

Priory School

Inspection report for early years provision

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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

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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?

Priory School Nursery is part of an independent preparatory school for boys. It has been established since 1921 and is managed by an educational trust. The school is

located in Banstead which is within the borough of Reigate and Banstead. It caters for children from the ages of two years 10 months to 13 years.

The Foundation Stage comprises of two nursery classes and a reception classes. The children have access to dedicated outdoor learning areas, playgrounds, hall, information technology suite and music rooms. The school is open Monday to Friday, term time only for 36 weeks a year. The school day starts at 08:30 and finishes at 15:15. The nursery department is open from 08:30 until 12:30 or 15:00. Children attend either on a sessional or full-time basis. There are currently 50 boys aged two years to five years attending the early years department, of these 27 receive funding for nursery education. They also support children for whom English is an additional language and children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Before and after school clubs are provided by experienced early years classroom assistants.

There are seven staff working directly with the children, of these, five have early years qualifications and one member of staff has the early years professional status. Close links have been formed with the early years development and childcare partnership for support and training.

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. Overall the setting is a completely child initiated learning, environment that offers free flow play both inside and out so learning and play is continuous. This is achieved by the use of the task board system and well deployed staff who are on hand to observe, support and extend activities. The staff themselves are extremely knowledgeable and well qualified, and are very enthusiastic and passionate about their roles in educating children and have realistic expectations of the children. Meticulous planning takes into account children's individual needs and interests as the next steps of learning are clearly identified and taken into consideration when planning activities, therefore, all children regardless of their abilities, make very good progress at a level that is suitable for their needs.

The boys attitudes to learning, their behaviour and general level of engagement is excellent. They have a real thirst for learning and totally enjoy their time in the setting. They eagerly start the sessions and are quickly absorbed in tasks, therefore, aiding them to make exceptional progress towards the early learning goals and in some areas they excel. The children further benefit from having additional subjects, for example, music, taught by specialist teachers.

All children are very confident, lively and happy. They have formed very strong

friendships with their peers and are able to initiate imaginary play and conversation very easily. Staff are skilled in enabling children to problem solve for themselves, which boosts their confidence and self-esteem. The boys are very able and skilled communicators and happily chat during play. Staff themselves are skilled at questioning and extending children's vocabulary. The phonic scheme running is very effective and the children enjoy learning in a very practical and meaningful way; they are able to transfer those skills and attempt writing for pleasure during play activities. Children really enjoy books and handle them carefully. They spend time reading and sharing books with their friends and adults; they can retell well known stories by looking at the pictures, following the text and by acting out stories with props. Reception children are becoming very confident readers, they have access to a good range of books within each classroom not just for story telling, but also for referencing. Books are encouraged to be shared at home with parents as a homework task.

Children are becoming very confident with numerical activities. Older and more able children are beginning to understand the concept of simple addition and subtraction; they can say what is more or less and attempt to add groups of objects and enjoy simple practical games. They are also being introduced to simple number bonds. Children's understanding of space, shape and measure is developing well. They learn how to use numbers in everyday situations and show that they understand size and shape through lots of practical activities, such as comparing and estimating, and use simple graphs to record their findings.

The children are very skilled in manipulating construction toys, both on a small and large scale. There are very good opportunities for the children to explore computers, reception children have opportunities to use the school's information and communication technology suite. The boys demonstrate really good investigative skills and thoroughly enjoy digging around looking for bugs and using equipment, such as magnifying glasses to do so. Children learn about different cultures and beliefs through well planned topic work. This is also enhanced by visitors and trips to the local environment, and a great input from parents and extended families.

The boys have the opportunity to use the outside classroom to create free flow play. This aids their health and physical development. They also have the opportunity to take part in structured physical education sessions and make really good use of the apparatus and equipment in the playgrounds. Children demonstrate a good sense of space and move confidently around the whole setting. They have every opportunity to take part in climbing, balancing, riding wheeled vehicles and are great in also transferring their imaginary play to make cricket nets into garages and car washes. They organise themselves really well in the playgrounds into small groups to play games and demonstrate excellent skills in turn taking. They are able to use scissors with precision and control, and have ample opportunities to use a variety of equipment, such as pens and pencils, paintbrushes and construction to develop their fine motor skills. They are encouraged to understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle and how the body works and the changes it goes through during physical exercise.

Children play musical instruments and experiment with sound independently, as well as having structured music lessons with a qualified music teacher. Children are very skilled and confident in using their imagination in role play situations. Each classroom environment has a role play area set up that is changed to suit the topic that is being explored. They enjoy and independently explore craft and messy activities, such as painting, sand, water and play-dough, which they have regular daily access to.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Children benefit greatly from concrete relationships between their parents and staff, helping them receive consistent support both individually and as a group. Parents receive detailed information about the Foundation Stage; the information outlines what and how children will learn. This ensures parents have a good understanding that play has an important role in developing children's skills for the next stage of learning. Staff ensure that they involve parents in their child's learning through regular newsletters, parents evenings, as well as written information at the end of the academic year. Parents make valuable contributions to their child's assessment during regular parents' meetings and through meaningful activities within the classroom, this contributes significantly to continuity in the children's education.

Parents report that the strengths of the setting are the small class sizes, excellent staff, great structure of activities and a broad curriculum. They are extremely pleased with their children's excellent progress in all areas. They feel they have ample opportunities to be involved in their children's education and the planning of their next steps of development.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The leadership and management of the funded education is outstanding. There are highly effective systems in place to monitor and evaluate the curriculum that is on offer in order to identify strengths and promptly address areas for improvement. There is a strong commitment to develop and improve the provision and effective use is made of outside support from the local authority. Staff have already begun to take on board the new Early Years Foundation Stage and have attended training. They are already looking at ways of adapting the current strong record keeping and assessment system into the new framework. The management team are extremely effective in promoting an inclusive environment in which every child matters.

Overall the setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection there are no significant weaknesses highlighted, but consideration was suggested to; continue to develop the opportunities for children to select their own resources and activities to enhance the existing good practice; for example adding to the range of materials available for children to create their own models and designs, indoors and outdoors. Children now have ample opportunities to self select activities in fact this is one of the main strengths of the setting.

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.

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