

# Shieldfield Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY225329
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Jim Bostock
<b>Setting Address</b>	8 Clarence Walk, Shieldfield, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 1AD
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<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Shieldfield Nursery
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 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?

Shieldfield Community Nursery has been registered with Ofsted since November 2001. It operates from a purpose-built unit consisting of three group rooms, a communal area, an office and staff room, kitchen and laundry facilities within a Health Service building. There is an enclosed outdoor play area next to the nursery with both grassed and hard surfaces and a range of outdoor apparatus for physical development. The nursery is situated close to the city centre of Newcastle upon Tyne and serves both the immediate area and the wider areas surrounding the city.

The nursery is registered for a maximum of 50 children under five. At the time of inspection there were 54 on roll. This included 10 funded three year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is open five days a week for 51 weeks a year from 08.00 until 18.00 each day.

There is a manager, a deputy and 10 nursery officers who work full/part time. All staff have early years qualifications and opportunities to attend further training. There are also four

support staff consisting of two chefs and two domestics. The setting receives teaching support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean and well maintained environment. All staff hold a first aid certificate and have had food hygiene training ensuring the physical safety of children. Children develop an awareness of hygiene routines, for example, hand washing before snacks, and know about germs. Children's health is well protected by the staff's good understanding of their specific requirements. For instance, the cook ensures all food ingredients are thoroughly checked to prevent children with allergies coming to harm. Babies and toddlers are given protection when nappies are changed as the procedure is excellent. Staff are very caring with each child during nappy changing, there is a basket for every child with all their individual gear and ointments, and staff wear aprons and gloves for each change. Accident and medicine administered are recorded properly, however, not all accident records have been signed by parents. This means that parents may not be fully informed about potentially important information necessary to protect the child.

Children enjoy a range of physical activities both indoors and outdoors. All children have access to outdoor play at least twice per day, whatever the weather, where they learn to manage their bodies well, enjoy running around and develop a good level of self confidence in their own physical skills. This includes using a range of wheeled toys, tunnels, balance equipment and caring for the nature garden. However, the outdoor area for the children under two years of age is bare, unattractive and in need of maintenance, compared to areas used by older children. The staff have plans to develop this area but they have not yet been implemented. Children have movement and music sessions which they enjoy. They develop their fine motor skills from regular activities where they use paint brushes, scissors, small tools, construction toys and the computer mouse. Children are able to rest and relax according to their needs as there are soft furnished areas in each room.

Children benefit from a very healthy diet. All food is freshly prepared on site by the chef. Children have a choice of two different fruit in both the morning and afternoon snack breaks. Children learn about being healthy and those aged two to five know what foods are good for them. They enjoy the positive experience at meal and snack times as they sit together and chat to each other about daily events. This helps them develop social skills as they relate to each other and staff. Staff take account and have a clear understanding of children's special dietary requirements which helps them to remain healthy. Children are regularly offered drinks to ensure they are not thirsty. Cultural diets are fully respected.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, secure and very welcoming environment. Posters, children's artwork and photographs are displayed very well, helping to provide a sense of ownership of their environment. The good implementation of most procedures, use of safety equipment, and staff's vigilance throughout the setting ensures that children's welfare and safety is monitored very well. For instance, there are high handles on every door to make sure that children cannot leave the rooms unsupervised.

Staff give a high priority to children's safety and have a good understanding of how to achieve a balance between moving freely and setting safe limits. The secure entry to the nursery and fully enclosed outdoor play area enhances the safe practice. Staff explain safety procedures to children to help them take responsibility for keeping themselves safe. Children play outside with good protection from strong sunlight by use of sun cream and hats. Children access the age appropriate toys and equipment easily and confidently. Their toys and equipment are sturdy, clean and in very good condition. There are risk assessments in place and staff have a good understanding of safety issues. There are written fire safety procedures, however, fire drills are not practised regularly, therefore, staff and children do not develop a good sense of how to stay safe in the event of a fire. In addition fire safety checks are not recorded when they have been completed.

