



Southdown Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	113701
Inspection date	09 November 2006
Inspector	Teresa Colburn
Setting Address	Gervays Hall, Jarvis Lane, Steyning, West Sussex, BN44 3GL
Telephone number	01903 814581
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Registered person	Southdown School Trust
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?

Southdown Nursery School opened in 1999. It is run by a charitable trust and is held in a school building in Steyning. It is situated in central Steyning, West Sussex. A maximum of 22 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open Monday and Wednesday 09:15 to 15:15, and Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 09:15 to 12:15 term time only. Children have access to a large enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 32 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 21 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local catchment area. The nursery is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as well as children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs four members of staff, including the head of the nursery. In addition two regular dedicated volunteers attend weekly.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children routinely wash their hands before eating and automatically after independently using the toilet, which helps them understand the importance of good hygiene. In addition, the spread of infection is minimised because staff remind children to use tissues to wipe their nose. Nappies are changed appropriately and disposed of hygienically. Staff ensure changing mats and tables are cleaned with antibacterial spray to protect children's good health.

Children who are infectious do not attend, thus preventing the spread of contagious ailments. All employed members of staff currently hold a suitable first aid certificate so staff are able to administer first aid in the event of an accident. Children are cared for appropriately when sick or injured, as parents are requested to collect children early when unwell, ensuring children are cared for in their home environment. Children's minor accidents are dealt with and documented effectively. For example a child banged their head on a table whilst socialising and laughing with a group of friends, staff immediately rushed to the child's aid to ensure necessary medical aid was provided. The first aid box is easily accessible, staff occasionally apply plasters to children without prior written consent from parents. However, staff do not know whether children have an allergy to the plasters provided.

Children learn about healthy eating and enjoy well balanced snacks such as, mozzarella cheese, cherry tomatoes, vegetable crudities with hummus, rice cakes, raisins and various fruit. Children's independence is greatly encouraged at snack times, as they eagerly help staff prepare the snacks for others. For example, helping to wash carrots, cutting up bananas, peeling satsumas and ensuring sufficient cups and plates for everyone. Children are encouraged to visit the snack bar throughout the morning session. They decide for themselves what they would like to eat and how much they select, and whether they would like a carton of milk or dispense fresh drinking water from the fountain. Children enjoy the opportunity to wash their own plates after snack, and spoke about the warm water and making sure all the crumbs had been rinsed off. Staff are on hand to give praise, guidance and support making the children feel valued. Staff and children enjoy the social occasion of eating with each other at snack and lunch times. Children routinely place their own lunch boxes in the easily accessible fridge, ensuring perishable items are stored appropriately and further encouraging children's independence.

Children freely enjoy a range of activities that develop their physical skills. The large outdoor environment is well used to ensure children have access to climbing, running, balancing on tree trunks, using both the digging area and sensory garden, riding bikes and participating in obstacle courses. Children respond and move enthusiastically during music and movement sessions. For example, they listen intently to action tapes and follow the instructions, particularly enjoying 'walking through the jungle' story.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from playing in an organised environment which allows them to move around and play safely. The environment is stimulating with a variety of child size equipment, displays and designated learning areas. The learning areas are organised to ensure children have free access to different activities and experiences. For example, role play, musical, creative, construction and the use of computers, therefore helping to ensure children's development needs are met. Children have some free access to a range of toys and resources appropriate to their age. Staff have effective routines in place regarding the cleaning and maintenance of the equipment and this ensures it is suitable for children's daily use.

Staff have a good understanding of safety and potential hazards. They conduct informal risk assessments prior to children's arrival to ensure children's safety is protected. In addition an informative health and safety file is well maintained, this identifies any possible hazards both indoors and outdoors, risk assessments and a yearly health and safety survey. Staff ensure the premises are secure and there are effective procedures in place to prevent unwanted visitors gaining access. Systems for the arrival and collection of children are good, as staff ensure children are collected by authorised adults. Fire detection equipment is accessible, the fire evacuation is clearly displayed and fire drills are carried out periodically, taking into account children's attendance. Consequently, children are able to leave the building safely in the event of an emergency.

