

Rydes Hill Preparatory School and Nursery

EARLY YEARS OFSTED INSPECTION REPORT

JUNE 2008





RYDES HILL PREPARATORY SCHOOL,
RYDES HILL HOUSE,
ALDERSHOT ROAD,
GUILDFORD,
GU2 8BP.

Headmistress
MRS STEPHANIE BELL, M.A. (Oxon)

24th June 2008

Dear Parents

I am delighted to enclose a copy of our recent Early Years (Nursery and Kindergarten) Ofsted Inspection Report which took place during the week beginning 9th June 2008. We are delighted that we received not only an overall rating of "outstanding" but also a rating of "outstanding" in every category and, at the end of the report, there were no recommendations for improvement! I am sure you will enjoy reading this and feel proud, as I do, of our exceptional teachers.

The Ofsted definition of "outstanding" is *"This aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality"*.

A few of the pleasing comments in the report are as follows:

"Children are making exceptional progress"

"The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding"

"Staff work exceptionally well together"

"Children visibly enjoy their time at school"

"Children beam with pride as they show their friends what they have achieved"

"Excellent teaching, use of vibrant resources and a plentiful array of unique learning opportunities"

"The quality of partnership with parents and carers is outstanding"

"Its family atmosphere is evident through the many smiling, happy faces of the children"

"The wider management team, head teacher and governors are all very involved within the early educational programme and provide excellent support at all levels"

"The quality of leadership and management is outstanding"

"..... children receive the very best early education ..."

"All staff are very well qualified"

"Detailed policies and procedures provide a secure foundation for consistent and high quality practice".

"The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding"

Yours sincerely

Mrs Stephanie Bell M.A. (Oxon)
Headmistress

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Registered Charity No. 299411

Rydes Hill Preparatory

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY291132
Inspection date	12 June 2008
Inspector	Amanda May
Setting Address	Aldershot Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 8BP
Telephone number	01483563160
E-mail	ENQUIRIES@RYDESHILL.COM
Registered person	Stephanie Bell
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?

Rydes Hill Preparatory School is a Catholic school and nursery which welcomes all denominations. It was founded in 1945. In 1989 ownership transferred to a charitable trust, the school is now managed by a board of governors. It is a non-selective school and caters for children between the ages of three and 11 years; currently 160 children in total attend. The school is situated in a Georgian country house in an urban area of Guildford and serves a wide catchment area.

The school is open for 36 weeks of the year, from Monday to Friday; children in kindergarten attend for a full day from 08.20 until 15.15 and in main school from 08.20 until 15.35. Younger children in the nursery may attend for a morning, afternoon or full day session. An early birds care facility is available from 08.00 until the beginning of the school day, and a Stay and Play facility is available from when lessons end until 17.30.

The nursery currently has 42 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions, with a ratio of at least one staff member to eight children. The school currently supports children who speak English as an additional language.

All staff working with the children hold relevant childcare or teaching qualifications; two members of staff work in the kindergarten class and there are five staff in the nursery. In addition, four qualified teachers offer music, ballet, French and physical education classes to all children each week.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are making exceptional progress as they enjoy lessons which are challenging, thought provoking and fun. Staff support children very well and take into account their individual learning needs before using resources or teaching methods to support them. Children are split into two classes. A qualified teacher over-sees teaching and lesson plans to ensure that all areas of learning are covered and to evaluate children's progress through the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. Staff within both classrooms demonstrate an excellent understanding of the importance of providing challenge to children in their play. Children respond well to questioning and encouragement as they choose activities which interest them. The nursery class promotes learning predominantly through free play, whilst providing adult-led focus activities in which children practise pencil control and begin to learn phonics and numbers. Children are learning to make simple calculations as they play with play-dough. Staff challenge children to think about how many models they will have if some are taken away. Children are focussed as they work and other children arrive at the activity to join in the fun.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Activities are planned by the teachers and lesson plans are used effectively to ensure that all teaching assistants are aware of the learning objectives for each activity. Staff work exceptionally well together to ensure that the education provided is both consistent and relevant to each child's needs and levels of understanding. Staff get together to discuss activities and evaluate them to ensure that the education provided can evolve and improve. Children are observed and assessed in their progress allowing teaching staff to be in a position to support children who require further help in reaching their potential. Children visibly enjoy their time at school and are eager to investigate and explore the many opportunities open to them as they extend their own learning continuously. After joining in with adult-led learning about the letter of the week, children independently use large pieces of paper and coloured paints to paint the letter Q. Children experiment with their new found skills and teaching staff praise children for their work, using stickers to recognise their progress.

Children enjoy many opportunities to develop their creative learning. They access paints and chalks within the classroom and design and make models which are displayed around the room. Children are encouraged to draw their designs of a fire engine on paper and spend time thinking about the different materials they could use. Children then choose different resources from the junk modelling materials to make their model. Children also enjoy dressing-up and playing in the classroom's role play area. They have access to notebooks and pencils to practise their emergent writing skills as they serve customers and take money from their friends. Staff provide opportunities for children to try new skills and activities and qualified teachers, from within the school, take children for different lessons. All lessons are well resourced and teachers use props where appropriate, such as Pepper the puppet, to encourage children to develop their awareness of quiet and loud as they play their musical instruments. Children enjoy being active and sing and dance together during ballet lessons, or learn different skills as they play cricket outside.

