



Sunshine & Showers Preschool III

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY313585
Inspection date	26 May 2006
Inspector	Jenny Kane
Setting Address	Dymchurch CP School, New Hall Close, Dymchurch, Romney Marsh, Kent, TN29 0LE
Telephone number	07793 636656
E-mail	
Registered person	Sunshine & Showers Nursery School Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 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?

Sunshine and Showers Pre-School III is one of three nurseries run by Sunshine and Showers Ltd. It has recently moved premises and was registered in August 2005 to operate from classrooms of Dymchurch CP School in Dymchurch. A maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 08:45 to 15:00 during term-time only. Children have access to a several enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 31 children aged from two to under five years on roll; of these, 20 children receive funding for early education. The nursery serves the local area and surrounding area and children attend for a variety of sessions. The group supports children with learning difficulties and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The group employs five members of staff; of these, three hold appropriate Level 3 early years childcare qualifications. They receive support from the Local authority, teaching staff at the school and the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean, comfortable and welcoming premises. The group maintains accident and medication records and has first aid resources ready to hand. Three of the staff hold current first aid certificates and other staff are intending to renew theirs. Sick children do not attend which prevents the spread of infection.

Staff follow safe cleaning procedures and maintain a good level of cleanliness. Children are independent when using the bathroom, ask for help when needed and are developing self-care skills. They understand about washing their hands after using the toilet and before eating. However, the nappy-changing arrangements are not acceptable. The current procedure does not prevent cross-infection and staff change children on the floor.

Children receive a good range of nutritious and healthy snacks during the session. In the morning, a café style system operates whereby children choose when they have their snack. They wash their hands, find their name card and sit down with others to eat. Children pour drinks from a jug, spread margarine onto their bread and help themselves to fruit. While they eat, children chat to their peers and the member of staff supervising. They wash their bowl up when finished and one child wipes the table.

Those children who stay for an extended day bring a packed lunch with them and parents are encouraged to provide nutritious food. The lunch boxes are stored in a shady area. The nursery has a policy of asking parents to include an ice pack in the box and this needs to be reinforced. Children sit together at tables to eat lunch and they choose where they sit. Staff sit and eat with the children and talk during the meal. This reinforces good manners and enhances their enjoyment of mealtimes.

Staff have a good understanding of nutritious eating and children take part in healthy eating projects. Menus on display ensure that parents are aware of the snacks their children receive. Staff discuss dietary needs and any special requirements with parents which ensures children remain healthy and that the group meet children's individual dietary needs.

Children generally do not require to sleep during their time at nursery. However,

some of the younger children do need to rest if they are staying all day. The group intends to look at the setting up of a quiet area, in another room, where children can rest and sleep, as they need to.

There are good opportunities for children to develop their physical skills. Children use the nursery garden in good weather and other areas of the school by arrangement. In the garden, they ride bikes, push around prams and are aware of where other children are. Children enjoy using 'the wobbly wood', an adventure playground area. They use the equipment well, balancing, climbing and swinging. They are confident, move about safely and ask for help when needed. For example, one child asks a member of staff to hold the chain on the swing to stop it wobbling. Children also go out for walks in the community. They visit the shops to buy food for snacks, the library to borrow books and to the beach to collect items for projects.

During music and movement, children find enough space for themselves to dance and move about. They join in clapping, jumping, skipping and marching around the room listening to instructions. Children join in singing 'if you're happy and you know it', miming to the actions enthusiastically. Their fine motor skills are developing well by using a range of small tools, scissors, staplers, brushes and rollers during activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a well-maintained and secure environment. Parents have access to the nursery via the side door, which means they do not have to walk through the school. However, in wet weather they need to wait outside. There is adequate space in at the main classroom. There is an additional classroom adjacent but this area is not used to its full potential.

Staff take positive steps to ensure children's safety at all times and to minimise risks. A risk assessment is carried out daily of all areas used which means that children move around freely and safely. To help to promote safety, staff supervise children at all times and there are appropriate procedures in place to follow in an emergency.

Children have access to the garden and other areas of the school. A good range of outdoor play equipment is available for children. They use the equipment sensibly and move about the garden freely. However, the garden is not secure because there is no gate between the garden and the playground. This means a member of staff stands in the gap and she is unable to join in children's play. When children use the adventure playground area they walk sensibly across the playground holding hands accompanied by staff. They take with them a small first aid kit and check the area before children go in to play. This procedure ensures that children are safe.

