



Shenley Lodge Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	141779
Inspection date	20 November 2006
Inspector	Cordalee Harrison
Setting Address	5 Faraday Drive, Shenley Lodge, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK5 7DE
Telephone number	07932 972 459
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Registered person	Shenley Lodge Pre-School
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 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?

Shenley Lodge Pre-School was registered in 1983. The pre-school is located on Shenley Lodge, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire. A committee of volunteers manages the pre-school.

The pre-school operates from the community hall; children use the main hall, a side room, and the toilet and washing facilities. There is a fully enclosed area for children's play at the front of the building. A maximum of 30 children aged from two to under five years may attend at any one time. There are currently 54 children on roll, of these, 26 receive funding for nursery education. The setting has suitable arrangements for children with learning difficulties, and for children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday 09.15 until 15.00. The pre-school operates term time only. The setting employs eight members of staff who work directly with the children, four

staff are qualified to level 3 in childcare and two are qualified to level 2. Currently two members of staff are on training courses, one of whom is doing and advance course.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children promote their physical development well because they regularly participate in a variety of physical activities daily. They enjoy playing out in the fresh air as they carry out some of their activities outdoors. They use suitable equipment to promote large and fine movements. For example, they pedal bikes, ride scooters, bend and stretch. They use tools, such as, scissors and fine tipped paintbrushes competently. However, staff do not always plan and organise the space well to ensure that children are able to move freely to properly develop their awareness of space whilst doing activities, such as, movement to music indoors, and using the wheeled toys outdoors.

Children are learning good hygiene habits; they use facilities that are maintained to a good standard of hygiene. They are developing good self-care skills and independence. Through the well organised cafe routine for snacks, children learn when they are hungry and thirsty. The more able children use the facilities, such as, toilets, hand basins and paper towels independently. Older children know to wash their hands when they come to the snack table, staff remind other children as necessary. Staff work effectively with parents to ensure that children eat healthy and nutritious snacks. Staff supervise the children closely whilst they eat to reduce the risks of choking, and to make sure that they eat only what is prepared especially for them; this ensures that children's health is not compromised at meal times.

Sufficient staff are qualified in first aid; they manage children's minor accidents appropriately. To safeguard children's health, accident and medication records contain all of the required information and are acknowledged by parents' signatures.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into a child centred environment. Displays of children's work, photographs and colourful posters help to create a bright and attractive pre-school environment. Ample good quality play resources are available for children to use, and for staff to resource the planned activities. Each day staff ensure that children have easy access to a wide range of age appropriate toys and resources; children make purposeful choices and initiate play.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of safety in the setting; they take appropriate safety precautions and check them regularly to ensure that they are effective. Safe arrangements are in place for children's arrival and departure. All areas accessible to children are safe; children use the available space, freely and confidently and promote their self-care skills. For example, they move freely between activities, and use the toilet area independently according to their ability. Children are learning to evacuate the premises quickly and safely; they regularly practise the fire drill. They further develop their understanding of personal safety

as they discuss safety rules at the start of the session. They are beginning to understand why it is important to keep themselves safe, for example, a child explains that if they fall they might hurt their heads.

Children are safe in the setting because staff are aware of the signs and symptoms that may indicate possible abuse and neglect. They are clear about lines of communication for dealing with child protection issues to safeguard children's welfare in the setting, with parents and with the local and registering authority. Guidance issued by government, and a clear child protection procedure that is specific to the setting are readily accessible to staff. The setting shares useful information about child protection with parents to enable them to deal with concerns about child protection independently.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy in their surroundings. Most children settle quickly at the start of the session and engage themselves purposefully in child initiated activities. They all join in a large group activity that helps them to focus at the start of the day. To ensure that all of the children benefit from large group activities, such as, story time staff manage the children in age appropriate groups; this ensures that the activity is differentiated for older and younger children. Staff use guidance, such as, Birth to three matters to inform the planning and assessment for younger children. However, staff do not ensure that all of the younger children are given appropriate levels of individual attention to help them to become properly engaged throughout the session. Children are developing their communication skills well; older children speak clearly and give information about the days of the week, the date and the weather.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have sound knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. They plan a wide range of purposeful activities across all areas of the curriculum, and link their plans, activities and children's achievement records to the stepping stones to progress children's learning towards the early learning goals. However, staff do not always use the planned activities and resources effectively to extend and challenge children's learning. For example, the book corner is uninviting; children make very little independent use of the good quality books that are available. Some staff are skilful at developing children's listening and concentration skills, they offer children appropriate levels of support in small group work and individual activities. Children practise counting many times throughout the day, however, there are few structured activities to help the older children to consolidate and build their understanding of numbers.

