



Sandhurst Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY331714
Inspection date	27 June 2006
Inspector	Jackie Liffen
Setting Address	Sandhurst Cp School, Rye Road, Sandhurst, CRANBROOK, Kent, TN18 5JE
Telephone number	01580 850407
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Registered person	Sandhurst Nursery School
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Sandhurst Nursery School opened in 1975 in the Old School Hall but now operates from a purpose-built building within Sandhurst Primary School grounds. A maximum of 19 children may attend the nursery at any one time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open each weekday during school term times from 8:45 to 15:45 and serves the local area.

There are currently 33 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 25

children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local catchment area and strong links are established with the primary school.

The nursery employs five members of staff, the supervisor is qualified and two members are undertaking appropriate qualifications. The nursery receives help from the advisory teacher from Kent Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and the Bexhill and Battle Under-Fives Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Most children are maintaining healthy routines and wash their hands after visiting the toilet using the basin, soap and disposable towels which are all within their reach. They are learning to understand simple hygiene practices when staff give them anti-bacterial gel to clean their hands, before eating. Younger children are growing and developing appropriately as they gradually become adapted to their new situation by watching the older ones and copying their good practices. Children are protected from infection because staff are alert to the prevention of germs and always wipe tables with anti-bacterial cleanser before children sit down to eat. Some staff are also trained in food hygiene and implement routines such as using coded cloths for different purposes. Children rest frequently in the book corner where they sit comfortably and enjoy relaxing in clean surroundings where the cushions are washed regularly.

Children spend a period of time during each session involved in exercise either outdoors, if the weather is fine, or indoors, undertaking specific activities such as playing with the chute or using their whole bodies to join in music and movement.

Children are well nourished because the group give them fruit every day at snack time. They are beginning to learn about healthy eating when they choose from three different pieces of fruit such as strawberries, apples and oranges. Children are also beginning to make informative choices when they pour a drink for themselves from the water and milk on offer. Children's welfare is maintained because their lunch boxes are stored in the fridge, which is maintained at a suitable temperature to ensure perishables are fit to eat.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed into the purpose-built room which is comfortable, clean and cleverly equipped with a large range of suitable toys, educational activities, and furniture. For example, all the tables have drawers underneath where the children help themselves to materials such as writing implements on the creative table. Children are able to move freely in the setting because staff are extremely effective at achieving the optimum use of space. They play with lots of new brightly coloured,

age-appropriate, safe, attractive, well-maintained toys and particularly enjoy imaginative games using the dressing up clothes and role-play toys in the home corner, which is often adapted according to the children's interests. Children easily sit at the child-sized tables on small chairs where they comfortably become involved in table-top activities. Staff help children to learn to avoid accidental injury by holding frequent fire drills and ensuring that any dangers in the setting are minimised, for example dangerous substances are stored in the kitchen area where children are prevented from entering by means of a stairgate. Although the supervisor safeguards children's welfare well and has a comprehensive knowledge of child protection procedures some staff are limited in their knowledge and do not understand recent Local Safeguarding Children Board advice. Children's safety is maintained on outings because staff develop a specific risk assessment to check that arrangements are sufficient.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are familiar with the routine when they enter with their parents, who help them find their names to put into a pot. Children then confidently gravitate towards an activity in which they are interested, for example, younger children move towards the playdough and older ones start to become involved in imaginative play. Children enjoy looking at and reflecting on the brightly coloured posters surrounding the room and the large sunshine and snowflake that adorn the ceiling. They spend some time concentrating quietly on their own in the book corner where they comfortably cuddle a soft toy, look at books and interact with their peers. Most children are involved in interesting activities throughout the session, however at times, particularly during the snack and lunchtimes, some of the younger children who have finished eating and have nothing to do become bored and disruptive.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The supervisor becomes familiar with children's family circumstances so that she understands their needs and bases the planning for the whole group around these. Children are beginning to progress because the supervisor knows and understands the Foundation Stage and Birth to three matters frameworks but her planning is not effective enough to help staff challenge children and use assessment to help children's understanding in all areas of learning. Staff are beginning to reflect on children's progress but are not interacting purposefully with them, so that children understand the varying concepts of their practical work. For example, when children are colouring in a worksheets, staff are not explaining why the letter 'H' is depicted, or the significance of the drawing. However, children are gaining in self esteem because staff encourage their independence by leaving them to manage their clothing by themselves. Children's social and emotional development is supported well, mainly because they have the freedom to explore and experiment intellectually, socially and emotionally with many quality activities, playing alongside and co-operatively with their peers.

