



Sunshine and Showers I

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127664
Inspection date	08 January 2007
Inspector	Jenny Kane
Setting Address	16 Jefferstone Lane, St. Marys Bay, Romney Marsh, Kent, TN29 0SW
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Registered person	Jacqueline Bayford
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?

Sunshine and Showers I is one of three nurseries run by Sunshine and Showers Ltd. The group operates from a single storey building in the Jefferstone Lane area of St Marys Bay. It was registered in October 1998.

A maximum of 30 children may attend the group at any one time. It is open Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 18:00 all year round except for two weeks in the summer and two weeks at Christmas. Children have access to secure enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 30 children aged from two to five years on roll; of these, 16 children receive funding for early education. From 2007 there will be a facility for children aged under two years to attend the nursery. The group serves the local area and surrounding area and children attend for a variety of sessions. The group supports children with learning difficulties.

Five members of staff work directly with the children all of whom hold appropriate early years childcare qualifications. The nursery receives support from the Local authority and the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy due to the promotion of effective procedures and by the staff's attention to good hygiene practice. For example, they wear gloves when changing nappies and wash their hands before preparing food. This helps to minimise the risk of cross infection and promotes children's well-being. Children show high levels of independence in their personal care, and have easy access to toilets. They learn to wash their hands before meals, after visiting the toilet and messy play. The majority of the staff hold current first aid certificates and first aid equipment is accessible. Staff maintain accurate records and work closely with parents to ensure that they have all relevant medical information they need to meet children's individual needs. This means children receive appropriate care if there is an accident or an emergency.

Children benefit from the provision of nutritious meals and snacks throughout the day. They gain an understanding of healthy eating as they eat fruit at snack time and most children drink milk. Each day there is a designated helper who helps to get out the plates and clear up the tables after the other children have finished snack. At other times during the day children have access to drinking water from their individual drink bottles. Several children bring packed lunches, which are stored in the kitchen. However as this is a hot area, there is a danger that the contents of the boxes do not stay fresh. The nursery intends to reinforce the policy of ice packs in the lunch boxes. Some children take advantage of the cooked midday meal, which is prepared on the premises daily using fresh ingredients. Extra staff are employed to prepare the food and they follow good hygiene procedures during kitchen duties. Staff plan menus on a four-weekly basis, display them on the notice board and parents have their own copy. At lunch time children help to lay the tables and carry the dishes of food from the kitchen. While they are eating lunch, children talk about healthy food. One child states that she likes bananas and another likes chocolate biscuits. When asked "what happens if you eat too much chocolate?" children know that "you will have a bad tummy" and "it is bad for your teeth". The member of staff reminds them about using their toothbrushes when they have finished eating.

Children enjoy a varied range of physical play activities indoors, in the garden and on outings, which contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Their fine motor skills are developing with the use of small tools during play. For example, children use spades, cutters and rollers, staplers and magnets and various sized brushes during activities. During a movement session indoors, children respond enthusiastically laughing and squealing. They demonstrate a good sense of space and move about confidently taking notice of where other children are. Children follow instructions from staff and move about on tiptoe, stretch, skip, crouch and march in time to the music. The garden has a very good range of equipment to encourage the children's large motor skills. In addition, the outside play areas are visually stimulating with pictures, photographs and labelled areas. As a result, children greatly enjoy playing outside. In wet weather, children still benefit from being in the fresh air because many of the outdoor areas are under cover, like the role-play

and garage areas. Children dress up warmly in coats, hats and boots, choose where they play and run about freely. They negotiate well when riding bikes, trucks and cars, manoeuvring round obstacles safely and cooperating when there is a traffic jam.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well-organised, welcoming and homely environment where their welfare is promoted by staff who have a high regard for safety. For example, they look back through accident reports to ascertain where incidents occur so they are able to reduce potential risk. Staff carry out daily risk assessments to ensure all areas are safe so that children are able to access all areas of play and the resources. Children are safe on the premises because security systems are good and there are clear procedures in place for collection of children by adults other than their parent.

Toys and play materials are clean, well maintained and conform to safety standards. There is a good range and choice and consequently children can easily access them. They freely select what they play with from the resources, which are stored in boxes, shelves and trays around the nursery. When playing in the garden children make good use of the many resources and play areas. Staff actively join in their play and supervise the children at all times. This helps children learn to keep themselves safe when outside. Children enjoy outings in the local community. They go to the shop to buy supplies, walk up the road to look at the sheep in the fields and go to the beach to collect interesting items. The staff plan these outings carefully, ensuring they are suitable for the children and link into various projects.

