



Sunny Days Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY289730
Inspection date	30 October 2006
Inspector	Rosemary Linda Tomkins
Setting Address	Knypersley First School, Newpool Road, Knypersley, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST8 6NN
Telephone number	01782 297900 school
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Registered person	Sunny Days Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional 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?

Sunny Days Playgroup opened on its present site in 2004 and operates from a classroom at Knypersley First School, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire. It is situated in a residential area in Knypersley and managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children at the playgroup. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The group is open each weekday from 09:00 until 15:00 during school term times only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 49 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, four children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs seven staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children know the importance of good personal hygiene through planned routines and effective staff practice. Staff ensure the children know how and why they wash their hands before snacks and after using the toilet. For example, staff ring a bell to gain attention to prepare the children for a visit to the toilets to wash hands before snack. Staff routinely clean the tables with anti-bacterial spray before and after food and practise the clear procedures for sick and infectious children to prevent the spread of infection.

Children benefit from healthy snacks, they have a variety of peeled, cut fruit and vegetables. They are provided with milk and water at snack time but they are not able to help themselves to fresh water throughout the session. This means that children cannot chose to meet their individual needs. Children who attend during lunch time bring their own packed lunches and drinks and are closely supervised by extra lunch time staff. All dietary and health requirements are discussed and recorded on children's individual record forms. This helps to ensure children remain healthy.

The playgroup has access to a newly surfaced outside play area and all children enjoy periods of physical activity during the session. They join in free-play using wheeled toys and outside equipment. Children are developing their physical skills and enjoying exercise.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very well-organised, welcoming environment where risks to children are limited through good safety and security procedures. Staff monitor access to the playgroup at all times with the school security system, locked doors and gates. Risk assessments are completed together with daily safety checks for all areas of the premises used by the playgroup.

Safety equipment is in place, regularly checked and maintained and all children practise the emergency evacuation procedures regularly which ensures they will be safe in an emergency situation.

Children use a range of safe, good quality, developmentally appropriate resources. These are very well maintained and presented by staff to enable children to choose from the varied range. Staff consistently explain safe practices such as forming a line and holding hands to go to the toilets.

Children are protected from harm by staff who have a good understanding of child protection issues. The policy and procedures comply with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are secure in the playgroup's welcoming and caring environment. They have positive relationships with staff. Children play happily together using resources such as, books, play dough, the home corner and art materials suitable to their age and stage of development. All children enjoy exploration with paint, water and natural materials such as leaves and fir cones which helps children represent their feelings and ideas in a variety of ways.

The children's language and social skills are promoted well by staff through constant conversation, questions and individual attention. For example, staff play with children on an individual basis to help them manage their dressing-up clothes, cook in the home corner and discuss their favourite activities. Consequently, children are developing their communication skills and are able to express their needs. All plans and activities are organised by the staff in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage. The staff have attended training to develop their understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework terminology and provide parents with detailed information on each outcome for children.

There is a very good range of resources to promote all areas of development in the playgroup. Children choose to play individually or in groups. At present, the playgroup children are cared for with some of the school nursery children but staff ensure close attention and support particularly for the children under three years. A number of children have recently joined the group for example, one child was attending for the first time. He was secure and confident and relating well to the other children. The staff encouraged the older children to help him to wash his hands and select toys.

Children under three years in the playgroup are progressing and developing well and in some cases are already achieving the early stepping stones. For example they know the names of colours, are beginning to count and recognise their own name labels.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The very well-organised staff team have developed their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage to plan and provide a varied range of activities under each area of learning. The learning intention is recorded and relates to the stepping stones and early learning goals so that all aspects are covered. Staff have developed the practice of recording their observations on the children's progress and also record the children's attitude to learning to provide a clear picture of achievements to make accurate reports to parents. In addition, staff record the next steps for each child's level of future development. However, the current policy of grouping of children does not always ensure each child progresses and achieves according to their age and stage of development.

Staff use effective methods to maintain children's interest such as playing music and ringing bells to denote change of activity. Plans allow staff to spend the majority of their time working directly with the children and asking understandable questions to ensure that children are appropriately challenged and engaged.

Children are clear about the purpose of adult led planned activities and frequently join in with their own ideas and home experiences. Development is good, particularly in the areas of personal and social development, communication and language and literacy. Behaviour is well-managed by consistent methods. For example, reminding children to help one another and praise each other's achievements. This results in an ordered caring environment for children.

Children show a strong sense of belonging as they greet each other and staff on arrival. They are interested in their free play as they select and carry out activities and assume responsibility for their personal care. Staff make good use of every day routines to extend the children's personal independence by encouraging them to help themselves to snacks and pour their own drinks. Children are friendly, show care and concern for others and respond positively to high expectations of levels of behaviour.

Children recognise their own name labels and attempt to make recognisable marks on paper. They use expressive gestures to describe words. For example, 'wiggly, wiggly snake'. They are developing their skills to speak clearly, increasing their confidence and select books for pleasure.

Children explore and investigate with activities such as, using pieces of metal and magnets They visit the surrounding community as they walk and visit the library. However, children do not have planned opportunities to use everyday technology such as a computer or programmable toys to develop their understanding of information and communication technology. Children celebrate festivals to broaden their understanding of the wider world. Activities and displays include various methods to help the children learn about other cultures using dressing-up, stories and food tasting.

Children are developing their understanding and using numbers. They count meaningfully up to seven and are developing problem solving skills such as deciding how many teeth the crocodile has. Teaching methods encourage children to use number language and count in context during daily routines. Children demonstrate that they understand shape, quantity and size as they compare shapes of everyday objects and play measuring games in the water tray.

