



## School Lane Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	254259
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 January 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Lindsey Ann Cullum
<b>Setting Address</b>	School Lane, Sprowston, NORWICH, Norfolk, NR7 8TR
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<b>Registered person</b>	Sprowston Lane Nursery School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

School Lane Pre-School is run by a committee of parents and carers. It opened in 1994 and operates from rooms within a resource centre on the outskirts of Norwich, Norfolk. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.30 to 12.00, during school term-times. Children have access to an enclosed play area.

There are currently 28 children aged two plus to under five years on roll. Of these, 13 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local community and surrounding areas. The pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs seven members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted appropriately because the setting takes positive steps to ensure that the premises and play equipment are clean and suitably maintained. Children are becoming increasingly independent in their personal care, for example, they confidently wash and dry their hands after messy activities. They follow established routines for hand-washing before snack-time although their understanding of good personal hygiene is not fostered by staff, who miss opportunities to explain the importance of hand-washing to children. Children's health is compromised as only some staff wash their hands before serving snacks and children are not provided with bowls or plates, in which to place their chosen snack foods. Children's health and medical requirements are discussed with parents and relevant information recorded. Staff do what they can to prevent the spread of infection, for example, noses are wiped promptly. Sufficient staff have current first aid knowledge to ensure children's well-being in the event of an accident.

Children are well nourished and have opportunities to learn about healthy eating because the setting provides them with healthy snacks, for example, fruit and crackers. They undertake topic based activities which enable them to learn about healthy living, for example, choosing pictures of healthy foods to stick on their place name card. Children with special dietary requirements have their needs met appropriately because the parents have provided the setting with detailed information. Children help themselves to their bottles of drink throughout the morning and pour their own water or milk at snack-time. These practices develop children's independence skills and help them recognise when they are thirsty.

Children have varied opportunities for physical play. Equipment, such as, a climbing frame, tunnels, balance beam or rockers are set out daily, encouraging children's confidence and co-ordination skills when using this equipment. They enthusiastically join in music and movement sessions, marching or dancing as they play instruments of their own choosing. Regular opportunities are provided for children to play outside, where they have space to run freely, manoeuvre wheeled toys or play games with hoops, balls and bats. Children have started to think about the effect that exercise has on their bodies, for example, children know that when they run about their heart beats faster. Children are developing competent manipulative skills, for example, they use rollers and cutters with the play dough. Their hand and eye co-ordination is fostered as they use resources such as construction toys, paint brushes or glue sticks with increasing competence. Children are able to fulfil their own needs regarding rest and relaxation. They access comfortable seating, positioned in the book areas, throughout the morning.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for in premises that are suitable and safe. The environment is made welcoming to children and families as notice boards contain useful information and photographs of children enjoying various activities are displayed. The rooms are prepared in advance and are well laid out with a range of activities covering different areas of children's

learning and development. Children access an appropriate range of toys which are checked regularly for safety. Any faulty items are removed and new equipment conforms to recognised safety standards. There are suitable security systems in place to prevent unauthorised persons accessing children. The doors are kept locked whilst children are present and all visitors are asked to sign in and out.

Children are kept safe as staff are effectively deployed within the rooms and are vigilant. Staff work well as a team and communicate with each other, for example, when they need to leave the room to take children to the toilet. This ensures children remain appropriately supervised. Daily checks and risk assessments are used to minimise hazards, for example, electrical sockets are covered and a child safety gate is fitted across the entrance to the kitchen. Children's safety is further promoted as equipment is adequately checked as it is set out each day and action taken to reduce any risk, for example, checking the play house is correctly erected. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe through discussion and safe practices. For example, regular fire drills ensure that children can evacuate the building quickly in the event of an emergency and staff remind children of safety rules, such as, not running about indoors. Procedures are in place for outings which include conducting a risk assessment, providing higher adult to child ratios and gaining parents' consent, in order to protect children.

