



Sunshine Under Fives Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	305351
Inspection date	14 September 2006
Inspector	Ron Goldsmith
Setting Address	Percival Road, The Dale, Chester, Cheshire, CH2 4AH
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Registered person	Management Committee Sunshine Under 5's Centre
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of 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 satisfactory. 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 Under Fives Centre is a registered charity under the supervision of a manager and supported by a committee and the Army Welfare Service. It opened in 1986 and operates from a building located on the Dale Camp in Chester. The centre provides a crèche and a pre-school. The pre-school has the use of a large room, which is subdivided into designated learning areas, a kitchen and a secure enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday during term-time from 09:30 to 12:30.

There are currently 18 children from two and a half years to four years on roll at the pre-school. Of these 15 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come mainly from military families based at the Dale Camp. However, some children attend from the local community.

The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and children who speak English as a second language.

Six staff are employed. Four of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a qualification and one member of staff is unqualified.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy daily physical play sessions outdoors, developing their strength and coordination. Children are happy playing outdoors as they run, jump and pedal or they are inquisitive as they explore texture in the sand tray. They enjoy the fresh air, the good weather and exercising their bodies. Staff plan a range of activities to help children develop their manipulative skills so that children handle equipment and tools well, such as painting or cutting and rolling play dough. This enables children to develop their skills and capabilities.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through daily routines, for example, washing their hands after visiting the toilet or before snack time. Effective cleaning systems to prevent the risk of cross infection are implemented as table surfaces are wiped down using anti bacterial spray. Children enjoy healthy snacks, choosing from a variety of fruits or cheese and crackers. However, although drinks are provided at set times, water is not freely available for children at all times and therefore they are not drinking enough to maintain their health by hydrating, particularly in hot weather.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a secure and welcoming environment. There are some brightly coloured displays and easily accessible equipment for self-selection. This encourages children to feel confident and secure at the provision and is reflected in their eagerness to attend.

Effective safety measures are in place such as, socket covers, fire fighting equipment and restricted access to the building. Children develop a good awareness of safety as they are reminded not to run about the premises and to walk only on the pavement and stay away from the road. The provider has completed a formal risk assessment of the premises to ensure hazards are removed. Children freely explore the warm, stimulating environment. Children have access to a range of resources that stimulate their interest and expand their learning. Toys and equipment are enjoyable, safe and in good condition.

Different play areas and resources are clearly identified within the room for example, an area for sharing books, a role play area with dressing-up clothes and house play. Activities and resources are rotated to maintain children's interest. Children move about freely between play areas where they can choose their own games. Children are confident to select resources which staff have put out for them, which successfully fosters their growing independence. Staff have a sound knowledge of child protection issues and the action they would take in order to protect

children. Staff are aware to report concerns to the appropriate agency, should they have any concerns regarding children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are eager to attend the setting. Staff create a positive environment where most activities are child-led. Children happily make their own choices in free play sessions as they move around the different areas, although they are not always allowed to finish activities in their own time. Staff offer good support and guidance when children lack the confidence to move on or cannot decide what to do next.

Opportunities for younger children are interesting, well planned and stimulating because staff have good knowledge and understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and use this to guide practice. Children enjoy messy play, which allows them to explore texture. Diaries help keep parents informed about children's routines and activities.

Children learn to think and question what is happening as they explore their environment using all their senses. They do this during sand and dough play, using art and craft resources and when running around freely in outdoor play. They are encouraged to use their imagination and develop communication skills through a wide range of first hand experiences, such as role play, making constructions, creating small worlds with figures or sharing books.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a strong knowledge of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and plan a range of interesting activities across the six areas of learning. Planning is linked to all aspects of learning. Staff complete relevant observations on children's play and learning to record individual progress and this informs future planning well. Staff have a good understanding of the individual needs of children. The observation, assessment and planning cycle are effectively linked to identify and prioritise what each child knows and can do to plan the next steps for individual children. Staff provide children with a range of interesting activities that engage their interest.

Children's behaviour is good, they play well together and show care and concern for each other. Sometimes they find it difficult to concentrate because of distractions in the room, such as at registration time or when it approaches home time. Children sing simple nursery rhymes and enjoy counting rhymes. They are imaginative in their play and enjoy role play in activities, such as when reading a book about a gorilla and making the accompanying noises. They operate the computer and with assistance can control the mouse for a desired effect. They talk about people and events that are important to them. These activities all contribute to children's understanding and thoughts about the world around them, how things work and a sense of time and place.

