



Cheltenham College Junior School

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?

Cheltenham College Junior School was established in 1863 and is a co-educational school for children from the age of three to thirteen. The school is situated near to the centre of Cheltenham in Gloucestershire. Kingfishers is the pre-preparatory department of the junior school. The department was opened in September 1993 and takes children from three to seven years of age. Children attend from a wide area around Cheltenham and represent the cultural diversity within the community.

Kingfishers occupies buildings at the centre of the school campus. The nursery uses a separate converted building with its own play area. There are two parallel reception classes in a larger, main building. All the children have use of the school grounds and

playing fields and the children visit the main part of the school to support topic work and for some activities such as swimming and physical education. The school day runs from 09.00 to 15.30. Children in the reception classes are expected to attend for a minimum of five mornings; the nursery class day can be more flexible to cater for youngest pupils. An extended day with activities from 08.15 to 17.30 is also offered.

There are 121 children on roll in Kingfishers. Of these, 32 children receive funding for early years education. The school supports children with learning difficulties and children for whom English is an additional language. The deputy head teacher is responsible for managing the twelve staff who work with the nursery and reception classes. The two reception teachers hold teaching qualifications with a specialism in Early Years. The nursery teacher holds an Advanced Diploma in Childcare and Education and a Foundation Degree. Teaching assistants rotate between the reception and nursery to provide extra support and continuity. Specialist teachers for music, French and physical education work with the class teachers on a regular basis. Classroom organisation is based on High Scope principles and practice.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Nursery Education

Children take part in an inspiring range of activities in both the nursery and reception classes. All children are confident in the setting and in their relationships with each other and staff. They are learning to take turns as they choose their activities, and areas where they wish to play. They are encouraged to develop their independence as they collect break time snacks, change their clothes for different activities and manage their personal care.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are making excellent progress and staff support them extremely well through their comprehensive understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Planning covers all areas of learning and short term plans are expertly used to meet the needs of individual children. Observations and assessments are completed regularly and form a solid basis which is used to inform planning, resulting in challenges being appropriate to individual stages of development. Staff demonstrate a high degree of skill and understanding of how to support those children for whom English is an additional language or have learning difficulties. They have a keen sense of fun which they share with the children, for example, reading the jokes on the back of biscuit packets at snack time, and clearly know and understand children very well. Children respond well to staff involvement in their play and learning and are keen to include them in their role-play and other activities.

Children's knowledge and understanding of their immediate and the wider world is excellent. Children confidently use a range of everyday technology in their play and planned activities, for example, they use the computer to write their stories, and for

games which support other areas of learning. Pre-school and reception children are starting to understand about the passing of time as they identify the day of the week, yesterday and tomorrow. Older children time themselves to see how many things they can draw in one minute, for example, twenty eight triangles or their name three times. Nursery children make boats from recycled materials and then test them on the lake to see if they will float. Children are skilful in their use of number. The youngest children count on in two's with the assistance of 'Mr Bear' and use number to assist them in daily routines such as setting the table for lunch with the correct number of knives and forks. Older children use their growing knowledge of number, shape and size to build two and three dimensional figures, count forwards and backwards, match and calculate.

All children recognise their written names and use these to plan their free play activities. The youngest children use pictures to do this, whilst older children record in writing. The setting provides excellent opportunities for children to practise and develop their writing skills both in adult-led and free play activities. For example, chalk boards, magnetic letters, role-play, sand and dough. Props such as 'froggy fingers' are used to encourage older children to remember the rules of writing. All children enjoy books and stories and talking about the recent events in their lives. This is assisted in the nursery by weekly visits from the headmaster of the junior school who joins the group for circle time to hear stories about new pyjamas and how boats became stuck on the lake.

All children enjoy a wide and varied range of creative activities which stimulate their interest and increase their awareness of texture, and use of different resources. For example, children construct using a wide range of materials, paint for a purpose and as a free play activity, when they discover what happens when they mix different colours together or make bubbles in the paint. Children's awareness of music, rhythm and instruments is significantly enhanced by daily music sessions with the schools' music teacher. They enjoy many good opportunities to develop all round muscle control, for example, in the playground at break times and in the gym where they use a variety of large equipment and apparatus. During these sessions children are encouraged to be aware of what is happening to their bodies as they exercise and learn how to keep themselves healthy.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents have clear information about the setting and their children's progress. This is offered through open evenings and twice yearly written reports which are accompanied by clear and comprehensive guidance information about the stepping stones. This assists in developing parents interest and understanding of how their children learn. Staff are available each day, before and after school, to informally discuss children's activities and progress. Familiarisation visits are organised for all children and times of attendance in the nursery is negotiable according to individual needs. Children requiring specialist help are well supported and parents take an active part in their ongoing assessments and programmes of work. Staff encourage parents to assist

their children in contributing items for topic work and to share their children's 'reading' folder. Staff are welcoming and friendly and children are keen to come to the setting each day. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Leadership and management of the setting is outstanding. Children's learning is of a consistently high standard and they are making rapid progress from their individual starting points. Systematic coverage of the six areas of learning and the stepping stones is indicated throughout planning documents and individual assessments and observations ensure that children are encouraged to move on from what they know and can do.

A clear management structure supports staff effectively in their personal development and use of a recognised educational progress scale, assists in monitoring the educational provision for children. Points for consideration raised at the last inspection have been effectively addressed. The school receive and welcome support from the early years consultant attached to the local authority. The school is committed to ongoing improvement and senior staff demonstrate a clear view of future developments, for example, a yet closer integration of the nursery and reception departments. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting agreed to consider the methods used to inform parents about the Foundation Stage, how they are involved in assessments and receive information about their children's progress.

The reception and nursery classes have made excellent progress in these areas. Parents are provided with clear and detailed information about the Foundation Stage which links directly to the report format used. Staff are available for discussion with parents, on an informal basis, before and after school each day, and appointments may be made for more in depth or formal discussions. Parents contribute to assessments when children start at nursery and these are used effectively to meet children's individual needs throughout their two years.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last the last inspection.

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 *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk