



Sunshine Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY273928
Inspection date	27 September 2006
Inspector	Anita Bartram
Setting Address	Clatterfield Gardens, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex, SS0 0AX
Telephone number	01702 333 313
E-mail	
Registered person	Sunshine Day Nursery 2003 Ltd
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 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?

Sunshine Day Nursery opened in 2003 and operates from four rooms in a converted dance studio. It is situated in the centre of Westcliff-on-Sea. A maximum of 53 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.00 to 19.00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 82 children aged from birth to under eight years on roll. Of these 20 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery operates a before and after school club for older children aged over five years. Children come from both the local and wider catchment area. The nursery currently supports a small number of children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery does not currently support any children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs 13 staff. The majority of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two staff are working towards a further qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have a sound appreciation of following good hygiene routines. Staff are vigilant at following procedures to prevent cross-infection, for example through weekly cleaning of baby toys and play equipment. Children are given time to clean their teeth after lunch and staff monitor hand washing. Consequently, children are learning actively about keeping healthy. The key worker system generally supports children's emotional well-being. However, babies and children who are less confident or take longer to settle are not always sufficiently supported to develop strong emotional bonds with staff. This means some babies and children are more vulnerable to distress when they separate from their parent or carer.

Children have their health and dietary needs very well met. Staff have implemented healthy eating menus for the babies and children and ask parents for suggestions and comments. As a result, children's more specific needs such as food allergies can be accommodated safely and children can be offered healthy alternatives if they do not like what is on offer. Staff seize opportunities to raise children's awareness of healthy foods, through discussions about which foods are good for them and offering a healthy variety of finger foods at snack time. For example, some older children recognise healthy foods such as pumpkin seeds. As a result, children are developing positive and healthy tastes for nutritious foods.

All children move with good control and co-ordination. They show sound awareness of space as they travel between activities indoors or as they use the wider open space at garden time. Older children thoroughly enjoy large adult-led movement activities where, for example, they can vigorously cycle their legs in the air as they pretend to pedal up and down hill. Children are able to make good use of the garden during warmer weather. However, opportunities are not so readily available to them once seasons change towards winter. As a result, valuable play and learning opportunities are missed that enable children to breathe fresh air and exercise in the wider less restricted space. Children enjoy using all the equipment although a wide range of tools is not always sufficiently available to them to extend their finer physical skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises are safe and secure. Overall, all hazards to the children have been minimised by staff. Children are able to use toys and equipment that are in good condition and stored mostly at child height. The outdoor play space is secure. Staff keep children safe on informal outings around the grounds of the nursery, by example, using increased staff ratios. The décor in each room is bright and well maintained. Staff personally welcome any visitors into the nursery and are vigilant about recording staff, children and visitors who are on the premises. As a result, children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe indoor and outdoor environment.

Staff give simple reasons to babies and children when they ask them not to do things. For example, when adventurous 18-month-olds climb onto rocking toys staff tell them they might fall or hurt themselves. Staff explain rules and employ boundaries with the older children to enable them to begin to think for themselves about keeping safe. For example, older children know that throwing the sand whilst they play is dangerous and could hurt their friend's eyes.

All staff have an appropriate understanding of their roles and responsibilities in child protection. Staff at various levels have attended recent training according to their posts. Written guidance is readily available to staff based on the procedures laid out in the booklet 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused – Summary'. As a result, measures to safeguard children from non-accidental harm are securely in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The manager and staff in the nursery have sound skills and knowledge of child development and childcare. Staff have begun to plan activities based upon the future DfES framework; the 'Early Years Foundation Stage', which builds upon the existing 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage, the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the 'National standards for under 8s day care and childminding'. As a result, children's care, learning and play are securely promoted.

Staff provide general activities that are fun and interesting. Senior staff interact confidently with the babies and children to extend their learning from the variety of activities on offer. Some staff do not always interact so purposefully with the babies and children and some activities in the two to threes room are sometimes inappropriate to the age and stage of the children in the room. However, babies and children are progressing soundly through normal milestones of development. Babies and children under three are beginning to develop their social skills appropriately. Babies make eye contact when they approach and seek out reassurance from familiar staff. Two-year-olds are starting to appreciate that they need to listen and can follow simple instructions, such as when they are asked to take off their shoes. All children under three enjoy moving to music. For example, babies spontaneously clap their hands or sway when staff put music on in their room.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals is developing well. Senior staff have a thorough understanding and are beginning to develop less experienced staff's skills. Senior staff working directly with the children are instrumental in the sound delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum. However, less experienced staff take a more passive role and do not interact so fully with the children to help them extend their learning and understanding. The effectiveness of the curriculum planning is generally sound. Again, senior staff are aware of activities they provide to cover the six areas of learning. However, daily planning does not identify all six areas and as a result, activities are not planned to rigorously offer depth or breadth, ensuring all aspects of the areas of learning are sufficiently covered over time.