Frequent use of the outdoor area helps children develop their physical skills. Children pedal bicycles and wheeled toys with enthusiasm and enjoyment. Children are encouraged to walk and enjoy fresh air and have regular opportunities to travel around, under, over and through balancing and climbing equipment to further develop their physical skills. Children use paintbrushes, spatulas, scissors and cutters with increasing confidence and control. Planned activities ensure children recognise the importance of staying healthy with topics such as 'All About Me'.

Children express themselves through creative activities and role play. They routinely develop their skills in recognising repeated sounds and sound patterns whilst playing musical instruments. Children spontaneously use rhythmic movements and sing along with songs as they listen to music tapes whilst helping to tidy resources away. Children enjoy free play and extend their activities to widen experiences such as making up their own imaginary games as they play with animals in the water tray and take the dolls for a walk in the pram.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy positive relationships with the staff and each other. They are valued and respected as individuals. Their confidence and self-esteem are developed by staff with use of praise and encouragement on arrival and during their play throughout the session. Staff ensure that resources positively represent the children who attend as well as individuals from the wider community. Children enjoy visits from parents to the group and walks in surrounding areas which increases their knowledge of the world around them. This helps raise children's awareness of diversity in their community and develop a positive attitude to others. Children behave well, they take turns, share, help each other and remember to say 'please' and 'thank you'. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The access to the playgroup is good. Currently, there are no children with disabilities attending but staff have formulated a system to offer appropriate support to parents and ensure the policies and procedures promote inclusion for all children.

All children benefit from the positive partnership staff have developed with parents. The individual routines and preferences are discussed which means that staff are aware of all the children's needs. Children settle well because staff work closely with parents. Daily routines and activities are displayed for parents. This means that parents are fully aware of the quality of care their children receive.

The partnership with parents and carers of children attending and in receipt of funding for early education is good. Parents and carers are made aware of how the setting operates through an information leaflet. They are informed of topics and operational changes verbally, from notices on the notice board and regular newsletters. Children's health and dietary needs are discussed and recorded. Exchange of verbal information on a daily basis keeps parents informed of their child's well-being and progress. Records are accessible to parents at all times and they are invited to visit the staff at any time to discuss the educational programme and their children's achievements. Parents are actively involved in providing resources for example, collecting acorns for the Harvest display. Staff involve parents in fund raising and social activities.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is significantly enhanced by exceptional organisation. All policies and procedures are individual to the playgroup and fully support the good childcare practice. The committee and manager have introduced robust recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure qualified staff are in place. They have effective procedures to ensure continued suitability of staff. The operational plan allows for a high level of staff to children. Staff are actively supported when attending training to continue to increase knowledge and experience to provide activities and high quality care for children.

Leadership and management of funded children is good. The staff have a clear statement of aims and objectives which focus on the development and achievement for all children. Children are progressing and achieving steadily because of effective teaching methods which are regularly

evaluated to assess the impact on children. Staff are experienced and knowledgeable and ensure children's individual needs are generally met.

Children's records and staff details are stored securely and available for inspection. The daily attendance record for staff, children and visitors clearly shows the times of arrival and departure. Staff attend training on a rolling programme and are increasing their understanding of children's development and knowledge of appropriate activities. Staff are supported by a visiting advisory teacher who provides examples of good practice and record keeping to further develop their knowledge and understanding of how children learn.

Induction training and appropriate policies and procedures work in practice to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. There are clear systems in place for recording accidents, medication and attendance. Documentation is maintained to a high standard. The policies and procedures are continually undergoing review and update to reflect the progressive improvement of the operational practice. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Care

At the last inspection the playgroup was required to ensure that systems were in place to inform parents about accidents and gain their signature on the accident records and to ensure parents countersign any entry in the medication record; to ensure Ofsted is informed of all significant events including changes in the manager; and to ensure a procedure is in place to be followed in the event a child being lost.

The new management team have reviewed systems for recording accidents, medication and lost children which involves new policies, procedures and individual record forms with parental signatures. This means that parents are fully informed on all aspects of children's health, care and security. The team have also informed Ofsted of all changes to senior staff and committee members and completed the required forms to enable the vetting procedure to be undertaken to ensure that adults providing day care are suitable to do so. This has ensured the quality of care and nursery education is now of a good standard throughout the setting.

Nursery Education

At the last inspection, the quality of the nursery education was judged as inadequate. The nursery was required to develop planning to include more clearly the learning intentions for activities and how activities can be adapted to suit children of all abilities; to provide opportunities for children to use writing for communication, using a range of mediums to develop their writing skills; to develop children's abilities to use books for enjoyment and explore a range of words and texts, not only in group situations but also independently; to ensure parents are kept fully informed of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and provide information on how they can become involved in their child's learning in meaningful ways; and to develop assessment records for all children that enable staff to assess children's abilities on entry and plan the next steps for their play and learning, share these records on an ongoing basis with parents and carers.

The new management team have ensured that all staff in the playgroup have the support of a visiting advisory teacher and the qualified school nursery teacher. They have attended training to increase their knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and associated stepping stones and how children learn. This also included training on effective planning including adapting activities, developing writing skills, communication and enjoyment of books. An effective system for including and informing parents of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage has been developed which includes visits from parents, daily verbal exchange and donations of resources. The children's clear progress and achievement records inform parents and staff of the next steps for learning. These measures have had a significant impact on the quality of nursery education which is now much improved.

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 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):

- ensure that fresh drinking water is available at all times.

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):

- review the grouping of children to ensure each child progresses and achieves according to their age and stage of development
- provide regular opportunities for children to use everyday technology and programmable toys to support their overall learning.

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