

Small Friends Children's Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY152460
Inspection date	19 April 2007
Inspector	Lisa Paisley
Setting Address	15 Rectory Grove, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 2HA
Telephone number	01702 471235
E-mail	www.smallfriends.co.uk
Registered person	Louise Julie Parfett
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?

Small Friends Children's Day Nursery is privately owned. It opened in 2001 and operates from a converted building, situated in the centre of Leigh-on-Sea, Essex. A maximum of 40 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 all year round. All children share access to a secure enclosed indoor soft play area.

There are currently 73 children aged from birth to under eight years on roll. Of these 42 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 11 staff. Nine of the staff, including both managers, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two staff members are currently attending training.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in an environment where a very high standard of hygiene practices are maintained. Children learn about hygiene routines through washing their hands appropriately, such as after creative activities and before meal times. Children have access to liquid soap, hot and cold water and paper hand towels ensuring the risk of cross-infection is minimised. All staff have undertaken first aid training, ensuring appropriate steps are taken in the event of an emergency or when administering medication, for example, an inhaler.

Children's awareness of the benefits of healthy eating is actively promoted at snack and meal times. Children enjoy a very good variety of healthy meals and snacks, for example, apples, oranges, bananas and dried raisins. Some of the older children are able to self-select during snack time encouraging choice and independence. Meal and snack times are a relaxed sociable time where children are effectively supported by the staff. They learn why some foods are better for our bodies than others through general discussions and planned topics such as favourite foods. Children are able to rest and relax in comfortable surroundings according to their individual needs and daily routines. Fresh drinking water is freely available throughout the session, ensuring that they remain hydrated. Staff maintain very good written records for each child to ensure their individual health and dietary requirements are met.

Children enthusiastically enjoy a wide variety of activities that contribute to keeping them healthy. They effectively use a range of activities on a daily basis to develop their physical skills. Children have access to a soft play room where they enthusiastically move around the area rolling balls, jumping into the ball pool, going through the play caterpillar and climbing up the stepping stones to go down the slide. Children's finer manipulative hands skills are successfully promoted through the range of tools such as scissors, pencils, paint brushes, threading and puzzles that children use well. Consequently children are progressing very well in their physical development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children independently make choices as they self-select activities from an excellent range of easily accessible play resources and equipment. Well-planned areas allow them space to be quiet, use their creativity, extend their imagination and develop their play. Good quality displays including children's art work, hanging mobiles, posters and labels are displayed. Play activities and resources are inviting and attractive for children, ensuring all children feel secure and comfortable within the nursery.

Children are cared for in a very safe, secure and well-maintained environment where risks to children are minimised. For example, all low-level sockets are in place, safety gates are securely fixed and appropriately used, the main entrance is secure and all fire exits are clear and in working order. All visitors are required to show their identification badge and sign the visitors' book ensuring an accurate record is maintained with regard to visitors and their purpose. Children move around the indoors area safely developing their independence and confidence. They learn to keep themselves safe as staff provide children with gentle and consistent reminders such as no running, tucking chairs under the table safely and lining up sensibly. Children practise

regular fire drills with the staff ensuring that they know how to evacuate the building quickly and safely in the event of an emergency or an incident.

Children are effectively safeguarded as staff have an extensive understanding of child protection procedures and how to keep children safe. A written policy is in place and staff are able to recognise signs of abuse and know whom to contact if they are concerned about a child in their care. A named staff member is responsible for child protection and they have a clear understanding of their role, through attending training and keeping up to date with any changes such as the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). Parents are informed of the group's responsibility regarding child protection reassuring parents of their child's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young children enjoy their time at the nursery as they are very confident, happy and settled. Their confidence and self-esteem is effectively supported and developed, due to staff relating to them sensitively and warmly. Young children are provided with a good range of activities, for example, play dough, puzzles, books, construction and the home corner. They use the soft play area enthusiastically with confidence when developing their physical skills. The nursery has obtained the 'Birth to three matters' framework and some action has been taken to implement the approach into their practice, however, further familiarisation and consolidation is required to improve the quality of care and play experiences for young children.

Children attending the out of school provision are provided with a broad range of activities that are age appropriate, interesting and stimulating. They also have the opportunity to complete their homework with appropriate and sensitive support from the staff.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are cared for by staff whom have a very good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. Planning is clear, effective, flexible and linked to the stepping stones, focus activities are incorporated into the planning identifying clear learning intentions for children. Children's developmental progress is tracked through the stepping stones and their individual progress informs future activity plans. Staff undertake initial assessments when children first start within the group, this enables staff to understand children's starting points and effectively track their progress along the stepping stones. Children participate in a very good range of exciting and stimulating activities which cover each area of learning. Children work and play well together, initiating some activities and impromptu role play such as 'The three little bears'.