Staff have developed a very good assessment system. Regular observations are carried out on children and information is transferred to developmental reports and records. Senior staff identify gaps or next steps in children's learning. However, this information is not transferred into the daily planning of activities. Consequently, activities are not robustly planned to focus on identified learning objectives and do not offer less experienced staff support to effectively interact with the children during activities to meet their differing learning needs. This has an overall impact on the amount of challenge offered to children's learning through the Foundation Stage.

Senior staff show great enthusiasm in their work with the children. This has a very positive effect on the children's enthusiasm to learn. At the same time, staff manage children's behaviour positively and calmly. Staff gently remind children of simple rules and boundaries are consistently applied by senior staff. As a result, children have a very secure understanding of expectations of their behaviour and are developing high levels of self-control. There is a very valuable amount of free-play time allocated during each session. As a result, children are able to explore and learn in activities they have chosen and which interest them. This creates a positive and busy atmosphere in the room. The garden is currently under used by staff to deliver the Foundation Stage. Consequently, the children miss valuable opportunities to learn through the wide range of experiences and differences in environment that the outdoor play space offers.

Children are interested and motivated to learn. Many are confident to try new activities, suggest ideas and speak in a familiar group. For example, children become purposefully involved in activities and are very keen to hear stories. Children confidently talk to both familiar and unfamiliar adults, asking meaningful questions and offering comments. Children are beginning to form good relationships with adults and each other. Older children work extremely well in group activities and are well aware of basic social rules such as taking turns and sharing fairly. Consequently, older children have very good levels of self-control and are developing a sound sense of community.

Children actively listen, and respond with enjoyment and attention to stories, songs and rhymes. All the children have a love of books and stories. Younger children handle books carefully and can choose a favourite book and pick out the main characteristics of the story. More able children willingly re-tell a familiar story using puppets that they have just watched being told to them. Children use the pencils and paper that is readily available to them, although many rely heavily on templates to draw around. Early writing materials and prompts for children to begin practising and developing their mark making skills are not always sufficiently obvious for them to see and use. Children enjoy counting. Many children can rote count beyond ten as they count how many children are sitting in their circle of chairs. Some are beginning to use their fingers to represent simple numbers such as two and five. More able children enjoy simple problem solving questions that staff pose at snack time, such as "how many more cups do we need". Older or more able children have very limited opportunities to begin to write or record simple numbers for purpose. For example, to record how many children are staying for lunch or how many want milk or water at snack time. Many children are developing a good sense of shape and size.

Children are beginning to ask questions to find out about the world around them. For example, they are curious to discover what visitors' computers do or why they are wearing a name badge.

Many children enjoy construction with man-made materials and select appropriate bricks to represent what they are building, for example, using prism shapes for a roof to their tower. Older children are familiar with information and communication technology and are able to operate simple equipment, such as a mouse. All children have an appropriate sense of time and place. Children can identify familiar colours and shapes such as circles and squares. Children listen appropriately as music is played for them to relax to, reacting to the change in tempo as they move their bodies on the floor. The noticeable emphasis of templates on the mark making table does inhibit some children from using their own imagination to draw pictures independently. All children are very confident at expressing their own ideas.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

There are very strong working relationships between staff and parents. For example, parents are able to offer suggestions about any aspect of the nursery and the manager is available for parents to speak to directly or by telephone. Parents are encouraged to come right into the nursery to settle their child each session and can informally discuss any issues with room staff. Written information is provided to parents about their child's daily and weekly routines. As a result, children are able to receive very high levels of consistency in their care.

Children who have more specific needs are fully included into the life of the nursery through the close partnerships staff have with parents and other outside support agencies. Children who have English as an additional language are appropriately supported through staff liaison with parents. Staff have built up a satisfactory collection of toys and resources to promote positive images of diversity. Consequently, while children play they are able to build a balanced view of the similarities and differences between themselves and others.

Staff have developed valuable skills in managing children's behaviour. Across all children's age groups staff are consistent in their approach. For example, they use calm voices and give children and older babies reasons why they are being asked not to run, throw toys or to be gentle with smaller babies. The positive strategies being used by staff enables all children to develop a strong sense of right from wrong. As a result, all children's behaviour is very good.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. With regard to nursery education, parents are provided with a wealth of various information about their child's achievements and progress. Both written and informal discussion takes place between room staff and parents on a daily, weekly and termly basis. This enables parents to be fully informed about how their child is progressing through the Foundation Stage. Parents are actively encouraged to share with staff what they know about their child and what achievements they have made at home. Individual children's development records are available to individual parents at any time. As a result, parents feel involved in their child's learning and can play an active part in helping their child learn at home.