Children are encouraged to fully participate within all lessons and as a result, are confident, self-assured and very happy. After physical education, children dress skilfully and are independent in their hygiene and self-care. Teachers spend time reminding children about the

importance of health and children are supported in their personal, social and emotional development. Close relationships are evident amongst children and adults alike. Children help to take care of each other and share beautifully as they work together to build different structures with bricks. Teachers invest time with children, praising and encouraging them through the use of stickers and awards. Children beam with pride as they show their friends what they have achieved and as they write on the blackboard the different words and spellings they have learnt. This ensures that children remain stimulated and that their thirst for knowledge is continuously supported through excellent teaching, the use of vibrant resources and a plentiful array of unique learning opportunities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's success in their education and development is due to an excellent relationship with parents. The school includes parents fully in the education of their child and provides informative details of the education provided in relation to the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. Parents are very happy with the provision and feel that it has exceeded their expectations in all aspects. Staff at the school ensure that new children receive an education which is immediately relevant to their needs, as they visit previous early years settings to discuss individual children's abilities and struggles.

Parent consultation meetings are carried out every term to ensure parents receive information about their child's progress across all areas of learning. Parents are also encouraged to look through children's work or approach the teachers or head teacher at any time to discuss their child's learning and development. The head teacher ensures that all parents within the school are kept informed and involved through writing a detailed newsletter every week. Parents are reminded about key events and photographs of children are included, ensuring that parents can share in their special achievements within the school community. The quality of partnership with parents and carers is outstanding.

The kindergarten class provides parents with the opportunity to see their child actively involved in activities, as photographs of them are displayed outside the classroom door and are linked to each learning outcome. This helps parents to become aware of the valuable teaching and learning opportunities being provided and demonstrates how this is appreciated and enjoyed by the children. Staff work closely with parents to discuss children's needs, particularly in respect of children who have learning difficulties and disabilities. A Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) is in place to support teachers and assistants with providing children with lessons and activities which are appropriate and provide suitable challenge. All members of staff are aware of the importance of consistency of support between the school and the home. Parents are encouraged to listen to their child read and help them to find items from home to bring in which link to current themes or topics. Parents are also welcomed into the setting to talk about their skills, talents and occupations to the children. Children enjoy visits from a postman, nurse, doctor and barrister. This helps children to develop an awareness of their local community and the wider world. They also enjoy trips into the community, such as, when they visit Littlefield Common to go bug hunting.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Children are given many opportunities to listen to a variety of different types of music and learn about different religions during their time in kindergarten. They write their names using symbols from different cultures and regularly visit the local church for mass. Children are sociable and their behaviour is impeccable. They know the difference between right and wrong and clearly hold very high

values. Older children within the school act as excellent role models for the younger children, helping with special jobs and being given additional responsibilities, such as, helping to supervise and care for the younger children as they play outside.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The setting meets the needs of the children for whom it provides.

The school prides itself on its family atmosphere and this is evident through the many smiling, happy faces of the children who attend. The wider management team, head teacher and governors are all very involved within the early educational programme and provide excellent support at all levels. The quality of leadership and management is outstanding. The school ethos ensures that all staff, senior management and the governing body work together to ensure children receive the very best early education which is centred around play. Staff work exceptionally well together to promote children's welfare and provide them with an environment which is well organised, to ensure children can respond to the activities which grab their interest. Children are encouraged to access resources and be independent in their learning. They help themselves to items that interest them, with staff following their lead during the majority of their learning. This provides challenge and effectively encourages children to think through new ideas and concepts.

Recruitment procedures are robust and secure. Procedures are in place to ensure that staff remain suitable and continue to provide high quality lessons and teaching to children. Appraisals of staff are carried out annually and senior teachers carry out observations of lessons, with the head teacher observing children's progress and teaching plans. This allows staff throughout the whole school to build strong working relationships and provides scope for sharing ideas, experiences and skills. All staff are very well qualified and the school ensures that there are plenty of opportunities for staff to develop their skills through internal and external training opportunities. The head teacher of the school is passionate in ensuring that children receive the best possible care and education and strives towards this goal, whilst being supported by the rest of the team. Detailed policies and procedures are in place which encompass the school's dedication to supporting children to reach their potential and achieve in all areas of their development. These are shared with parents and staff alike and provide a secure foundation for consistent and high quality practice.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was recommended to: develop methods of reporting to parents to make them aware of the progress children are making in each of the six areas of learning; and to increase opportunities for younger children to self-select tools and materials in order to fully develop their designing and making skills.

The setting has implemented changes to ensure that these recommendations have been addressed. Many methods are now used to ensure parents are kept informed and involved in the school and teaching staff ensure that parents receive many opportunities to discuss children's progress. Details about the curriculum for the Foundation Stage are shared with parents through the prospectus, information on the school's website and through attractive wall displays.

Resources and activities are displayed for children to access freely with relevant resources being stored at their reach. Children help themselves to items which interest them and children have

many opportunities to develop their design and making skills. Children are independent as they choose what they would like to make out of junk modelling and their self-esteem is enhanced through their work being displayed within the classroom.

Complaints since the last inspection

n/a

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

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