Children enjoy physical activities outdoors. They enjoy running, jumping, pedalling and rolling around in the enclosed play area. They are beginning to count up to 10 and recognise different shapes. Staff communicate well with the children, they ask questions that enable children to

think and to solve problems. For example, a project in which children develop ideas on simple calculation and comparing groups of objects involves weighing and counting. The activity is well supported by staff asking children how many counters should be added or how many need to be taken off, to get the quantities to be the same.

Children recognise their written names and sometimes the names of others. They enjoy sharing books with each other and generally handle them correctly, turning the pages and laughing at some of the images and stories. There are opportunities to link sounds with letters or to write for different purposes. Through these activities children develop a range of mathematical knowledge, in addition to developing enquiring minds, helping them to understand their world

The children construct with a range of building materials and make models using their fine movements and developing their hand and eye coordination. The children use a range of small tools with increasing control and confidence, for example, paint brushes, pencils and crayons and shape cutters. They have opportunities to explore their environment and they are supported by the staff working alongside them during play. They are able to select from a range of art and craft activities. This enables the children to be independent and to use their vivid imagination and natural creativity.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children learn to make decisions and think for themselves because they are given opportunities to make their own choices in selecting the resources and activities that they do. They become increasingly independent while still being given assistance when needed. Children are learning to behave well and have consideration for others. For example, they cooperate well when playing together, handing each other equipment and taking turns without any need for prompting. They enthusiastically help tidy away. This is because the staff establish helpful attitudes in children.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Staff treat each child as an individual, acknowledging and respecting their home experiences and developing their self-esteem as they are given a warm welcome each day. Children develop awareness of peoples similarities and differences and learn to appreciate diversity in cultures and beliefs, through some good books and topics, such as when they celebrate Chinese New Year or sample food from around the world. Staff work well with parents and other agencies to follow up concerns about speech and language development.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Relationships with parents are positive which establishes a good basis for the open exchange of information and views. Parents understand procedures for children's safety and welfare as they receive good information about the provision from the parent-pack, the notices displayed and daily informal contact. However, opportunities to involve parents in their children's learning are limited. Parents are welcomed into the room where they can see what the children have been doing. They are aware of the topics children have covered and staff give them information or send home regular newsletters.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff are suitably qualified and experienced in providing care and education, which results in good outcomes for children under enjoying and achieving, staying safe and making a positive contribution. There are good processes for checking on the suitability of new staff and children are always kept supervised in the presence of any students or visitors as a safeguarding procedure. However, the organisation has not submitted sufficient information to the regulator to enable checks to be verified on all committee members, which is a breach of regulations.

Staff work together well as a team. Space and resources are well-managed to provide a welcoming environment. Staff are supported by a range of opportunities to attend training to update their knowledge and skills. Staff training is provided but it is not linked to appraisals and professional development in order to meet identified needs and support improvements within the setting.

The quality of leadership and management is good. Children engage in a range of activities to maintain their interest and this is enhanced by the staff's knowledge of child development and children's differing needs. Children benefit from good staff ratios, giving them plenty of individual attention. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were two recommendations arising from the last day care inspection and three key issues relating to the nursery education. The recommendations were to ensure all committee members complete appropriate vetting procedures and to obtain evidence that electrical appliances and fittings conform to safety requirements. The committee has changed since the previous inspection and committee members have not followed a suitable vetting procedure. This is a breach of regulations. The provider was able to produce certificates to show that safety checks are carried out on electrical appliances.

The key issues were to implement policies and procedures for managing children's behaviour so that they can extend their learning, develop the observation of children to ensure that planning meets the needs of all children and to monitor children's participation in activities to ensure that individual children get a balanced range of learning experiences.

Children's behaviour is good. The staff team operate a home diary for children who are especially disruptive in conjunction with a sticker reward system to acknowledge good behaviour. They effectively use observations and skills-lists to assess what children know, understand and can do and keep records of this in children's folders. They keep records of what this means in terms of children's next steps, which is evident in their questioning of children, the challenges they set and the knowledge that they are able to share with others. Children's participation in activities is monitored through the key worker system and ensures all children, regardless of their pattern of attendance, are given opportunities to participate in all activities.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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.

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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 children have access to drinking water throughout the day
- ensure a vetting procedure which allows the regulator to determine the suitability of all committee members.

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):

- share and regularly review information about individual children's progress with their parents and carers
- develop strategies which will help children to improve their concentration, particularly at registration time and at the close of the morning, and allow children time to finish activities in their own time.

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