Children are very well protected from possible abuse or neglect. Staff have attended training and show an excellent understanding of the procedures to follow with any concerns. They are fully aware of the types of abuse and signs to look for.

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

The provision is good.

All children are happy and settled in their environment. They benefit from responsive, encouraging staff, who give lots of reassurance, cuddles and warm, natural interaction. For example, one child became upset and was immediately cuddled and held by staff who talked gently and comfortingly. The child pointed to the outdoor area and staff reassured the child that they would go out to play soon.

Well planned activities are linked to the different developmental stages of young children. Regular observation about children's interests, and their responses to the activities are kept to help promote their development. This helps to successfully build on what children already know. Children enjoy making choices about their activities, being enthusiastic and purposeful. They are motivated and interested in a broad range of developmentally appropriate activities which provide very good levels of challenge for their age and stage of development. For instance, babies and toddlers engage in painting and heuristic play. They enjoy playing in the sand with a range of tools and staff help their use of language by developing their vocabulary. They learn about colour, number and enjoy singing songs to reinforce these topics. Children aged two are showing very good progress as they name a range of colours, name many animals and make complicated objects from construction sets. They explore texture with pasta and cut and stick with coloured squares to make 'Elmer the elephant' while they learn about shapes and using small tools.

Children become confident communicators as they share ideas in their play and are ably supported by skilful staff who use good techniques to broaden their learning and knowledge. Above all, children enjoy themselves enormously. They laugh and squeal with delight as they explore, create, join in with others and maintain concentration and interest in their play.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff attend regular training on the foundation stage which enhances their knowledge well. They are well qualified, experienced, knowledgeable and skilful, so that effective learning opportunities are available for the children. Good planning covers a range of topics and includes the learning intentions which are linked to the stepping stones. Observations and assessments of children are carried out so that staff are well informed

about children's progress and what they need to learn next. Staff are skilled at developing children's confidence and independence. They quickly build very good relationships with the children, which form a secure basis for all aspects of their learning. Staff provide lots of challenges during activities and introduce new words which assists children's learning and language development very well. They use very good techniques such as modelling and using open questions to help children explore, investigate and develop their ideas. Staff have the knowledge and skill to ensure that children with learning difficulties and disabilities are very well supported. All children are beginning to learn to use sign language very well.

Children readily separate from their parents and carers as they greet each other and staff on arrival. They are independent and helpful, for example, they select their own resources and readily volunteer to serve fruit and milk at snack time. Children are settled, their behaviour is very good and staff help them learn to share equipment and to take turns. As a consequence, the children show consideration for one another. For example, they sit together at circle time and wait their turn to speak allowing others to have their say. They are keen to try new experiences, independent in their self care and confident in the nursery.

Children are developing excellent language and communication skills. For example, a three year old child said "I want to paint a black car", showing excellent sentence structure at an early age. They talk about their experiences confidently and are able to listen attentively to other speakers.

They are developing very good early writing skills using a range of tools such as chalk, brushes and pencils. Children are beginning to recognise their own name and identify letters, helped by the use of symbol cards with their name on and letter recognition activities. The role play area, however, does not always have pens and paper so that children can practise writing for purpose.

Children are very good at counting and they know the names of simple shapes. For instance, children aged three are able to identify squares, circles and triangles, and count up to 10. They spontaneously sing number songs at circle times. They talk about patterns such as the stripes on a zebra and play opposites in card games. However, there were some missed opportunities to provide extra challenge by using mathematical concepts of more than and less than, halves and quarters, for example, during fruit cutting and serving.

Children learn about vegetables and how to grow them, using their senses very well to explore texture, smell and temperature. Through the use of regular visitors and celebrating festivals children are developing a good awareness of their environment and the role of people within it. They use simple programmable equipment competently, including a computer. Children are beginning to increase their awareness of other cultures through a range of resources such as books, dolls, and through activities linked to other festivals and events. They are very imaginative, using opportunities such as water play to discuss rescuing sinking boats. They sing songs and play musical instruments regularly.