Children show a strong sense of belonging as they greet staff and each other upon arrival. They work well together and understand the importance of cooperation during group activities. For example, children making bubbles, tipping and pouring the liquid while playing with the water. Children are keen to participate in the range of activities provided such as role play, creative activities, puzzles, construction and books. Children have good communication skills, as they engage in conversation with their friends and staff, who actively listen. They confidently handle and enjoy books in which they sit in small groups to share stories. They particularly enjoy story time where they listen intently with enjoyment to stories such as 'The tiger who came to tea'. Children confidently use tools and resources to make marks and more able children are able to write their own names independently. Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy is well promoted through planned activities such as butterfly printing, comparing patterns and symmetry. Older

and more able children can count up to ten and beyond confidently. Circle time and singing number rhymes such as 'Ten little fingers' help children consolidate early mathematical concepts. There are good opportunities for children to participate in cooking activities, for example, making porridge, helping children's understanding of weight, measurement and capacity.

Children have good opportunities to find out about the natural world as they enjoy exploring their environment such as planting broad beans and exploring the life cycles of caterpillars. They have regular trips out to the local farm, shops, library and park. Children talk with interest about their own lives and learn about the work of people within the community, including the local road safety officer and the local healthy life-style development officer where children have the opportunity to participate in yoga. They are developing an awareness of the uses of information technology in everyday life and are able to operate equipment such as domestic items, measuring tapes and the computer. Children's physical skills are well promoted through a variety of mediums such as the hoops, balls, climbing frame, play caterpillar and the ball pool. Children's finer manipulative skills are suitably promoted through the good range of activities such as threading, puzzles, building with small bricks, threading and using scissors. Children's imaginations and free expression is promoted through a range of activities such as, painting, role play, craft activities and music and movement. They enthusiastically enjoy music and movement where they can practise moving their bodies rhythmically, stamping their feet, nodding their heads and waving their arms.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from having access to a good range of play resources which promote positive images of diversity and they participate in activities developing their awareness of diversity. For example, Easter, Holi, Diwali and Mother's day and they taste foods linked with festivals such as hot cross buns. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities take part fully in nursery activities. They are very well supported by staff who have a positive and sensitive approach to meeting their needs. A named member of staff works with parents and outside agencies to ensure that all children develop confidence and make good progress. Consequently, an inclusive environment is provided for all the children.

Staff provide very good role models for children by being calm, reassuring and polite. Praise is given freely to children, ensuring that they develop confidence and self-esteem and understand that they have done well. Their individual needs are met very successfully by the staff, however, the written behaviour policy does not include a statement with regard to bullying, as result inappropriate action may be taken in the event of dealing with concerns. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents are fully informed about the provision the nursery offers and how their children are progressing. Parents are warmly welcomed into the nursery to help their children to settle or to talk to staff about any concerns they may have. They also receive regular newsletters which keep them up to date with activities and events such as Red Nose Day, collecting for the Tsunami and for Oxfam at Christmas. There is effective written and verbal feedback at the end of the day, ensuring clear information is given to parents. Excellent quality notices and displays on the information board in the foyer informs parents about the Foundation Stage curriculum. Regular meetings with the key worker are arranged with parents to discuss their child's developmental progress. As a result parents are clearly and comprehensively informed about their child's care and their developmental progress.

Parents are aware of how to make complaints about the provision and the written policy has been updated to reflect the National Standards, ensuring the correct procedure is followed in the event of a complaint being received. Staff listen to parents' concerns and will act promptly and sensitively to any issues.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the well planned and effective organisation of the nursery, however, this could be further developed by reviewing the organisation of play sessions to further extend child-initiated play and learning opportunities for children. Staff make good use of available play space and children are able to move freely and independently around the setting accessing a good range of activities which support their play and learning. Staff plan activities well to meet the needs of the range of children. The nursery has a comprehensive and detailed range of documentation, including the operational plan, policies and procedures. Good quality written notices are displayed to remind staff and parents to share important information that could affect the children's care. This works in practice to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare.

Leadership and management is good. The owner/manager and staff are professional, enthusiastic and motivated to providing children with positive early years play experiences and learning. A clear staffing structure is in place within the nursery and all staff are aware of their roles and responsibility, ensuring that they consistently carry out their roles to a high standard. Staff are deployed successfully within the nursery and good staffing ratios are maintained at each session ensuring children are well supervised and supported during activities. Staff receive a good level of support through team meetings, appraisals and they are actively encouraged to attend training; ensuring current childcare practices are updated. Consequently, children are cared for by knowledgeable staff and benefit from continuity of care.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last education inspection the provision agreed; to ensure that a parent's signature is consistently obtained when recording accidents, incidents and existing injuries to children and ensure that children have ready access to drinking water. Documentation relating to accidents, incidents and existing injuries are clearly and accurately recorded ensuring that staff are vigilant to monitoring safety records. Parents signatures are obtained and drinking water is available to children ensuring that they remain hydrated and healthy.

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following: the opportunities for children to further develop and practise basic mathematical problem solving skills. Mathematical problem solving is promoted through daily routines such as at circle and snack times, further developing early mathematical concepts for 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 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 the outcomes for children from birth to three by using an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- update behaviour management policy to include a statement with regard to bullying.

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):

- review organisation of play sessions to further extend child-initiated play and learning opportunities for 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