



# The Secret Garden Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY302121
<b>Inspection date</b>	04 January 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Melissa Tickner
<b>Setting Address</b>	Springfield Road, Southborough, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 0RD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01892 542 173
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Asquith Court Nurseries Limited
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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?

Asquith nursery opened in 1990 and has been under Asquith Court Nurseries Ltd since 2005. It operates from five rooms in a detached house in Southborough, Kent. A maximum of 52 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 five days a week, 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 69 children aged from 3 months to under 5 years on roll. Of

these, 28 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local catchment area. The nursery supports children with special educational needs, and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 15 staff. Thirteen of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are developing a clear understanding about keeping themselves healthy. They enjoy a range of healthy snacks mid-morning and afternoon, such as fresh banana and apple pieces. Meal and snack times are closely supported by staff, who chat to the children and offer them encouragement. Children enjoy the healthy cooked meals, prepared on site, such as chicken with potatoes and broccoli. They drink water at meal and snack times, and are able to access water to drink at other times, independently or with supervision, depending on the age of the child. Staff are also vigilant in this aspect and remind children to have a drink of water at other times. Staff are aware of catering for children with dietary requirements and the system of recording dietary needs is appropriate, which helps ensure the risk to children is reduced.

Babies needs are met well as they are fed, changed, and have rests as appropriate. Their routines are followed and staff adopt positive practices. For example, there are safe and hygienic procedures for nappy changing and bottle warming, individual bed linen is used for babies, and their sleep and feed routines are met appropriately. Their preferences for comforters and sleepwear are clearly recorded on their cots to help ensure they can settle at sleep time. Toddlers are encouraged to nap and rest after lunch and have use of individual sleep mats for this.

Children are taught about good hygiene practices, which are reinforced by staff, such as reminding children to wash their hands after the toilet, and brushing their teeth once a day. Staff maintain a clean and hygienic environment through positive practices such as use of anti-bacterial sprays, gloves and aprons. Young children are provided with clean individual bed linen on a daily basis, and their hands and faces are wiped and kept appropriately clean. These aspects help maintain children's health and avoid the spread of infection. However, in the pre-school room, children share musical instruments such as recorders, and resources for water play which exposes them to the risk of the spread of infection. Staff have clear systems for dealing with and recording accidents, medication, and illness and there is a very high level of first aid trained staff, ensuring that children can be cared for quickly and appropriately should an emergency arise.

Children of all ages have regular supervised access to the outdoor play area which allows them opportunities for physical play, fresh air and use of outdoor toys and play equipment. For example, pre-school aged children delight in using the parachute in the garden and take turns to run under it, and move and jump vigorously. As a result,

children are developing an understanding that physical exercise helps contribute to being healthy and funded children are able to make progress towards this area of learning.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and very welcoming environment which provides space for most areas of play. The baby room is very well organised, offering them a welcoming, child orientated environment. A good range of safe and suitable toys are accessible at a low level, and organised in to different areas of play. Accessible mobiles and other attractive low level decorations hang around the room. This helps to provide a warm, welcoming and stimulating environment and encourage children to feel safe and secure. Children of all ages are offered a good range of age-appropriate toys, many of which are accessible at their level to encourage them to make choices independently. Some resources in the pre-school room however, are in poor condition and not maintained or organised to a high standard. Children's work is displayed to create a child friendly environment around all the rooms, and appropriate child sized furniture is used throughout the nursery.

Children are kept safe through positive practices maintained by staff. They regularly promote these in practice with children, encouraging them to take care of themselves and be careful. For example, a staff member closely supervises pre-school aged children enjoying a hammer and nail activity, babies are carefully strapped in to their chairs at lunch time, and staff encourage children not to run indoors. Security is well maintained with a doorbell entry system, and clear visibility to monitor arrivals. Visitors not recognised are challenged and there are clear procedures in place for the collection of children. Staff supervise and support children extremely well during their activities, ensuring their safety whilst also allowing them time and freedom to play and explore independently. These aspects help ensure they are kept safe whilst at the nursery.

Risk assessments are in place, and a clear safety monitoring system is completed on a daily basis, to ensure all aspects of the nursery are checked for safety thoroughly. All staff are involved in this helping to ensure they are familiar with risks and understand their responsibilities. Children are kept safe through the child protection co-ordinator's thorough awareness of child protection issues and procedures. She is clear in her knowledge of signs and symptoms of abuse and procedures to be followed. She has recently attended training in this area and covers this aspect with staff during staff meetings to ensure they are also familiar. This helps to safeguard children's welfare appropriately.

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

The provision is good.

Children are very settled and well cared for. They play confidently in a busy environment. Staff are extremely welcoming and supportive and know the children

well as individuals. Young babies are cuddled and comforted, and staff are extremely sensitive to their needs. Staff chat to them about what they are doing and interact well with them throughout the day. For example, staff sing songs with the babies and encourage them to clap their hands and praise them as they do so. A range of interesting and varied activities are planned and provided for children of all ages, and staff work to the Birth to three matters framework to provide activities for the under three's covering all aspects. Children of all ages have a good range of quality resources and toys accessible to them. Children's needs are met well and they are encouraged and supported by enthusiastic and caring staff.

#### Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff provide activities within all areas of learning and are successfully able to promote this in all activities, whether planned or not. For example, children enjoy 'cooking' in the home corner. Some good learning opportunities are offered by the staff member who recognises she can take this a step further by providing the children with rice and water to 'cook', and look at the changes that occur when water is added. Children thoroughly enjoy this activity and it prompts some good discussions and opportunities to learn. Staff encourage the children and help them make progress. Children are provided with a good range of activities that cover all areas of learning. Most staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and know how to implement it. However, agency staff do not have the same level of knowledge to be able to successfully promote the Foundation Stage. Currently, all paperwork relating to nursery education including planning and observation systems is undergoing review, and consequently simple systems are in place. Staff do however, offer a good range of learning opportunities in all areas of learning successfully throughout the day which helps children to make progress towards the Foundation Stage.

Children are making progress in all areas of learning. For example, they show good levels of confidence in all situations, and high levels of curiosity and interest in their activities, at which they persist for extended periods of time. Children are developing good levels of independence; they pour their own drinks, use the toilet independently, and choose when to eat their snacks. Children are familiar with numbers and have opportunities to use them. For example, they count how many bowls of rice they need for the number of children present. Children are familiar with mathematic language and staff regularly use words such as more, less, heavy, light and total. They also understand challenges, such as how many starfish are left in the water when one is removed. They are beginning to understand concepts such as sinking and floating. Children show an enjoyment of books. They independently access the book corner whenever they wish and choose a range of books. They are familiar with and enjoy mark making opportunities. A display shows a number of children have attempted to write their names, and they enjoy drawing in the mark making area with a good range of resources such as pens, paper and scissors to help support and encourage them. Labelling is well used throughout the room, and children have been involved in writing the signs of areas around the room.

Children enjoy and have access to a range of exploration activities, such as magnets, threading, water play with a good range of resources to support this, exploring rice when water is added and natural materials and resources to explore. They use

resources for technology, such as the computer, and are able to operate a computer programme and use the mouse well. Children have access to the construction corner and enjoy the construction activities available. Children learn about the wider society through topics, such as the Chinese New Year and are able to access a variety of resources that reflect the diversity of our society. Children are able to make good progress in creative play. They thoroughly enjoy role-play and have a good range of resources to support them in this activity. Two children talk about the baby they have dressed themselves, wrapping it up warm and taking it for a walk in the pram. Children delight in the music activity; taking turns to use different musical instruments and exploring whether they prefer the sounds played loudly or quietly. They enjoy a good range of creative activities, such as cutting, colouring, drawing and sticking.

As a result, children are making good progress at the setting and enjoy and achieve in all activities in which they take part.

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

The provision is good.

Children's individual care needs are recognised and well met by staff. Staff respond well to the children; they support them, care for them well and value them as individuals. As a result, children are developing good levels of confidence and independence and are developing an awareness of the wider society. A knowledgeable SENCO helps ensure that children with special educational needs are supported and have their needs met. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are extremely well settled and are developing good relationships with their peers and staff.

Children's behaviour is good, and is well managed throughout the nursery by all staff. Children are valued and encouraged as individuals and are praised when they do something well. Staff manage children's behaviour well according to their age group. Children in the pre-school room have drawn up their own rules and know and understand these. Children are encouraged by staff to share and use good manners, who praise and reinforce this positively. Methods used by all staff for managing children's behaviour are effective and work well in practice. These aspects contribute to helping children feel secure and understand the behaviour rules of the setting.

Partnership with parents is good. Staff work closely with parents regarding their children's care and education and have fostered good working relationships. Staff provide a good range of information for parents, including daily discussions, a notice board with a range of information, newsletters and parents' evenings twice a year. Parents are encouraged to get involved and contribute ideas to the nursery, and fill out questionnaires to offer their feedback. They are also being involved in a new round of 'play therapy' evenings, where parents are invited to attend to look at the Birth to three matters and Foundation Stage that are being worked towards at the nursery. Systems to work with parents are effective and help to keep them informed about their children's care and education.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The organisation of the nursery is effective and productive. A well organised set of documentation is in place and staff are clear on their roles and responsibilities. Staff are clear on the required ratios and ensure these are met at all times, including meal and break times. There are clear and effective systems in place for the recruitment, vetting and induction of new staff. Children of all age groups are well supervised and supported. These aspects help contribute to the smooth running of the nursery.

Leadership and management is good. The manager has a clear vision for the nursery, is committed to her role and supportive to staff. She is keen on making changes to help improve and develop the nursery. For example, new parents information evenings have recently been implemented, parent questionnaires are sent to all parents to invite them to comment and evaluate the service offered, and she monitors how the nursery is running by doing spot checks on the different age groups. Outside agencies are also worked with to take on new ideas and ways to develop and improve. Staff are encouraged to attend training regularly and attend staff meetings to update and review relevant information and training. As a result the nursery is well supported, led and managed, which enables them to make relevant and appropriate changes and progress. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration. 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**

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 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):

- ensure good hygiene practices are in place with regards to the sharing of musical instruments and water play toys
- ensure children's resources, toys and environment are well maintained and in good condition

### **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 and improve methods to ensure all agency staff are clear and knowledgeable on the Foundation Stage of education.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)