Children select and carry out activities independently. They share their learning experiences with others, for example, a group of children work independently as they build with the construction set. They talk about the pictures on the container, and develop their own ideas. They discuss what they are making and how tall they will build their tower. Children make marks independently using mark-making implements, such as crayons and felt tip pens. However, there are few opportunities for children to begin to write for different purposes. Labels around the room raise children's awareness that print carries a variety of meanings. Children enjoy

many stimulating creative experiences, and they are proud of their achievements, for example, a child proudly shows her painting. Children play freely and imaginatively in the well-equipped home corner. They practise their communication skills and consolidate their knowledge and understanding of the world in their pretend play, for example, a child puts on the doctor's coat, selects the correct implement and carefully examines the ear of one of the adults. Children regularly enjoy music and movement; they sing and use musical instruments from different parts of the world in their activities. They use modern technology, such as, the computer, microscopes and slides in their investigations as they study topics about the natural world.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children raise their awareness of cultural diversity and disability as they use many good quality play resources that reflect the wider society. To extending their understanding of diversity, they acknowledge many different cultural festivals. Through these practical activities, labels in English and other scripts and pictures from around the world, children learn to value their own cultures and that of others. Children's record forms contain all of the required information to enable staff to meet their individual care, health and welfare needs appropriately. Staff use suitable strategies to manage behaviour; the atmosphere in the setting is busy and purposeful. Children are learning the boundaries that are in place for behaviour. For example, staff use an egg timer to help children to learn to share equipment fairly. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are learning to behave well and show some consideration for others.

The setting is experienced at providing for children with special needs. There is a special needs coordinator and a systematic procedure in place that is known to staff and parents. The setting works well with parents and outside agencies to implement the procedure. This ensures that the right strategies and resources are in place to meet the needs of children as identified; children with special needs make good progress in their learning. The setting achieves an inclusive atmosphere.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents participate actively in the pre-school as helpers and members of the committee. They are well informed about the setting's activities and are encouraged to provide resources to support the topics that children are studying. Staff exchange verbal information with parents daily, they take effective steps to encourage parents to be involved in their children's care and learning. They share children's achievement records with parents, and keep them informed about changes through notices, newsletters, children's home link books and parent meetings.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The pre-school environment is warm and welcoming, safe and secure for children. Children participate in a wide range of age appropriate activities, most of which are well planned and properly organised. Most of the children are engaged in purposeful activities that are appropriate

to their stage of development. Children build their confidence and progress their overall development well.

Sufficient staff who are qualified in childcare work directly with the children. Children use ample good quality resources that are attractive and readily accessible to them. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children are safe, there is a sound recruitment policy and procedures to ensure that only staff who are vetted are alone with children. Staff's involvement in planning the setting's activities ensures that activity plans cover all areas of children's learning. However, staff do not plan and organise the space effectively for children's physical activities.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The setting has started to assess its strengths and weaknesses; they have identified some areas where improvements are needed, such as, updating the setting's policies and procedures. However, the nursery education is not properly evaluated to ensure that the learning objects are met consistently across all areas of the curriculum and to ensure that children's learning is properly extended. For example, there are limited opportunities for children to begin to write for different purposes and the book corner is not attractive for children to use.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Children Act inspection, the provider was asked to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection, and ensure that parents are aware of the setting's role in the protection of children. To safeguard children, staff now demonstrate good knowledge of child protection, and the signs and symptoms that may indicate possible abuse or neglect. The setting also shares useful information about child protection with parents, they are now clear about the setting's responsibility to safeguard children.

At the last nursery education inspection, the provider was asked to provide a wide range of physical activities for children, and to provide practical activities to develop children's skills in letter formation, and for children to practise mathematical skills. The provider was also asked to ensure that children have opportunities to develop their imagination through music and dance and to evaluate the educational provision to ensure that time and activities are managed effectively to deliver a balanced programme to all children.

The provider has made some improvements to progress the nursery education. Children now participate in a wide range of physical activities, which promote all aspects of their physical development. They now have sufficient opportunities to practise letter formation through planned activities, and the effective use of labels also help children to see and replicate letters. Children use numbers and mathematical language in their everyday activities; however, staff still do not plan consistently to consolidate children's mathematical skills. Children now have sufficient opportunities to develop their imagination through music and dance; they enjoy music and movement activities daily. The provider's evaluation of the educational provision is not fully effective, although children participate in a balanced programme of activities, the activities are not always properly evaluated to ensure that they meet the learning objectives for the children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, 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 complaint 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):

- make sure that the younger children are given individual attention so that they are able to experience all of the activities fully
- plan and organise the space effectively for children's physical activities (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):

- make sure that staff use the planned activities effectively to extend all areas of children's learning
- provide more opportunities for children to begin to write for different purposes, and make the book corner inviting to children
- evaluate the nursery education to ensure that the learning objects are met consistently.

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