Children are very confident within the setting where they are eager to try out new

activities and become interested in what is on offer. They all concentrate and sit quietly whilst the supervisor is talking to them as a group in the book corner and they recall significant experiences when questioned. Some children have a developing awareness of their own needs and competently take themselves to the toilet, remembering to wash their hands afterwards. They are forming good relationships with adults and peers and are beginning to consider the effects of what they say and do for themselves

Most children comfortably sit in the book corner during the session where they study large picture books, which are easily reached, or converse with their friends. Children listen attentively at circle time, responding to questions or answering their names when appropriate. They interact confidently with others and are beginning to make themselves understood in complex situations. Children listen and happily join in action rhymes and music and movement. Most of the older children know how to hold pencils correctly and are developing the ability to recognise and copy their own names.

Children say and use numbers in order in familiar contexts, for example, when changing the date on the calendar. They are developing mathematical terminology and ideas when they watch staff cut pieces of fruit in half and then into quarters. Some children relate number to objects when they count the participants sitting around a table. They show interest and concentration when using building blocks to make different shapes and designs.

Children are growing in knowledge about the world about us as they read relevant stories and sing about a caterpillar growing into a butterfly. They learn about magnifying glasses and other technological tools such as a telephone and calculator in their pretend play, and role play a variety of familiar scenarios. Older children are showing an interest in suitable software which is displayed on the computer. They discuss experiences in their own lives and in those of their families during a whole group activity to plan an outing. Some children are involved in planning and planting out a new garden in the outside area and discuss, investigate and ask questions about the quality and hardiness of seedlings. They assimilate knowledge about other cultures from posters and through celebrating a variety of festivals.

Children are developing positive attitudes to exercise and a growing awareness of the importance of physical activity as staff introduce them to a number of suitable activities to develop their fine and gross motor skills and their spatial awareness. For example they finely tune their dexterity when putting nuts, bolts and screws into the 'big builder'. They develop fitness and stamina when exploring their surroundings outside when playing with the larger, colourful apparatus such as a slide and climbing frame. Children move with control and co-ordination when following instructions during music and movement and they travel around and under the especially prepared parachute, whilst having fun in its folds.

Children are becoming familiar with different materials, such as clay, when they are invited to squeeze it and form their own creations. They sing simple songs from memory and are learning to move rhythmically and use instruments to make different sounds, for example, when they play with the Mexican instruments and accompany themselves in song. A number of children are developing their imaginations and

creativity when they choose to draw and colour from memory, helping themselves from suitable tools placed on the painting easel.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are respected and included in all activities, helped by staff who facilitate their play. All children are valued and allocated a key worker who watches their progress and sometimes keeps a record. Children benefit from a number of activities and resources which help them value diversity, for example they have fun dressing up in Indian and Chinese costumes. Children improve on their knowledge of different nationalities, cultures and religions by assimilating information from the posters around the room and playing with little figures, some in wheelchairs and with different skin tones. Overall children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children have their specific needs met by the supervisor who works in close partnership with parents to ensure that the group co-operate with any special requirements that may be necessary and provide the optimum care for each individual. Children's understanding is enhanced when professionals visit the group to talk about their work and introduce beneficial exercises. Their welfare is protected because staff ensure that they are familiar with any special dietary requirements.

Children are well behaved and generally react favourably to requests and commands from staff. However, on rare occasions when they are inactive, their imaginations and energies are sometimes diverted inappropriately. Children develop self-esteem when they are encouraged to undertake tasks for themselves and the supervisor takes every opportunity to offer positive reinforcement.

Children are secure because their continuity of care is enhanced by the group who try to work in partnership with parents. For example parents give written permission for various activities such as taking photographs, and they know how to make a complaint. However, parents are not completely informed about the procedures within the group which affect their children, because the policies are insufficient and out-of-date. The partnership with parents is satisfactory.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's security and development is improving because the setting is situated in new purpose-built premises. The committee are working hard to enhance the provision and the leadership and management is satisfactory. Although staff are keen to offer high quality care and education, not all children are progressing as well as possible because only the supervisor holds an appropriate qualification and has an expert knowledge of child development. She is focussing on future improvement and encourages staff to undertake appropriate training.

Children's well-being is enhanced because the supervisor organises the setting effectively, allocating specific periods to different themes, for example this week the children are involved in messy play. Children move around the room very easily and freely because the group organises the space and toys effectively. Children's security is enhanced because staff are deployed effectively as key workers.

The setting has all the required documentation to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. Most records are up-to-date and used suitably in maintaining good relationships with parents to ensure children's welfare and security is paramount. However, some written policies are insufficient and are not informing parents about current procedures within the setting. The group are very aware of the importance of confidentiality and ensure that individual private records are stored in a locked filing cabinet.

The provision 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.

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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 the child protection procedure complies with that of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

- consider how to involve all children in activities in which they are interested, throughout the day, including the snack and lunch periods
- up-date written policies so that they are sufficient and suitable to inform parents about the setting
- develop an action plan that sets out how staff training and qualification requirements will be met.

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):

- enhance children's knowledge and skills by interacting purposefully with them, so that they understand the varying concepts of their practical work.

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