



Kittens Day Nursery and Big Cats Out of School Clubs

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 508948 |
| Inspection date | 30 November 2006 |
| Inspector | Alison Weaver |
| Setting Address | Ecat House, Cross Levels Way, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN21 2UF |
| Telephone number | 01323 649243 Big Cats |
| E-mail | moreilly@sussexdowns.ac.uk |
| Registered person | Sussex Downs College - Childrens Centre |
| Type of inspection | Integrated |
| Type of care | Full day care, Out of School 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?

Kittens Day Nursery and Big Cats Out of School Club are run by Sussex Downs College. They opened in 1989 and operate from two buildings on the Sussex Downs College Campus site in Eastbourne. They also have access to some other college facilities. A maximum of 30 children may attend the nursery, and 32 children aged five to under eight years, may attend the out of school club at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:15 to 17:30 for 51 weeks of the year. The out of school club is open after school on Mondays to Thursdays from 15:00 to 18:30 and on Fridays until 18:00. In school holidays, the out of school club is open 08:30 to 17:30.

There are currently 27 children aged two to under five years on roll in the nursery. Of these 15 children receive funding for nursery education. There are currently 24 children aged five to under eight years who attend the out of school club. Children come from a wide catchment

area to attend the setting. Most of their parents either work or are students at the college. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs six staff. All of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. The out of school facility employs nine staff. Five of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualification. One staff member is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through the reinforcement of everyday routines, including hand washing after using the toilet and before eating. Children have easy access to tissues so they can help themselves if they need to wipe their noses. Staff take the necessary steps to help prevent the spread of infection amongst children in both settings. These include cleaning the tables before meal times and the wearing of gloves and disposable aprons when changing nappies. The use of a shared bowl of water and towel with younger children after messy play is less effective at preventing cross infection.

There is a very high level of first aid trained staff, which ensures that a child receives appropriate care in the event of an accident. Staff obtain the necessary information about children's individual health needs from parents. This helps promote their welfare. There are good arrangements in place for children who become ill whilst in the nursery.

Children learn about the importance of healthy eating through planned topics in the out of school club. The younger children learn what is good to eat as they talk together about their meals and do cooking activities. All children choose from a selection of healthy snacks such as cereals, bread sticks with cheese and pitta bread. Fruit is always available to the children. The children in the out of school club have access to a water dispenser so can help themselves when they get thirsty. Water is also readily available for nursery children and they frequently go and take a drink from their own bottles. This helps ensure that children do not become dehydrated.

Staff provide a broad range of activities, which effectively promote children's health, both emotionally and physically. Staff interact well with the younger children and encourage them to express their feelings. Younger children receive good support from staff as they learn to control their bodies and develop their physical skills, particularly when doing movement activities. They are also able to rest when they become tired.

Children enjoy plenty of opportunities where they gain and develop physical skills such as running, jumping and balancing. They show good co-ordination, moving confidently and safely. They enthusiastically explore different ways of moving using their bodies as they pretend to be sea creatures and jumping beans. They confidently use a variety of different play equipment outdoors including trikes, hoops and scooters. Their fine motor skills develop well as they use a satisfactory range of tools and smaller equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from playing in secure and safe environments. Staff have a good awareness of security and ensure that there is no unauthorised access to the children. Both buildings used by the children are well organised with different safe play areas for the children. The buildings are well maintained and the outdoor areas are checked before use to ensure that they are safe. Staff carry out effective daily safety checks and regular comprehensive risk assessments. They show a good awareness of how to keep children safe. Appropriate safety equipment is in place, including socket covers and radiator guards. Staff and children regularly practise fire drills so that they know what to do in an emergency.

Staff are deployed effectively so that children are well supervised at all times, including when going to activities in other areas in the college. All children access only those areas that are suitable for them. This enables children to explore and develop their independence without the risk of harming themselves. There are clear procedures for outings with children in the out of school club. This includes the wearing of wristbands when they go to use the astro turf area so that staff can easily identify the children from the club.

Children enjoy playing with a wide range of good quality equipment that is appropriate to their age and stage of development. The equipment is in good condition and attractive to children. A lot of the storage used allows children to safely choose from the toys and equipment without needing adult help.

The provision has all the required procedures and documents in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. All staff are very knowledgeable about child protection and are fully aware of what to do if they have a concern about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The staff create friendly and welcoming settings with a range of interesting visual displays. These displays help to promote children's learning. Children's work is displayed well which contributes to their sense of self-esteem. The rooms are set out well with the exception of the book area for the older children in the nursery. There is no clearly defined welcoming area where children can sit and relax together to look at books.

Children are very happy, confident and independent. They enjoy their time in the settings and are interested in the activities that are available. Staff use the Birth to three matters framework to plan meaningful activities for children under three years of age. They observe children regularly and keep a form of record of progress for individuals. However, this record lacks clarity to enable all staff to easily track how individual children are achieving and to plan the next targets. Young children enjoy many activities that stimulate their senses including painting with their feet. They fully engage in circle times and soon realise that if they sit out they miss all the fun. They enthusiastically join in with singing and action songs.

Older children in the out of school club freely choose from a good range of activities. The art and craft activities in particular, are very popular with the children. They enjoy the relaxed, informal and friendly atmosphere where they make good relationships with the adults. They frequently call an adult over to join in their games. Staff in both settings are very caring and supportive, which helps children develop their confidence and achieve. Adults spend time playing and talking with children, encouraging them to play together and share. All children enjoy plenty of opportunities to develop their social skills. They relate well to each other and form friendships.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. A well-balanced curriculum ensures children have a wide range of experiences that supports their learning in all areas. Observations identify children's stage of learning and these are used to complete the records of their progress. Staff know the children well and use the records of achievements to informally plan the next steps for each child. However, staff do not formally plan activities to show how to take into account individual children's needs and abilities. This fails to ensure that all children are challenged and extended appropriately at an activity. Overall, staff use good open-ended questions to encourage children to think and express themselves.