Children's welfare is adequately safeguarded because staff have appropriate knowledge of child protection procedures and understanding of their responsibilities towards children in their care. Staff are familiar with the group's child protection policy. Some staff have attended recent training to update their knowledge. Clear procedures and practices ensure that children are protected from adults who have not been vetted.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are confident and happy in the pre-school. They are warmly greeted by staff as they come into the setting and settle quickly. Staff position themselves at activities so that they can interact with and support the children. They are kind and show a genuine interest in the children's activities, promoting their self-esteem. Children are able to choose what to play with and boxes with additional resources are placed near to some activities so children may extend their own play, for example, play food items within the role play area. Staff are guided by the children's interests and help them to develop their own ideas, for example, some children wanted to form a musical band so staff asked others to join in. Children develop confidence as staff listen to what they have to say, valuing their contributions. Staff acknowledge that children's learning is promoted through their play and first-hand experiences. They use good questioning techniques which prompt children to think and express themselves, for example, 'how does the cornflour feel', 'what will happen if we add water'.

Children under three are cared for appropriately. Some staff have attended training on the 'Birth to three matters' framework and consideration has been given to this when planning activities for younger children. Staff have a good understanding of the needs of children under three and how they develop and offer appropriate learning opportunities.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making sufficient progress towards the early learning goals as all staff have a reasonable knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how children learn. The two rooms are set out to offer children continuous play provision which adequately covers the six areas of learning. Planning sheets for different types of play are displayed near each activity and guide staff on their role, how to extend the activity, the vocabulary which could be introduced and the resources which are available. Focussed activities are planned around the children's interests and add to the learning environment. For example, the current theme of animals has led to imaginative play in the water and sand with a variety of play animals, exploration of an ice block, discussion about where different animals live and what they eat. Staff pick up on learning opportunities as they arise naturally through children's play, for example, introducing the word 'binoculars' to a child playing with them and explaining how they work. Staff observe the children regularly to identify the next steps in their learning. This information is broadly woven into the planning of future activities.

Children are eager to learn and try new experiences, for example, they show delight as they explore the texture and feel of dry cornflour, mix it with water and add glitter. They concentrate well and become engrossed in their play. Children have formed positive relationships with staff and each other and some clear friendships are evident. They are learning to play co-operatively and share resources, such as the computer mouse to play a game. They show pride in their work, showing their finished work to staff and other children. Children are becoming independent as they choose what they wish to play with, wash their hands after messy activities, ask to go to the toilet and access their own drink. They respond positively to simple instructions, for example, by helping to tidy up. Children have opportunities to draw and paint and some give meanings to their pictures, for example, a sunshine. Children seek their name card at snack-time and have a named coat peg. Limited use is made of print and labels within the pre-school to promote children's understanding that print carries meaning. Staff miss opportunities during children's play to develop children's awareness of sounds and letters. Children confidently express their own needs, for example, when they need the toilet or want a particular toy. They chat whilst playing and incorporate new words, for example, binoculars into their imaginative play. Children enjoy listening to stories and eagerly join in familiar rhymes.

Children show an interest in numbers and staff regularly introduce these during activities, for example, counting how many children or painted fingers. Staff use mathematical language well, for example, talking about size and shape whilst using the dough or weight whilst filling buckets with sand. Children access a variety of games on the computer and demonstrate their competence in controlling the mouse. Visitors from the local community raise children's awareness of the different jobs that people do in society. Children are involved in discussion to increase their knowledge about special events in their own lives and develop respect for a range of cultures and beliefs.

Children are able to explore and investigate different materials. They watch as they mix different coloured paints together, feel the texture of dough, cornflour and sand. Children confidently use musical instruments, playing their own rhythms, marching along to the sounds or singing familiar nursery rhymes. They use their imaginations well, for example, whilst playing in the home corner or with the animals in the water tray. Children enjoy physical activities and join

in music and movement sessions energetically. They use a range of resources outside to develop their physical and co-ordination skills.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed into the setting and are valued and respected. Staff praise children for their contributions and achievements which helps to promote their confidence and self-esteem. Children are helped to develop a positive attitude to others as images of different people that make up society are displayed, resources reflect diversity and the children are involved in celebrating some festivals. Visitors, who reflect the local community are invited into the setting, for example, a nurse or postman, to talk to the children about their jobs. Children with additional needs are welcomed into the pre-school and given appropriate support to promote their welfare and development. Staff liaise well with parents to ensure children's records contain sufficient information to enable appropriate care to be provided. They complete an 'All about me' book, providing information on family members, pets, things the child likes to do, which assist staff when settling children. Good settling in practices are in place to support children and parents as they start pre-school.

