



Pumpkin Patch Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY334466
Inspection date	28 September 2006
Inspector	Susan McCourt
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Registered person	Anita Dawn Hotton
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 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?

Pumpkin Patch Nursery was registered on this site in 2006 but had been open on another site for ten years previously. It is situated in the Preston Park area of Brighton and is privately owned with a sister nursery in Hove. The building is a converted house and children are accommodated on the ground and lower ground floors with large playrooms and a large outdoor area.

It is registered to provide full day care for 60 children. There are currently 42 children on roll, nine of whom are in receipt of nursery education funding.

There are 14 members of staff, ten of whom are qualified for their role, and a further four are in training. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean environment and have easy access to facilities which help them to be independent in their personal hygiene. They learn about the importance of cleanliness because staff are on hand to encourage a good routine, and pictures on the wall remind children of how to wash their hands. Nappy-change areas are fully equipped with gloves, wipes and nappy disposal units, which helps to prevent any potential cross-infection. Children's bedding is labelled for the sole use of that child and is washed regularly. Medication and accident records are well-maintained and meet the standard.

Children are well-nourished. Snacks of fruit and rice cakes are available for an extended period in order that children can take a break when they choose. Lunches are freshly cooked on the premises daily to provide a healthy balanced meal that can be varied to meet any cultural or dietary need. Children eat in small groups with the staff in a social and relaxed atmosphere, which encourages children to try new things and develop good eating habits. Children can be independent and pour their own drinks and feed themselves as appropriate, and they can help themselves to drinks of water at any time. Babies are fed in accordance with their home routine and are always cuddled for bottle feeds.

Children enjoy a healthy lifestyle and their physical development is fostered well. Children have good access to a wide range of physical play equipment including bikes and climbing equipment. They learn to throw and catch, and can move in a variety of ways such as hopping, jumping and skipping. Children also learn to use smaller equipment such as safe knives and forks, threading games, dough tools and paint brushes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children greatly benefit from playing in large, spacious rooms which have been thoughtfully arranged to create excellent play opportunities. Children can have free access to a full range of activities and enjoy playing in light and comfortable rooms. There is plenty of space to move around and enough equipment for small groups to play co-operatively, which means that children are relaxed and can develop their games well. Further equipment is at child height, and containers are transparent, making it easy for children to get what they need and enabling them to be more independent in their play. The play equipment includes lots of natural, household and found objects - scoops, jugs, whisks, pine cones, bark and shredded paper - giving children an excellent range of play materials to choose from.

Safety is maintained to a high standard. Rigorous risk assessments and thorough daily checks ensure that the building is always safe for children to play. Staff vigilantly follow any procedures that safeguard children and are quick to notify any problems, which are swiftly dealt with. Accident records are reviewed monthly to note any improvements that may be needed. Fire checks and drills are held regularly to ensure that children can be evacuated in case of an emergency.

Staff renew their child protection training every three years in order to stay up to date with best practice. All policies and procedures are maintained accordingly and parents are informed about the staff's responsibilities. Staff have access to written guidance about reporting any concerns and understand that the welfare of the child is paramount.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are well-settled and confident in the care of the staff who get to know each individual child very well, and take great delight in their company. The routine allows for children to have predominantly free play with some small group circle times for stories, singing and sharing news. Babies follow their own routine and staff work closely with parents to ensure that they know each baby's individual preferences and personality. This helps the babies and parents to settle to the new setting and thrive. Staff use the Birth to three matters guidance effectively and babies move into the toddler rooms, then on into the pre-school room at the appropriate stage of their development, with plenty of support to ensure that the transition is smooth. Each of the learning environments is skilfully set up to allow for independence and to support that particular stage of development.

Nursery Education

The teaching and learning is good. All staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and use their planning to set up the activities so that each area of learning can be facilitated. As children play, staff are skilled at seeing where the child's interest lies, and extending the child's learning accordingly. Staff also devise structured activities within the learning environment to focus on specific skills from the stepping stones. Assessment is constantly ongoing and staff make quick and detailed notes about any achievement made through general play, or in the structured activities, for inclusion in the child's records. These records then form the basis for the planning of the next stage of the child's learning, meaning that plans are always pitched at the right level for each child's capabilities.