Good procedures are in place to promote children's safety during outings in the local community. Staff use reins and push chairs, carry a mobile telephone, first aid kit and relevant documents regarding the children in their care. Parents give their written consent for outings, which on occasions involves travelling on the bus or the Light Railway.

A good range of toys and equipment are available for children's play, which are stimulating and suitable for their age and stage of development. Storage is limited, but the group shares toys with other groups in the chain, and this means that resources are frequently changed. The furniture is of good quality, in clean condition and shelving is at child height. This ensures that children have easy access to the toys, select what they play with and make choices for themselves. Posters and samples of children's work on the walls help make the environment bright and welcoming.

The manager and staff have a good awareness and understanding of child protection issues. There are clear written procedures in place, which the group shares with the parents. The manager ensures that procedures are up-to-date, and that staff understand their responsibilities and attend appropriate training. This safeguards and promotes the children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, relaxed and confident during play. They enjoy a good range of interesting, challenging and age appropriate activities, which are fun and support their developing needs. Children enjoy a mix of activities that include outside play and outings. They have plenty of time to engage in free play and make choices about what they play with from the available resources.

The senior staff members have a good knowledge of how children learn through play and the activities link clearly with the Foundation Stage and the Birth to three matters framework. A key worker system works well in practise and ensures that parents are involved in their children's care and development.

The daily routine is clear, well organised and planned according to the children's capabilities. The children are interested and take part eagerly because staff put thought into the organisation of activities. However, at times the routine is very busy with several activities taking place at the same time. Staff intend to consider making better use of other available space.

Children's work is valued and displayed, and this gives them a sense of achievement. Children take some work home to share with parents and samples are in their record books and used as examples to describe their development. Staff have adopted a clear system to record children's development. They note significant progress during activities on small pads and transfer these later to children's individual folders.

The group builds warm and positive relationships with the children, which ensures they feel secure. Staff have a friendly and caring approach and have particularly good interaction with the children under three. They are responsive and sensitive to meeting younger children's individual needs. Children relate well to each other and work together learning important social skills, such as sharing, negotiating and turn taking.

Younger children receive good individual support, reassurance and cuddles. They

have developed secure relationships with staff who are responsive and aware of their needs and this increases their sense of well-being. They are beginning to develop preferences, make choices for themselves and join in most of the activities. However, staff are sensitive to their needs and offer good alternatives if the child does not wish to join in. For example, one child helps to wash the paint pots and another has an individual story.

The member of staff responsible for the children under three has a very good knowledge and understanding of the Birth to three matters framework. She has recently attended training in the subject and is beginning to introduce this into the planning of daily activities. She has developed a clear method of observation and recording of progress and achievements. These records contain photographs, samples of work and explanation as to how the activity links with the framework. However, not all parents look at their children's record folders and staff intend to address this issue. Other staff are beginning to develop their knowledge through in-house training and the sharing of information. The use of the Birth to three matters of framework helps staff to provide activities, which promote younger children's care and learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making steady progress across the six areas of learning. Children achieve well because senior staff are skilled and use their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage to provide good quality education. Staff identify children's progress and assessment is linked to the stepping stones. This helps staff to plan appropriate next steps in children's learning.

Children are developing good relationships with adults and peers. They have a good rapport with staff who are aware of their individual needs. Children work together taking turns and sharing fairly. They show good levels of independence, for example, when using the toilet, helping themselves to drinks, selecting play materials and helping to clear up after activities.

Communication and language skills are effectively encouraged. Staff extend children's learning through many practical activities. Children enjoy stories in groups and individually. They respond enthusiastically and join in huffing and puffing to the story of the Three Little Pigs. Children pay good attention because the member of staff makes the story interesting by using various voices and puppets. They learn to recognise familiar words, such as their own names and labelled areas, and resources help children's language and literacy.

Children use mathematics during daily routines, such as snack time, register and other activities. For example, children discuss the concept of larger, smaller and simple calculation during an activity with various sized boxes. They recognise and compare shape, size and quantity and can confidently count up to 10 or more.