Children's independence develops well as they see to their own needs such as putting on coats, visiting the toilet and pouring their own drinks at snack time. They have opportunities to make their own choices of toys. They develop good relationships with peers and adults. They learn to share and take turns when playing together, for example, as they do floor puzzles. Staff encourage children to help an adult and each other.

Children communicate effectively, showing a good use of vocabulary. They talk confidently about their experiences, such as having an injection and about their pets. Children that are more able learn the link between sounds and letters as they practise jolly phonics. They enjoy looking at books and listening to stories. Children explore different forms of mark making, learning to form letters with increasing skill. They have some opportunities to practise writing for different purposes in the role-play area. They find their names at snack times and register them on the board.

The children have opportunities to develop their understanding of number and shape in the range of activities available. They learn to count and recognise numerals. They explore measuring as they take part in cooking activities.

Children learn about the wider world from visitors such as a science teacher, fire officers and police. They enjoy celebrating different festivals and learn about how others live. They regularly use information technology and show very good mouse control as they play different games on the computer. They record their own voices using the tape player. They explore different materials and objects using a variety of tools and equipment including magnifiers, torches and measuring tapes.

Children express themselves creatively through a range of mediums. They paint, draw and make collages that represent their experiences. They become absorbed painting pictures at the easels.

They enjoy the play dough activities and making different patterns in the sand. They enjoy music and join in enthusiastically when playing instruments. They learn about rhythm as they beat out their names.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff ensure they have full information from parents about their child so they can respect their wishes and meet children's needs. Children from a variety of backgrounds are welcome in both settings. Staff help children to acknowledge their backgrounds by encouraging parents to share their traditions and celebrations with all the children. Staff ensure that children have access to a variety of resources that represent the wider community. These include cooking items in the home corner, dressing up clothes, welcome posters and puzzles. These resources and the planned topics help children develop a positive attitude to others and learn about the world around them. There are fewer resources showing positive images of disability.

The setting has effective arrangements in place to care for children with special educational needs. Staff support these children well and give them good quality care. They work closely with parents and other professionals to help these children achieve and make progress. The nursery makes regular use of pictorial timetables to aid communication with all children.

Overall, children behave well and respond positively to staff. They learn to play well together and to share toys. The staff are good role models, showing care and concern for the children. Children's self-esteem develops as they are praised and encouraged by staff. Appropriate methods are used to promote good behaviour, particularly with the older children. The children in the out of school club take part in deciding the club rules and regularly remind each other of them. They learn to take shared responsibility for behaviour in the club as they earn rewards for the group. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Nursery children benefit from good parental involvement as they settle into the setting. The effective use of displays and notice boards in the lobby keep parents informed about general childcare issues and about the activities. They receive very helpful verbal and written information about the Foundation Stage, which gives them a good overall picture of what children are learning. The curriculum plans are easily available for them to look at so they can see what activities the children are enjoying.

Parents and staff work together as they share information about children's individual progress and development, particularly at the regular consultations. Parents are welcome to contribute to their child's ongoing assessment record. Staff produce regular written reports on each child so that parents know how well their child is progressing towards the early learning goals. The opportunities for parents to extend children's learning at home are not fully exploited.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall, the setting is well organised and space is used effectively for the different aged children. The organisation of snack time in the out of school club is less successful as children sit too

long and become restless. Staff group children appropriately and supervise them well. Children benefit from being cared for by a very high level of qualified staff in both the nursery and out of school club. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

There have been some recent changes in the nursery with regard to the manager and the organisation of the rooms. However, the impact on the children is minimal as the nursery continues to operate smoothly. The dividing of the children into two rooms has been beneficial as it allows staff to organise activities appropriate for the different age groups. The staff team work well together to support the children and provide a settled environment.

All the required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being, is in place. A thorough recruitment procedure is in place, which ensures that staff are suitable to work with children. The ongoing development of staff is promoted through satisfactory induction and appraisal systems. These help ensure that staff understand their role and know how to support children in their play and learning. The staff are encouraged to keep up to date with childcare practices through ongoing training. The policies and procedures provide clear and detailed practical information for staff, which helps contribute to the smooth running of the setting. There is a complaints policy but it does not sufficiently reflect the current necessary procedures.

Leadership and management are good. The staff are committed to continuous improvement and development of the nursery education provision. Evaluation of activities is carried out to identify areas of improvement. Staff monitor and evaluate the overall provision for education to ensure that children benefit from attending the setting. They make use of staff and parent questionnaires to review their practices. They also carry out some action plans to develop and improve the setting.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the nursery was asked to ensure regular fire drills were carried out. The staff and children now regularly practise fire evacuation so that they learn how to stay safe in the event of a fire. The nursery was also asked to maintain an accurate record of attendance. This record is being kept appropriately.

At the last inspection for nursery education, the group was asked to consider improving the reports to parents. The group now links the reports for three year old children to the six areas of learning and identifies the next target for each child so that parents are more informed about how to support their child at home. The group was also asked to consider combining the participation records with children's assessments to enable staff to identify which stepping stones may need to be revisited. Overall, this has been met but it remains an ongoing area for development.

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):

- improve the book area to make it more inviting to children
- further develop the records of children's progress with regard to the Birth to three matters framework and ensure the records are used to inform future planning
- improve the complaints policy to ensure it reflects the current procedures more closely.

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):

- ensure that information gained in children's records is used effectively in the planning to enable all children to be challenged and extended at activities.

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