Children have regular opportunities to play outdoors. Varied physical activities and use of different equipment enables children to develop their overall physical skills well. For example, they move, balance and catch balls successfully. Easy access to a range of small equipment and good guidance in using such things as cutters, paint brushes, computer mouse and hand puppets allows them to manipulate materials and use tools with good control.

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

The provision is good.

Children are valued as individuals. They develop a positive attitude to others and their understanding of the wider world is enhanced through the use of visitors and celebrating various festivals. There are good opportunities for older children to access positive images of diversity and difference in the playthings, however, these are limited for the children under two years.

Staff are calm, competent, friendly, responsive, patient, kind and gentle with children. Therefore, children's behaviour is very good. They use timely interventions where they use distraction or clear instructions which protect children. Children are helpful, tidy away toys and help serve and clear away at meal times. This helps them develop a sense of responsibility to others. They also collect pet food for the animal shelter as they learn about taking care of pets. Younger children are well supervised to ensure they begin to learn right from wrong and how to be kind to each other. Children greet each other each morning, recognising and naming their friends as they sit together at circle time. They develop independence and confidence very well.

Children with English as a second language are very well supported, and the staff have good plans to ensure children with learning difficulties or disabilities are fully included in the activities and daily routines. All children are learning Makaton sign language and staff are very knowledgeable about a range of disabilities so that they can meet children's individual needs. The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnership with parents is good. Many parents gave comments for this inspection and all speak very highly of the staff and setting. They say that their children receive very good care and that staff ensure sufficient information is gathered regarding the needs and routines of the children. Parents feel that their children make very good progress, particularly in social and language development, and that the transition to school is easy for those who have received the funded education. Good information is available to parents. Notice-boards, regular news letters, verbal discussions, keep parents well informed about the setting, what their children will be doing and how they can be involved. Their thoughts and views are sought through parental questionnaires, and these are valued and respected. Some of the parents have been using the nursery for a number of years. Although there are displays about the early learning goals, the nursery does not fully help parents understand the curriculum and parents are not sufficiently involved in the assessment process. This hinders parents' ability to extend learning into the home.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The staff team is very consistent as there has been a very low turnover in recent years. This ensures that children are looked after by staff they know and trust. Staff are committed to the ongoing development of the setting and attend many training courses. They are all qualified and very experienced which ensures that children are cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child development. The staff form a happy and effective team, who have defined roles and offer a good range of well resourced activities which capture children's interest. They provide a happy, caring environment for children.

The organisation of the nursery is sound which means the sessions flow well. Close monitoring of the group sizes and staff deployment contributes to children's safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to take part in the setting. All staff are suitably cleared to work with children. Clear

procedures and policies support staff in working successfully in partnership with parents. All legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and wellbeing is in place. However, the complaints procedure is not up to date.

The leadership and management of the funded education is good. The management team is well qualified, very experienced and motivated. The assessment and monitoring process works well to help ensure that the setting meets children's educational needs. Staff have a sound awareness of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and how to apply this in practice to support children's development. They ensure that plans reflect the early learning goals and observations about children's progress are well used to provide challenge in activities to stimulate their learning.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

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

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to maintain a sleep monitoring record, seek advice about the placement of water dispensers and about the regularity of fire evacuation drills.

The sleep monitoring record is now well kept to ensure children are protected and parents informed. There are no water dispensers available to allow children free access when they are thirsty. Fire drills are carried out in accordance with the fire safety regulations but are not regular enough to allow children to develop their knowledge of staying safe in the event of a fire.

With regard to the funded education the nursery has improved children's listening skills by using circle and small group time to encourage children to have their say and listen to each other as they choose how activities are to be carried forward, according to their interests. Children now listen to rhyme and do rhyming games, provided by BBC educational programmes, to help link sounds to letters. The nursery has developed the observation and assessment of children so that it is used to help all children's individual progress.

### **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.

## **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 fire safety arrangements so that staff and children regularly practise the fire evacuation procedure and fire safety checks are recorded
- update the complaints procedure in line with the addendum to the National Standards of 2005

### **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):

- develop the use of mathematical concepts in everyday activities
- continue to develop parental knowledge of the early learning goals and their involvement in the assessment process.

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)