

Josca's Preparatory School

— Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY290873
Inspection date 25/06/2008
Inspector Susan Parker

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Type of inspection Nursery Education

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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

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?

Josca's Preparatory School was founded in 1956 and moved to its present location in 1969. In 1998 Josca's merged with Abingdon School. Josca's Preparatory School is

situated in the village of Frilford near Abingdon. The pre-prep operates from a classroom with additional access to several rooms within the school for specialist subject activities. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 16 children may attend the pre-prep at any one time. The school is open each weekday from 08:45 to 16:10 during school term times.

There are currently 15 children aged from four to five years on roll, all of whom receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide geographical area. The pre-prep currently supports a small number of children for whom English is an additional language.

The pre-prep employs 10 members of staff. All of the staff, including the specialist subject teachers, are qualified or experienced in their field of expertise.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff have an excellent understanding of the Foundation Stage and of how children learn through play. The children learn very early on what behaviour is acceptable through age-appropriate behaviour management techniques. Children are rewarded with 'Golden Playtime' where they can choose what to play with independently. Children who have shown inappropriate behaviour will have the 'Golden' time reduced. Children are able to redeem themselves and gain this time back. This is very conducive to a child-friendly learning environment. The clear boundaries support children's sense of security and give them an understanding of what is right and what is wrong.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is nurtured well. They are attentive and respectful of adult and peers alike. For example, they know to be quiet and listen when someone is talking and to take turns. Children have developed their independence in dressing and toileting themselves. Their self-esteem is promoted as they proudly talk about their buildings and creations as well as showing their physical prowess.

Children have built an outstanding awareness of phonetic links as they have many opportunities to recognise and write familiar letters, words and sounds. Children that are more able are producing sentences. They are encouraged to enjoy books and they handle books well. They take time to look at the pictorial illustrations and follow simple text before turning the page to continue the story. They have gained an understanding of the author, title and type of book. For example, children can readily differentiate between a storybook and a reference book. Children have plentiful opportunities to mark make and are beginning to form recognisable letters, words and sentences as they practice writing in everyday play situations as well as formal

writing exercises.

Children are developing a growing awareness of number, problem solving and calculations. Children are able to calculate in every day, practical situations, and actively subtract using various items, which engage children's interest. For example, ten cars covered with a cloth, a certain number are taken away and the children calculate how many by subtracting the number of cars left from the original number.

Use of exciting activities as well as formal workbooks, show an outstanding awareness of mathematical development.

Children have regular access to a computer and other technological equipment. Specialist staff teach information technology. Children are developing a good awareness of the wider world. They learn from their peers about their differences and similarities. They regularly experiment with growing seeds, watching butterflies emerge from cocoons and learn about the importance of soil, light and water to make things grow. Children regularly construct their own designs using a variety of media and materials as well as different construction methods and tools.

Children are agile and competent in their physical skills. They have access to an excellent range of outdoor equipment, which promotes muscle growth, control and strength. They have daily access to a range of tools, such as various sized pens and pencils to draw, scissors to cut and shape, paintbrushes and glue spreaders. They also have access to different types of construction sets. Children have exciting imaginations. They enjoy making individual creations using an excellent selection of media and materials.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents are well informed of their child's achievements and progress. This starts with the parents or carers and the child completing an "I can do" book. This gives practitioners a good insight into each child's baseline from which they can progress. This is followed each term by a report outlining each child's achievements towards the early learning goals.

Staff encourage parents to participate in their child's education and learning by encouraging them to share their individual expertise and knowledge. This ensures that children's education is greatly enhanced in true partnership with their parents or main carer. The nursery education programme links closely with parents ensuring that they are fully involved in all topics and information is shared effectively.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered through the exceptional daily practices. Children are developing a growing understanding of good social skills and the differences and similarities between themselves and their peers, and have an excellent understanding of socially accepted codes of behaviour.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is outstanding. The class teacher shows excellent management skills and she is supported in her role by the experienced head of prep and knowledgeable head of the school. There are effective links with the other pre-prep classes, enabling the sharing of ideas and good practice for the benefit of all, and staff are always looking for ways in which the excellent practice can be developed.

Staff are highly competent. They are able to instigate and develop incidental learning from the fun and exciting activities, naturally. This supports the balance and coverage across all aspects of the curriculum. The staff team are supportive of each other and flexible in their working, ensuring the needs of the children are being met at all times. They are fully involved in assessing their own strengths and weaknesses in the provision of nursery education.

The management structure enables the pre-prep to be proactive in its monitoring and evaluation of the nursery education. Staff all work together as a cohesive team. The ethos throughout the school is the development of the children into secure confident learners who thrive in the imaginative and stimulating environment. Planning and assessment are evaluated and used to inform future planning. This ensures the needs of children are being met through the inclusion of all and the adaptation of activities.

Staff are exceptionally skilled and competent in their provision of nursery education. They demonstrate a real affinity with children. They use their wealth of experience and their ongoing personal research and development to provide a wide range of practical and stimulating learning opportunities. The staff are receptive to improvement and are consistently striving to provide a fully inclusive, high quality provision for children. They are committed to ensuring that they are well versed in all current and future regulations and guidance in order to provide excellent care and education for all children.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, staff were asked to consider providing opportunities for children to have access to spontaneous activities such as sand, water art and craft.

Children are able to choose to play in the sand and water trays outside, as well as using various media and resources to develop their own ideas in craft and construction. This actively promotes children's ability to freely choose to develop their own creative ideas and imaginations.

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.

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 2473)* which is available from Ofsted's website:
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07/07/2008

Ms Chris Davies
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Our Reference EY290873

Dear Ms Davies

Inspection report

An Ofsted childcare inspector inspected your nursery education provision on 25/06/2008.

Please find enclosed:

- a copy of your inspection report

The inspection report

The inspection report sets out Ofsted's judgements about the quality of the provision you offer. The law says that you must provide a copy of the report for the parents of all the children that you care for unless you provide childcare in a crèche, open access or holiday playscheme.¹ Ofsted has published your report on the internet.

If you have any queries about your report or inspection judgements, please contact our helpline on 08456 404040 within 30 days of receiving your report.

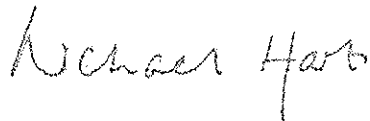
Changes to conditions of registration

Following this inspection there have been no changes to the conditions of your registration. Your current certificate still applies.

If you have any queries about this letter, please ring the above telephone number where one of my colleagues will be able to help you or write to the Divisional Manager at the above address.

¹ The Nursery Education (Inspection)(England) Regulations 2005

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Hart". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Michael Hart
Director, Children