

Hurst Lodge 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?

Hurst Lodge School is an Independent school established in 1942. It has been on its present site since 1997. The kindergarten opened in 1980 and operates from four rooms within the main school building. The school is situated on 22.5 acre grounds.

The school is open each weekday from 08.30 to 15.30 during term time. Kindergarten children attend each morning with the option to attend a variety of other sessions. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area and the schools playing fields and facilities. There are currently 50 children in the kindergarten and pre-prep class who receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and wider area. The school is able to support children with learning disabilities and or/difficulties and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are twelve staff members who work directly with the children. All of the staff working with the children have recognised qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff have an excellent understanding of how children learn. Specialist teachers for art, drama, dance and physical education work together with the staff team in place to ensure they plan an extremely well balanced curriculum that enables children to excel in all areas of learning. Children naturally learn through their participation in exciting, spontaneous and planned activities, all of which present children with challenge in order to maximise the learning possibilities. Regular observations recorded during children's play and information gained from the evaluation of activities is used to inform future planning and allows staff to track children's progress and highlight any concerns.

The environment is inspiring. Staff use the outside area to provide the children with wonderful learning opportunities for example; children spend the day in the woods in the school grounds, where they readily participate in a range of exciting activities such as, building camps and threading leaves onto sticks. Children are aware of how plants and seeds grow as they plant beans and cress and watch them grow. The water theme in place at the time of inspection allowed children to visit the school laundry and wash their clothes outside. Staff readily extend children's interest for instance, when singing a song about animals washing their clothes in the jungle; the children started talking about different jungle animals and their names so staff provided a book for story time about jungle animals.

Children are extremely confident and highly motivated. They concentrate well and listen intently when 'smiley the crocodile' came to visit them to talk about teeth and how to keep them clean. Children speak confidently and express their thoughts and ideas very well; they have excellent relationships with each other and the staff.

Children count competently and use mathematical language naturally in their play and daily routines. They enjoy completing number charts using large blocks placed on the correct number. Staff support early calculation by asking 'how many'. Children compare size and shape in a variety of ways including, measuring ties with a tape measure and talking about the different shapes of items they are using.

Children benefit from seeing print in the environment and show an interest in books. Most children can write their name and staff encourage the younger children to begin to mark make in a variety of different ways. Children recognise each others' names from the name cards held up in circle time. Children learn the sounds of letters for example the letter of the week is 't' and children talk about turtles, trains and teabags. Children enjoy independently drawing various items which begin with 't'.

Children have extensive opportunities to be creative for example they make their own masks and the 'van tots gallery' displays the children's still life Van Gough art work. Children use a range of tools and they play with the play dough and construct items using glue sticks and scissors. This helps them to develop their eye-hand coordination and fine motor skills. Children's physical skills are further promoted as they take part in a range of dance exercises and physical activities such as finding their point of balance and playing sports games.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. Staff are consistent, calm and sensitive and use positive strategies to help children learn right from wrong. Children are kind and caring for example, they show concern for a child who was at the doctor's. Children share resources and play exceptionally well together. Children form excellent relationships; their confidence is evident in the way they interact with each other and staff.

Excellent arrangements are made to ensure all children are included. There are suitable, sufficient resources and activities to help children learn about a diverse society through their play, experiences and planned activities. All children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive appropriate support.

Children participate in activities that promote awareness of others' cultures and traditions for example, displays and photos show the children celebrating St George's day and Chinese New Year. They are very aware of the local community and events such as Ascot ladies day where they make flags and go to Windsor Great Park to wave to the queen in her carriage as she makes her way to the racecourse. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents have clear information about the school and the Foundation Stage. There is a clear prospectus, weekly newsletters, meetings with parents, annual reports and lots of displays of photographs of children participating in a range of activities and experiences. Parents comment on the exceptional staff who are very approachable and how they are fully informed about their child's progress and development. They comment on how happy their children are in the school and are pleased with the variety of activities and experiences the staff provide for the children to help them develop, learn and achieve.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The head of the school plays an effective role ensuring staff have suitable qualifications and experience. She regularly meets with the manager of the kindergarten to ensure all the children's learning needs are being met. An appraisal system is in place which highlights any staff training requirements. All staff have the opportunity to attend training and an induction system for new staff ensures all staff are fully prepared to carry out their role. The staff are very well supported by the head of the school who recognises their commitment and gives them the opportunity to use their extensive knowledge, experience and imagination to plan an exciting curriculum using both the inside and outside areas to provide exceptional learning opportunities for the children.

The manager of the kindergarten has superb evaluation systems in place to ensure the learning needs of the children are continually met and catered for. The school is also in the process of implementing the Effective Early Learning evaluation system; this will further enhance children's and staff's learning and development. Staff are deployed effectively ensuring children receive excellent support and guidance. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Not applicable

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 *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