means that information about children's development and interests is obtained from the beginning in a 'child form'. This superbly contributes to a very successful settling-in process. Positive daily feedback and formal and informal opportunities, such as, parents evenings, open afternoons and coffee mornings, enable them to be very proactively involved in discussing and contributing to their children's very good progress. Topic books with

their work share children's fun experiences and book packs enable parents to be proactive in supporting their learning further at home. The parents' network, well planned newsletters, extensive daily activities and plans displayed on the notice boards are very frequently shared with them. Well written accessible policies provide comprehensive information about the procedures and a very good introduction to the Foundation Stage curriculum and Early Learning goals. The school's partnership is significantly enhanced through acting upon parent's feedback, for example, in a suggestion box and message book. Parents are involved in outings and embrace the many opportunities to share their skills and cultural backgrounds by joining in the activity sessions. This values their input extremely and includes them actively in children's learning. Therefore, they are very effectively involved in their education. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The leadership and management is outstanding. The head teacher and staff hold a clear vision for the nursery education that provides a strong focus on the personal development and achievement of children. The on-going monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum is overseen extremely well. The nursery and reception teachers meet regularly with the head teacher to discuss the provision of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Long and medium term planning ensures that each of the areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum is covered. Medium term planning comprehensively identifies learning outcomes for children linked to the Foundation Stage curriculum. The excellent planning also identifies the likely topic, activities, resources and assessment opportunities and the lead is often taken from children's interests.

Staff meet weekly to plan in detail and excellent daily communications support the brilliant organisation. The weekly planning identifies the activities that are provided within each area of learning. Differentiation is achieved across each area of learning through the identification of individual learning outcomes. Observations of specific children contribute to the assessment process. Effective assessment, clear evaluations of what children have learned and good communication between staff members strongly contribute to the very good quality of forward planning. The committed and skilled staff team work extremely well together and work hard to make a vibrant learning environment for children. As a result, children make excellent progress. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The previous inspection recommended that the school continue to develop the systems to regularly seek parents' comments and suggestions.

A parents' suggestion box and message book have been implemented, therefore improving the opportunities for them to give feed back and make suggestions about the school provision.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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