The nursery has a commitment to safeguarding children's welfare. The owner ensures that all staff working with the children know how to put the child protection procedure into place. The manager has just recently attended the latest training in the subject and intends to share the information with her colleagues. The nursery will update the policy according to new guidelines.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their play and staff extend their experiences by planning interesting and stimulating activities. They are happy, move about freely and are able to make choices from the well-organised and easily accessible resources. The routine is flexible with staff accommodating children's individual interests and needs. Children work in small and large groups throughout the day and benefit from a key worker system. They are interested in the activities and join in enthusiastically because staff are good motivators. Children help to look after their environment cooperating when it is time to clear away.

Staff know children well and have developed positive and warm relationships with them. This ensures that children are well supported, confident and secure within the nursery. Samples of children's work and photographs of activities, displayed around the nursery help to make a bright environment and keep parents informed. Staff working with the children under three have a good understanding of child development and awareness of the importance of learning

through play. Children receive plenty of attention, comfort and reassurance. As a result, younger children explore their environment and express their feelings and preferences.

Birth to three matters is effective within the nursery. The younger children benefit from its use, which promotes their all round development. Staff are beginning to incorporate the framework into routines and activities. They monitor children's progress on a regular basis and record useful information in their individual folders. These are available for parents to look at and help to keep parents informed of their children's development. The introduction of contact books for the under threes would ensure that parents have a written record of their children's day, activities, sleeping and eating routines.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making steady progress towards the stepping stones and the early learning goals. This is because the staff members working with the children identify their progress and use their assessments to plan the next steps in their learning. The manager has attended training in curriculum planning and has a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. She is enthusiastic and has a good understanding of how children learn and progress. She is keen to share her knowledge with others and this will help the less experienced staff to open up discussions with the children during activities and extend their learning. The planning has clear learning objectives; shows resources needed, evaluation and identification of how activities meet children's individual needs.

Children's personal, social and emotional development, fostered through the close relationships formed with the staff, is good. Children are growing in confidence; taking themselves to the toilet, putting on coats and aprons and serving meals. They are able to make independent choices and decisions about what they want to do because resources are freely accessible. Children form good relationships with one another sharing and negotiating during play. They talk a lot about experiences, which have happened at home, discussing in detail their pets and other family members.

Children's language is developing well and many are confident communicators. They initiate conversations about their likes and dislikes speaking clearly to staff and visitors. Children enjoy stories and looking at books. The book corner is comfortable with low seating and displays of books. Consequently, children use this area a lot throughout the day, either individually or in small groups. Children can retell and remember parts of stories. During a story about the Three Bears, children join in with "who's been sitting in my chair? who's eaten all the porridge?" and staff make the experience interesting by allowing children the freedom to communicate ideas freely. Children are learning to recognise their names and familiar words. At register, children identify that it is Monday and find the corresponding label for the weather chart. They use name cards and clearly labelled work and resources helps children's literacy.

Children's mathematical development is progressing through routines such as meals, during register, on the computer and in the garden. For example, when identifying the date staff help children understand that one and one together makes eleven. During snack, one child counts the four pieces of her apple before eating it. Children are beginning to express the concept of 'how much' and 'how little' as they pour and measure sand and water during activities. The

opportunities for children to incorporate counting and number into outdoor play are good. There are visual displays, role-play and hop scotch squares.

Children demonstrate their creativity through their interest in dressing up and role-play. Staff have recently developed one of the rooms for quiet activity and role-play. Children enjoy playing at feeding the dolls, using the washing machine and ironing. They know that at home "you put water in the iron". Children hang up clothes using pegs and another goes around the room vacuuming. They use their imaginations when playing in the office area where they use pads, envelopes, pens, telephones and a typewriter. Children enjoy experimenting with colour and texture during a range of art, craft and cooking experiences. When they are playing in the gloop they describe it as "sticky" and "squidgy".

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are settled and at ease in the nursery. They have a good attachment to the staff who have a caring attitude and treat all children with respect. Key workers speak to parents regularly and discuss any specific requirements. Staff are able to provide care for children with a range of differing abilities and needs. The manager has recently completed training, which ensures she is fully aware of issues regarding special needs and disability. Staff work with parents and other professionals sharing information and skills. This ensures that children are cared for according to their individual needs.