Children are active and confident learners, staying at self-chosen activities for lengthy periods. They play co-operatively and understand the need to share and take turns. Children learn about emotions and show empathy if a child is upset or cross. Children develop good verbal skills and can describe their play and intentions very ably. They enjoy looking at books and listening to stories, and they see books for a variety of purposes such as non-fiction and reference books. Children know significant letters and see lots of print in the environment. They are confident to attempt writing and copy their names from their cards. Children are also confident at counting and recognising numerals. They can learn about mathematical concepts as part of everyday activities - cutting the apples at snack time or working out how to build a road track that can go over a hill. Children learn about measurement, shape, capacity and weight and enjoy looking at and copying patterns.

Children learn about the natural world at first hand and can help with gardening and talk about the creatures that live there. They use a variety of technological toys such as the computer as well as friction, wind-up and battery operated equipment. Children learn about other cultures through themed activities and enjoy chatting about what they have seen and done in their own

lives. Children's creative development is fostered as they have easy access to a wide range of materials with which to create paintings, art and craft objects. They enjoy well-structured role plays where they can act out simple narratives of making poorly animals better, or making the tea for their friends. Children enjoy singing and make simple instruments. They listen to a wide range of musical styles and can pick out familiar or favourite tunes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The setting has children from a diverse community and the toys and play equipment reflect this. Staff plan to offer children Spanish and French and also arrange support for the mother tongue as appropriate for children with English as an additional language. The learning environment includes numerous dual-language books and posters showing non-stereotypical images of families and children. There are good systems in place to support children with special needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator [SENCO] is very experienced and is extending her knowledge with further training. She is very committed to her role and has established good working relationships with other professional agencies in order to meet the children's individual needs and can act as an advocate where appropriate.

Children are well-behaved. They understand the simple rules that guide their behaviour and staff give clear and consistent messages about what they expect. Children are able to talk about why it is important to be nice to their friends. Children who test the boundaries are given positive and friendly direction and children are happy to comply. They remind each other of the rules and have taken part in compiling a simple book about them, and what they mean.

The partnership with parents is outstanding. Staff take great care to ensure that they can provide consistent care and they have excellent systems in place to ascertain all the relevant information about each child. The setting gives parents good quality information about how they work and parents receive a verbal feedback from staff as well as written information. Parents can meet with the child's key worker at frequent parents' evenings, which also provide social opportunities or further information about activities and practice. A regular newsletter invites contributions from parents in terms of skills or items for play. Staff compile scrap book of children's work every month with notes about the child's achievements so that parents are always kept abreast of their child's development.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are treated as individuals and have good self-esteem as a result. They learn about right and wrong and show empathy towards the other children. Children learn about different cultures and take part in activities about different festivals. Staff enjoy giving the children time to reflect and be fascinated by the world around them, and delight in their sense of wonder.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Recruitment procedures are thorough to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children, and staff

update their qualifications and do further courses to develop their skills and practice. Staff ratios are met or surpassed and the rooms are organised to maximise the supervision and support of children to ensure that they are well cared for. All staff demonstrate a good awareness of children's needs and it is evident that they really enjoy their work. The register is an accurate record of the dates and times of arrival and departure, and staff and visitors are also noted. All records and personal information are securely stored, and all policies and procedures are in place.

The leadership and management is good. The owner works closely with the manager of the setting and there is a clear set of shared values that guide the practice of the nursery, putting children's interests first. Senior staff work alongside others at every level and share tasks, acting as role models and mentors. There are rigorous systems in place to monitor the nursery and good support for staff to train and improve their qualifications. The manager and staff have clear ideas about how they want the nursery to develop and are committed to achieving their aims.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 make 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):

- continue to develop the outdoor learning environment. This also applies to nursery education.

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):

- see above.

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