Overall, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

All required documentation is in place. Policies and procedures reflect actual staff practice and systems are firmly in place to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. Parents are able to see most policies and procedures at any time and further details are available via the setting's website. As a result, parents are able to be fully informed about the operation of the group.

The provider is suitably aware of her responsibilities and has sound vetting procedures to check new staff. The adult-child ratios are adequately met, although staff working with babies and children under two years are regularly taken away from direct care of the children to do necessary domestic chores. This sometimes has a detrimental effect on some babies' and children's emotional well-being. This is particularly evident in the effectiveness of the key worker system in settling in new children.

The leadership and management of the nursery is satisfactory. This enables children to make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage. Senior room staff are very good role models for less experienced staff and training is encouraged to help develop staff professionally. Formal development plans are not yet in place to focus on areas for each member of staff to increase or develop skills. The manager is fully committed to improving the care and education for the children and openly seeks feedback from parents about their views and opinions on the childcare and education. As a result, the leadership and management of the nursery education encourages children's steady progress towards the early learning goals.

Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the quality of care was judged as satisfactory. The provider agreed to amend the registration system to meet the requirements of the 'National standards for under 8s day care and childminding'. This has been completed and the register now accurately records when children are attending the setting. Written fire procedures have been amended to reflect actual staff practice and a confidentiality policy is now in place. As a result, documentation is in place to guide all staff in protecting children's welfare and safety.

The provider agreed to increase staff knowledge and understanding of: equal opportunities; the 'Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs'; and how to implement the group's behaviour management policy to ensure consistency. The senior management team now has a good appreciation of these areas and has started to cascade their knowledge to less experienced staff. This has had a positive impact on how well staff meet children's individual needs. Staff are now very effective in managing children's behaviour and this has led to high levels of self-control in the children.

At the last inspection, the quality of nursery education was judged as having significant weaknesses. The provider was asked to improve staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and the early learning goals and use this increasing knowledge to review

playroom organisation and behaviour management strategies and improve the quality of teaching and learning. The provider has made substantial improvements. Senior staff in the Rainbows room now have a very thorough understanding of the Foundation Stage. They interact confidently and professionally with the children and have organised the room to enable the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage to be covered. Their confident approach is consistent and offers children boundaries and simple rules to help them regulate their own behaviour. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning has improved.

The provider was asked to develop planning to enable all staff to understand what children are intended to learn from the set activities and to meet the needs of all children. She was asked to continue to develop the assessment records, ensuring that they effectively track children's progress against the stepping stones and the early learning goals, demonstrating how the information gained will be used to identify the next steps in children's learning. The provider has made sound improvement. Senior staff know the children very well and the setting has taken advice from other professionals. However, plans are not yet sufficiently robust to help all staff readily identify where the six areas of learning are covered in activities and what the planned learning intentions are to address gaps or next steps in different children's learning. Staff have made good improvement in how they assess children's development. Senior staff identify gaps or next steps and share this information with parents. However, this information is not rigorously transferred into planning. As a result, specific or focused activities are not rigorously planned to meet the specific learning outcomes required to extend all children's learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

On the 21 March 2006 Ofsted received a concern about inappropriate behaviour of an ex-member of staff at this provision. Ofsted wrote to the provider on the 3 April 2006 asking them to carrying out an internal investigation into the concerns under National Standard 11: Behaviour.

The provider supplied a full report into the concerns, which Ofsted received on the 7 April 2006. The report showed that the provider had acted appropriately regarding the inappropriate behaviour of a staff member. However Ofsted was not notified of this event and therefore an action was given to the provider under National Standard 14: Documentation; ensure Ofsted is notified of any significant events, no later than 14 days after the event. A satisfactory response to this action was received on 20 April 2006. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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 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 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):

- make more use of space and domestic staff in the under two's room to enhance babies' welfare and well-being
- continue to develop all staff's awareness of using planning to meet babies' and children's specific learning needs according to their age and stage of development
- develop the key worker system to enable babies and children to form strong attachments to staff, particularly when first settling into the nursery

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):

- continue to develop the curriculum planning to ensure all six areas of learning are purposefully planned for in each session, and challenge and support is identified within the daily planning to help all staff move children onto the next steps in their learning
- increase the children's use of the outdoor environment to help staff deliver the Foundation Stage curriculum.

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