The staff use appropriate strategies to manage children's behaviour which are suitable for their age and understanding. They use positive language, discussion and explanation. Activities, which are well-organised help to maintain a calm environment and meaningfully occupied children. Consequently, children's behaviour is good. They share, negotiate over toys and play well together. Parents and key workers discuss and deal with any issues as they arise, which ensures consistent care.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developing through celebrating festivals, discussion and activities. Children have equal access to the toys and play materials, which promote positive images and diversity. They use their senses when they partake in cooking activities, playing with the sand and water, on outings and when playing in the garden. For example, a member of staff finds a snail and the children gather round showing a great deal of interest. Children go inside to get water and bread to replenish the bird table. There is a designated section of the garden set aside for the children to grow herbs and vegetables. Children are confident with information technology equipment. They use the computer well, have good mouse control and take turns. There is a list for names during busy periods and staff are on hand to give help and assistance as needed. Children have the opportunity to discover nature and find out about the local environment during walks to the shops, beach and mobile library. The nursery fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnership with parents is good. The owner and her staff are aware of the importance of working closely with parents. Key workers liaise with parents on a regular basis. Parents openly share relevant information about their children and are involved in their care. As a result, two-way communication is good and these positive relationships benefit the children. One of

the communication strategies is Rosie the rabbit. This is a fluffy toy, which children take turns to have at home for a weekend. Children and their parents 'look after' the rabbit and on return to the nursery, they communicate to others about what Rosie did at their home. Parents feel confident to approach staff at any time because there is an open door policy. They confirm that the nursery listens to their views and opinions, they like the development folders and make positive comments about the service.

Parents of the children receiving funding for nursery education receive clear written information about the Foundation Stage and the six areas of learning. There are good visual displays regarding the educational curriculum, which include explanations and photographs. In addition, parents attend open evenings and consultations where they discuss their children's progress, look at work and records of transfer. This also ensures that parents have sufficient information and knowledge to help their children to continue to learn at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff make good use of the available space making the environment cosy and homely. They organise their time well ensuring children receive a good amount of attention. Staff display a high regard for the well-being of the children in their care. All parents receive good quality, well-produced information about the provision's care and education. The prospectus informs parents about the nursery's aims and details arrangements about the service. The group maintains written policies and parents have a modified version in the prospectus. However, some of these procedures lack detail, particularly those relating to complaints and child protection. Records relating to children are in place, secure, confidential and appropriately maintained.

Leadership and management are good. The owner takes a proactive role in the managing of the setting and has good relationships with the staff. She confidently delegates responsibility to her senior staff whilst giving support and sharing knowledge. The staff demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment to attending training courses, participating in team meetings and in-house training sessions. They continue to look at ways in which to develop and the introduction of staff assessment and reflective practice is proving beneficial. The sharing and collaborating of skills and knowledge with the other nurseries is positive for both the staff and the children. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation systems ensure any changes are effective and help to promote the children's care and learning. The provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last care inspection, the provider has followed previous recommendations. The radiators in the play areas are now covered with thick fabric to prevent children from harm. However, it is agreed that the radiators in the proposed baby area will be covered with appropriate fireguards. The second, relating to food is now covered by the kitchen staff who check the contents of the fridge ensure that any out-of-date food is discarded.

Since the last nursery education inspection, the provider has followed previous points for consideration. Staff have increased the opportunities for children to explore their understanding of unwanted behaviour through a range of measures, staff training and working with parents. The development of the garden now provides children with several different areas for play, which ensures that children are able to use the garden in all weathers and are fully stimulated when playing outdoors.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, Ofsted received one complaint relating to National Standards 6: Safety and 7: Health. This involved an allegation made in March 2006 about general hygiene, first aid procedures and the safety of the outside play area. The provider responded by carrying out an internal investigation. In addition, she informed and consulted with all the parents. Ofsted was satisfied that by taking these steps the provider met the National Standards and remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation closed.

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.

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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):

- consider introducing contact books for the children aged under three years
- review existing written policies, in particular child protection and complaints

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 staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage to ensure that all aspects of the six areas of learning are covered during activities to further extend children's learning

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