Children behave well in the setting because they are given consistent guidelines and staff manage behaviour in a positive way, using distraction and praise. Children respond well when they are asked to help with tasks, for example, tidying up. They are learning to share, take turns and play co-operatively. Staff are good role models, they are calm and kind and treat children with care and respect. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's well-being is promoted as parents are made to feel welcome in the pre-school. Staff work effectively with parents to settle children into the group and parents stay with their child as long as they feel is necessary. Staff are available at the start and end of the sessions which provides regular opportunities for a two-way flow of communication. Parents gain details about the provision, activities and childcare practices by talking to staff, reading the 'welcome booklet' and information on the notice board. They are advised about the procedures for making complaints and a complaints log is available.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is satisfactory. Parents receive sufficient details about the setting when their children start. They gain some information about children's learning and the early learning goals through discussion with staff and information on the notice board. Parents know they are able to see their children's records at any time. However, there is currently no system in place for parents to formally contribute to their child's achievement process, although staff encourage them to share information on an informal basis.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the care of suitably qualified and experienced staff who have a sound knowledge and understanding of childcare. The pre-school follows appropriate recruitment

and vetting procedures to ensure staff are suitable to provide care for children. Staff are clear in their roles and responsibilities due to effective induction procedures and an ongoing programme of appraisals. Clear policies support the operation of the group. The established staff team work well together to ensure children learn and develop. Staff are deployed effectively to ensure children are supported and their needs met.

The environment is organised to promote children's safety and give them a range of meaningful play opportunities. There is an effective key worker system established to assist settling children into the setting, undertake observations of the children's progress and share details with parents. Most of the required documentation is in place and kept in an orderly fashion, with due regard to confidentiality. The current registration system does not accurately record the times during which staff are responsible for children's care which compromises children's safety and welfare.

Leadership and management of the nursery education are satisfactory. Staff work well together as a team, utilising each other's strengths and interests, to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum. The Committee meets regularly and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. An action plan was put into place to address the issues raised during the last inspection and the group are continuing to make progress. The setting has clear aims and a strong commitment to ensuring children and families receive a quality service. Overall, the needs of the children who attend are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

#### **Care:**

At the last inspection, the quality of care was judged to be inadequate. The setting needed to improve the security of the outdoor area; the risk assessment process; the records of accidents and visitor's attendance; the operational plan and promote children's health when outdoors in the sun.

Risk assessment processes have been implemented which cover the security of the outdoor area and the safety of both the indoor and outdoor environment, promoting children's safety. Clear recording systems are in place for accidents and visitors to the premises, in order to safeguard children's well-being. The Committee and staff have established a system to review and update the policies and operational plan, so this accurately reflects practices within the group. Children are appropriately protected whilst playing outside in the sun as the group have adopted the practice that all children will wear hats.

#### **Nursery education:**

At the last inspection the pre-school agreed to improve the systems for assessing children's progress; develop planning to cover all areas of children's learning and increase opportunities for children to solve mathematical problems, explore how things work and develop their skills in information and communication technology.

The staff team are currently evaluating different systems for assessing children's progress, in order that they can link individual children's next steps for learning into their future planning.

This process is ongoing. Staff plan a range of activities for children throughout the week, which incorporate problem solving, exploration and information and communication technology. As a result, children's learning in these areas is promoted.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

In January 2006 Ofsted received information raising concerns relating to National Standards 1: suitable person, 2: organisation, 3: care, learning and play, 11: behaviour, 12: working in partnership with parents and carers and 13: child protection. Ofsted investigated by conducting an unannounced visit on 02/02/2006. Evidence showed that there was no breach of standards 1, 2, 3, 11 or 13. However, actions were raised relating to standards 6: safety, 7: health and 12: working in partnership with parents and carers. The actions required a written response, which was received within the specified time and approved. 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):

- promote children's health by improving hygiene practices during snack-time, giving children explanations about good hygiene and a healthy lifestyle, so that they begin to understand how to keep themselves healthy
- improve the system for registering children, in order to provide an accurate record at all times

#### **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):

- increase opportunities for children to develop their knowledge of sounds and letters, learn information can be relayed in the form of print and experience print within the environment



- provide parents with further opportunities to contribute to their child's record of achievement.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)