

Norwich Steiner Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY293859
Inspection date	27 November 2007
Inspector	Andrea Caroline Snowden
Setting Address	Bowthorpe Road Methodist Church Hall, 302 Bowthorpe Road, Norwich, Norfolk, NR5 8AB
Telephone number	07749987776
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Registered person	Norfolk Initiative Steiner School
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Norwich Steiner Kindergarten registered in 2004 and operates from Bowthorpe Methodist Church Hall, where they have sole use of the premises during kindergarten hours.

Accommodation used by the children comprises of a main hall, toilets and an enclosed outdoor play area. The kindergarten is open each weekday from 08:45 to 15.30 during term time only. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time.

There are currently 26 children on roll, aged from three to under eight years. The kindergarten is not registered to receive funding for nursery education. The kindergarten is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The trustee's employ a team of four staff, three of whom hold relevant early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted because staff are well-informed about their medical needs, allergies and dietary requirements. Appropriate documentation and training is in place to ensure children are treated effectively following an accident and that any homeopathic remedies administered follows parental instructions. Consent has been sought to seek emergency medical treatment should this be necessary, ensuring that children can be treated effectively and swiftly. Children are learning about their personal hygiene. For example, they place their hands in front of their mouth if they cough or sneeze and wash their hands after using the toilet. However, they use a single towel in the bathrooms which has the potential to expose children to cross-infection and compromises the otherwise very good hygiene practices within the kindergarten. Children also help to wash their cups and bowls after snack time, helping them to understand how to maintain a clean environment around them.

Snack times are a highly social occasion with children involved in preparation of food, laying the table and serving to their peers. They cut fresh fruit into bite sized pieces, lay out the boards and napkins ready for others and after saying grace help to pass out the bowls of porridge. Children are offered healthy, organic options which include cheese scones, apple crumble and 'fairy food'. Children have excellent opportunities to learn about healthy food as they grow pumpkins and butternut squash in the garden along with carrots and herbs. They harvest the vegetables and make soup to eat at snack time. Children have pressed apples to make their own apple juice, helping them to appreciate where food and drink originates from.

Children's physical development is promoted effectively and they take part in activities which develop their muscles and their appreciation of the natural world around them. They enjoy time in the garden where they run and chase one another, climb on the logs, use balance beams and play 'hide and seek the silver pot'. Children are enthusiastic about outdoor activities and enjoy sweeping the leaves from the playground or tending their soft fruit and vegetables.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment which is tranquil and inviting, where the use of soft furnishings and natural materials has created a setting where children can feel safe and secure. There are appropriate facilities which children can access independently and mattresses to use for rest if they are tired. Children benefit considerably from the wide variety of equipment which is organised to promote their learning and independence. All resources are safe, well made and of good quality and children have been involved in making some of them, for example, by finger knitting skipping ropes or sewing puppets. Children are encouraged to respect the play equipment and are reminded by staff to 'be very careful' and by helping to tidy away at the required time are learning how to keep a safe and ordered environment.

The premises are safe and risk assessments are conducted to ensure the children's safety is maintained when using equipment, taking part in activities or going on outings. The front door is secured during session time to prevent children leaving unsupervised. However, during the arrivals period first thing in the morning the door is left unlocked to allow parents access. Although there are notices to parents to try to prevent children leaving the premises

unsupervised, this system is not robust enough to ensure children do not leave, or intruders gain access, having the potential to compromise the safety of children.

Children's welfare is further safeguarded because staff have an absolutely clear understanding of their roles in child protection procedures. They recognise the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and are able to put the procedures into practice. There are appropriate internal procedures in place to ensure concerns about children are dealt with properly, but the procedure to be followed should an allegation of abuse be made against staff does not make it clear about which authorities should be notified.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have developed positive relationships with one another and with the staff. Friendships have clearly formed and children are seen playing harmoniously together. They are able to negotiate and discuss how they might make an activity work and involve others to expand and elaborate. Whilst presenting a puppet show a group of children work together to set up the characters and scenery and then take turns to tell parts of the story.

Children show great confidence. They speak easily with visitors to the setting and engage in games. They invite visitors to be involved in their activities and show excellent social skills. Children are articulate and when reciting a poem, use complex language, facial expressions and body language to enhance the story. They clearly delight in their ability to remember and recite the poem and enjoy the opportunities for singing and storytelling. Children demonstrate good imagination as they go about their play. Their knowledge and understanding of the world around them helps enhance this further, and when 'flying' as peregrine falcons, children say they are perching on a log watching for meat to eat.

Staff interact well with the children. They are calm, patient and gentle. They listen intently and respond to children's comments and questions. As a result children feel valued and respected. Children are unhurried in their activities. They are given the opportunity to explore their ideas and extend what they are doing, often having the opportunity to revisit and consolidate what they have learnt, refining their newly acquired skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's behaviour is of a consistently high standard. They share well, care about their peers and respect the staff and environment. Staff are patient and take time to allow children to explain the 'Golden Rules', which help them learn good table manners. Staff explain why behaviour is unacceptable and as a result children are quick to learn right from wrong. Children's self-esteem is very high and staff praise and congratulate children on their achievements. They are truly valued.

All children are treated with equal concern and staff show a good awareness of individual children. They work closely with parents to ensure they are well informed about the children and their family in order to meet their individual needs more effectively. Children are developing an awareness of our diverse society and take part in activities and celebrations which help them to learn about the wider world. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are integrated into the setting positively. Individual plans help ensure that children are set achievable targets which can be monitored both at home and in the kindergarten, ensuring that children

reach their full potential. The uncomplicated nature of the Steiner equipment means that all children can take part in play at a level which meets their specific stage of development.

Children benefit considerably from the strong partnership with parents. There are many opportunities for parents to discuss their children's welfare and progress and staff make themselves available at every session, should parents wish to discuss concerns. Parents are able to share information about their children in a variety of ways and home visits enable staff to understand the children more clearly. Written information for parents is of a high standard, informative and gives support and guidance where appropriate. Parents also enjoy the opportunity to join in with activities and listen to talks at open evenings, helping them to understand further the experience their children are gaining. There is an effective complaints procedure in place in order that any concerns raised by parents may be swiftly addressed.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the effective organisation of the kindergarten. Staff ensure that their deployment enhances what the children are doing and that they are available to offer personal care when needed. Space in the room is used creatively, providing areas for children to play imaginary games, work at tables, rest and eat according to their needs. Staff are suitably qualified and attend mandatory training in order to update their knowledge and skills. They have been appropriately vetted to ensure that children's safety and welfare is maintained and there are effective policies and procedures in place which contribute to promoting the outcomes for children. The required documentation is in place, ensuring that children can be cared for according to their parent's wishes and that their good health and welfare is successfully promoted. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to develop a procedure to follow should a child become lost and to include the regulator details in the complaints procedure. A separate policy has been devised detailing the procedure to be followed should a child become lost, ensuring that staff are aware of the expected action to take and minimising time delays in instigating a search. Additionally, the regulator details are printed in the complaints procedure and are also available in the parents handbook, which ensures parents are able to contact Ofsted should they wish to discuss any issues.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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

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.

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):

- further improve hand drying facilities to minimise the risk of cross-infection
- ensure security of the front door is monitored at times of arrival and departure, to ensure children are not able to leave the premises unsupervised
- ensure the safeguarding children procedure is clear about which authorities should be notified in the event of allegations being made against staff.

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