Staff have appropriate awareness and understanding of child protection issues and recent training contributes to safeguarding children. The head of nursery is fully aware of the correct procedure to follow in the event of an allegation made against staff. However, this is not documented as the nursery is currently reviewing all policies and procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle easily into the welcoming nursery environment because the gentle, caring staff provide good attention. Children arrive enthusiastically, are eager to participate in the range of activities provided and have a positive attitude towards learning. Children enjoy playing outside and good support is provided by staff to ensure their well-being at all times. For example, a small group of children negotiated very well with each other whilst building a very long train track outside, taking turns, sharing resources and helping each other to ensure the track did not break. Children show considerable independence and make choices about the toys and resources they wish to play with. Staff have some knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework, and are beginning to use the documentation to record children's informal observations. Staff interact very well with children, enabling strong relationships to develop.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff provide a range of planned and free play activities to enable children to make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff knowledge and understanding on the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage is generally

good. Staff conduct informal observations which are used to update children's profiles. However, these are not fully utilised to enlighten short term planning to ensure children's individual development needs are consistently being met. The nursery operates an effective key worker system, staff know their key worker children well. Staff are skilled at deploying themselves to offer children appropriate support and space to initiate their own activities and play independently or with their peers. Clear procedures are in place to help meet the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children have a varied range of resources and activities to provide them with enjoyment. Staff have divided the room into designated learning areas to promote the children's learning and development. For example, children have access to a range of musical instruments in one area to promote creativity and two easily accessible computers within the room to promote information technology skills.

Children are involved in their learning. They are confident, work independently and show good levels of concentration. They are developing an awareness of others needs and have good self-esteem because staff listen to them and value their ideas and contribution. Children have ample opportunity within the daily routine to develop their independence and self-care skills. For example, ensuring their lunch box is stored in the fridge on arrival, helping prepare the mid morning snack and they see to most of their own personal needs such as visiting the toilet, washing hands and blowing their nose.

Children talk openly with their peers, staff and other adults. For example, during an art activity a child noticed a button looked like an egg, children then begin a lengthy social discussion about soft and hard boiled eggs. Children are beginning to understand they can use writing for a variety of purposes and are beginning to write for themselves. For example, children freely decided prices for each item in the toys shop, staff supported children in writing the number freely or tracing the number. Children enjoy listening to stories and some children are beginning to recognise Polish books have different words. They enjoy singing nursery rhymes and also recite songs they know with enjoyment.

Children show a developing understanding of numbers. They are beginning to use numbers in everyday activities. For example, they have good counting skills and learn to count up to 10 and beyond to identify money and when using the till in the toy shop role area. Children are introduced to shape and space through a range of adult-led and self-initiated activities.

Children are developing an awareness of the wider world, through a range of resources and as they celebrate festivals. Children use the computers freely, showing they are developing a good understanding of how to use the mouse and keyboard, they self-select computer programs. They are skilled using headsets and greatly enjoy wearing them and looking at story books whilst listening to the story cassette. Children have access to their own digging area within the garden, enabling them to find and identify living insects.

Children use their imagination well during creative activities for example, they recognise using a certain piece of ribbon will make the teddy bear look sad, but stated 'the teddy may also be sad as it has no hands or legs'. Children enjoy a good range of adult-initiated creative activities,