There are good opportunities for children to make their own art. They explore texture, colour and feel during various creative activities. Children squeeze paint out of containers, choose from a selection of brushes, rollers and tools and enjoy using their

hands to paint. They thoroughly enjoy the feel of cooked spaghetti and respond enthusiastically to the way it feels. Children respond well to action songs and rhymes, and join in clapping, jumping and skipping. Children's imagination is developing well as they act out their experiences during role-play. For example, the home corner is a doctor's surgery and children enjoy dressing up, using the props and tending to the member of staff who is the patient. Displays of art and project work displayed around the room, give children a sense of achievement.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are relaxed in their surroundings. They have a good rapport with staff who treat them as individuals with their own particular needs. Children enjoy a mix of organised activities, free play and one to one attention. They make choices about what they play with and are able to express personal preferences. This helps children to feel secure and have good self-esteem. The group works closely with parents and regularly discusses with them any specific needs or requirements. This ensures continuity of care for children.

Staff are caring and considerate and are committed to a policy of inclusion. They have a good awareness and are confident in their ability to provide care for children with a range of abilities. Children benefit from a key worker system whereby staff use the assessment records to ensure each child receives appropriate care. The deputy is undergoing training in special needs, which has increased her knowledge and understanding. This information is then cascaded down to staff. The premises are reasonably user friendly and areas can be adapted for children with a disability or additional need.

Children have access to a good range of play materials that reflect diversity and positive images. They gain an understanding of the wider world through activities, discussion and the use of books. Children develop an interest in their community through walks in the school grounds and outings to local shops, the library and the beach. Children have access to all of the toys and make effective use of the resources. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Appropriate behaviour management strategies are effective and work well in practise. Staff deal with incidents consistently and in a caring way. For example, they explain to children what they are going to do next and give a warning when it is time to start clearing away the toys. Children benefit from clear rules and boundaries and staff have reasonable expectations about what children can achieve and act accordingly when dealing with incidents. Staff allow children plenty of time to choose what they do and how long they stay at each activity and therefore, children are well behaved. The group shares the behaviour management policy with parents, and key workers give regular feedback as needed and discuss any incidents of unwanted behaviour as they arise.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff are friendly and approachable and have formed good relationships with the parents. The group shares information about children's care, progress and development both verbally, and in writing. Staff and

parents chat on a regular basis sharing relevant information. Children's developmental records are very comprehensive and staff take good care in their presentation. However, although many parents take a keen interest and ask to view these records, not all parents enjoy the same access. The group holds information sessions for parents but again not all attend.

Information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and the six areas of learning is clear and well presented. The manager and senior staff have a good knowledge and understanding of nursery education and are keen to share this with parents. They are looking at ways to involve parents further in the written assessments and records, to ensure that all parents continue their children's education and learning at home.

Written policies and procedures are of a good standard and clearly reflect the service provided. The prospectus sets out the nursery's aims and objectives and contains a modified version of all the policies. This ensures that parents receive good quality information about the group's care and education. Parents are happy with the service provided and children benefit from the positive partnership between staff and the parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The staff members have thought a great deal about the planning and layout of the play areas. The day is well planned, allowing time for quiet and active play. At times, the space is limited and although there is additional space in the adjoining classroom, this is not always used to its full potential. Staff are developing the environment to make better use of the available space.

A good mix of activities indoors, using the outside play areas and outings helps the group meet the developing needs of all the children. Children enjoy activities in small groups with their designated key worker for part of the session. All staff are involved in the planning of activities under the guidance of senior staff. Less experienced staff receive good support on a daily basis. However, the introduction of a formal supervision system would be beneficial in ensuring that staff identify and discuss individual training needs.

Children's records are secure, shared with parents and are readily available. Information about the children is relevant and used to promote their welfare. The group takes into account parents' views and opinions and looks after children according to their wishes. Staff have a friendly yet professional approach, which provides children with continuity and stability.

Leadership and management are good. The owner is fully involved in the running of the nursery. She takes an active role and works alongside her staff, offering support and leading by example. As a team, they are beginning to identify their strengths and areas for improvement. Senior staff recognise the importance of monitoring and evaluating the curriculum. All staff take responsibility for planning and the manager delegates tasks and responsibilities to individual staff. The nursery demonstrates a good commitment to continued improvement through training and team meetings.

Staff are enthusiastic and forward thinking regarding new ideas and ways of working. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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):

- improve the nappy changing facilities
- ensure children remain secure in the garden with particular regard to the gate
- consider ways to improve the environment for children with particular regard to the flow of activities, quiet time and the use of space [applies to both care and education]

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):

- introduce regular formal supervision for all staff to include looking at staff training needs [applies to both care and education]
- consider ways to further involve parents in their children's records so that all parents can support children's learning at home [applies to both care and education]

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