for example play dough, baking pancakes, collage, corn flour play, exploring custard and different painting and printing techniques. Children enjoy music and singing familiar rhymes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated with respect and are made to feel good about themselves. Children learn about different cultures through planned activities related to different festivals such as, Diwali, Chinese New Year and Christmas. Parents are encouraged to become involved and provide resources for cultural activities, for example parents recently provided a wedding dress, bridesmaid dress and other resources for an Indian wedding celebration. A member of staff regularly reads stories and sings nursery rhymes in Polish and French. Children recognise the words are different, but freely explain the story from memory and from the pictures. There is a suitable range of resources to provide children with a positive outlook on the wider world. Children find out about the local community through visitors attending the nursery for example, postman, nurse, paramedic, green grocer and dentist. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to positively support and promote the children's development. Some staff have attended informal special educational needs training. However, the nursery does not have a designated special education needs co-ordinator, as the role is currently shared informally between the head of nursery and supervisor and neither has attended dedicated special educational needs training. Therefore, this limits the nursery's understanding of their role.

Children behave extremely well; they learn to share and take turns, to negotiate and work harmoniously together. They are becoming aware of their own needs and the needs of others within the nursery. They are able to make choices in their play and learning, which contributes to their independence and self-esteem. Staff are positive role models and reinforce good behaviour through praise.

Parental feedback is positive and parents state they are happy with the nursery. For example, good staff team, children happy and well settled, range of activities provided and meetings with key worker staff to share children's observations. Parents receive suitable information about the nursery before their children start and complete suitable registration forms and 'all about me' booklets to ensure staff are aware of the children's individual needs and likes and dislikes. There is a designated parents' area in the entrance hall which provides parents with useful information. For example, nursery policies and procedures, photograph's of children participating in various activities, termly newsletter and Ofsted details. Parents are invited to informal parent evenings, this ensures parents are kept well informed about the nursery.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff are friendly and approachable and actively keep parents informed of their children's welfare and progress. Parents receive good information about the Foundation Stage. Staff have taken numerous photographs of children's learning and displayed these under the six areas of learning to enable parents to fully understand.

Parents are encouraged to attend meetings with key workers to enable them to view their child's records and inform them of their child's development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from being cared for by staff qualified and experienced in childcare. Children are at ease and comfortable in the organised and welcoming environment. Children feel confident and secure as the staff team fully support the children and know them well. There are high ratios of staff to children and staff are well deployed which helps to ensure children are well supervised and safe at all times. Most required documentation is in place and stored efficiently and confidentially. However, due to the review of current procedures the policy relating to an allegation of abuse made against a member of staff or volunteer was unavailable at time of inspection.

Leadership and management is good. The head of nursery has used up to date current literature to help identify the nursery's strengths and weaknesses. The staff team are committed to ensure the weaknesses are addressed effectively, they all have a desire to continually improve the quality of care and education they offer to children. Staff have regular staff meetings with the head of nursery and appraisals for all staff are completed to support them in their role and to identify training needs. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to implement the action plan that sets out how supervisors will achieve a level 3 qualification, improve the recording of fire drills to include more detail, develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and improve the child protection statement to include contact names and numbers for the local police and social services department, and of the procedures to be followed should an allegation be made against a member of staff. They also agreed to improve planning to ensure that children make good progress in all areas of learning of the nursery education programme. Overall, these have been addressed well. The head of nursery is due to attend and complete a level 3 qualification in the New Year, this was delayed due to the previous course being cancelled. Fire drills are routinely practised, effectively recorded and evaluated which ensures children are able to leave the building safely in the event of an emergency. Staff have appropriate awareness and understanding of child protection issues and recent training contributes to safeguarding children. The head of nursery is fully aware of the correct procedure to follow in the event of an allegation made against staff, however policy is not currently available as the nursery is undertaking a review of all documentation. Staff have adapted the nursery education plans however, they need to continue to develop these further to ensure all children's areas of learning is routinely challenged.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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):

- ensure written parental permission is sought prior to applying plasters
- ensure all policy documents in relation of an allegation of abuse made against a member of staff or vounteer are available for inspection
- ensure the designated Special Educational Needs co-ordinator has attended appropriate training

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 planning to ensure activities are routinely challenging for all children.

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