

The Sunshine Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY338625
Inspection date	13 March 2007
Inspector	Sarah Fletcher
Setting Address	The Sunshine Centre, Edmunds Road, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX16 0PJ
Telephone number	01295 276769
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Registered person	The Sunshine Centre
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional care, Out of School care, Crèche

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 inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Sunshine Centre is situated in the Bretch Hill area of Banbury, Oxfordshire and serves the families of nearby residential estates. The centre is run by Sunshine Centre plc and opened in 2006. It comprises a nursery, which is open each weekday for 51 weeks of the year from 08.30 to 18.30; an after school club, which is open each weekday from 15.00 to 18.30; a playscheme, which runs during the school holidays; a crèche to support parents and carers attending the centre; and a variety of courses and drop-in support groups for parents, carers and their families. All services are housed in a purpose-built building with outdoor play areas for the children. There are currently 78 children aged from three months up to five years on roll in the nursery; of these 17 receive funded education. The crèche offers a maximum of 10 places and operates as required, mostly for children under three years, to support various adult groups that meet in the centre. The after school club has 43 children on role and the playscheme has varying numbers of school age children attending. The setting welcomes children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language.

A board of trustees oversees the operations of the centre, including the management of the budget and recruitment of staff. There is an overall centre manager, who is supported by a

management team which includes the day nursery manager, a part-time qualified teacher, a Children and Community Development Co-ordinator and a Quality and Early Years Development Officer.

There are seven staff who work with the children in the day nursery. All staff have early years qualifications to level 2 or 3. In addition, four staff work with the playscheme and the after school club and three staff work with the children when the crèche is operating.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing an understanding of simple good health and hygiene practices and the importance of hand washing routines. Older children independently wash their hands for snacks and meals in an adjoining bathroom. Low sinks in the main room encourage good hygiene, which children demonstrate often, washing paint, glue or compost from their hands. Children help staff to tidy up for snack time and are given cloths to wipe table tops, which they soak under the taps themselves. Children stay healthy because staff follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. Children are encouraged to wipe their own noses and to cover their mouths when coughing. Nappies of the younger children are changed after snack time or when needed following appropriate routines, in a changing area adjoining the main room.

Children have their health and dietary needs met because staff work well with parents. Staff provide children with freshly prepared snacks each day and with milk or water to drink, while parents supply children's lunches. Some children bring cold packed lunches and others have hot lunches, which staff warm up carefully in the microwave. Children can choose their snacks from a selection of fruit, cheese, different breads or crackers, which they serve to each other. Children are beginning to learn to cut up fruit and cheese under staff supervision. The established snack routine involves children counting those children seated at their table and the required numbers of plates and cups. They also serve food to each other and pour their own drinks from lidded jugs. During lunchtime children are encouraged to be independent and open their own packets and boxes whenever possible, with staff on hand to assist children when required.

Children enjoy physical play and learn about healthy living on a daily basis. They play inside and outdoors as they wish, with a good range of resources, toys and equipment to increase their physical skills available under a large covered area, which protects children from the weather. Children are developing an understanding of spatial awareness and move around confidently. Photographs show children playing with a large parachute, bouncing on a small trampoline and balancing on beams. Indoors they enjoy rolling playdough, cooking and drawing with pencils and chalks. Children can rest and sleep according to their needs on large cushions in book area.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming and secure indoor and outdoor environment, which is suitable for its purpose and appropriately risk assessed, using well-implemented documentation. Children access and use suitable and safe equipment throughout the nursery.

Floors are kept clear of toys and spills are cleared away. Toilet facilities are easily accessible to children and coat and bag hooks are labelled and within easy reach.

Children's safety is appropriately addressed as staff make daily checks for hazards to minimise risks to children. Secure entry systems into the building and through into the nursery area ensures children receive suitable protection from unvetted adults at all times. Children are beginning to learn to keep themselves safe and avoid accidental injury as they move around the main room and outside. Staff supervise children during their play but are not always aware of what children are doing. Children cannot access the kitchen, as it is fenced off with a low metal fence and gate, which remains closed to prevent children's entry. Double handles on the entrance door ensure room security and outdoor entry is supervised through a locked gate.

Children's welfare is protected because staff clearly understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Children receive care from staff who are appropriately vetted and have relevant experience, knowledge and skills to care for them. All staff receive good levels of training for child protection as part of their induction. They have clear awareness of the signs and issues of child protection and know the importance of recording information appropriately. Secure collection arrangements using a password system ensures children are only collected by authorised adults.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time in the nursery, playing with a range of resources which increase their learning. They develop self-confidence playing with a wide variety of toys and resources and role play equipment, such as kitchen units, play food, dressing up clothes and dolls of differing nationalities. Books are easily accessible for children to freely handle and make attempts to read. Low sinks for hand washing after craft activities are in the main play area and children understand the importance of washing their hands when messy, without prompting. Outdoors, children freely access messy play resources, such as couscous and lentils, shaving foam and compost. Easels are erected indoors and outside, with free painting or chalks. A computer is available in the main room with a large lettered keyboard and mouse, giving children free access to appropriate programmes to enhance their learning. Displays of children's artworks are in progress, further developing children's confidence and self-esteem. The supervisor has laminated photographs of children enjoying a wide range of activities to create a visual timetable for children, although this is not yet in use. Staff allow children the freedom to explore the wide range of resources, which are stored at children's height in clearly labelled containers.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Staff have little understanding of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and this directly affects the children's learning. Staff do not plan structured activities or themes to inspire children's learning, although children are able to freely access a good range of resources. As a result of the lack of planning, children do not receive any structure and wander from table to table with little direction or persistence with any one activity. Evaluation of activities does not take place to show staff the progress children are making or to assess the relevance of the activity to the area of learning. As there are no structured activities planned or evaluations made of activities, it is difficult for staff to truly assess children's achievements and as a result children are not making satisfactory progress across the areas of learning. Staff move around the room to play or help children, but they are not necessarily well deployed or watching children when they are playing with potentially

hazardous objects. Staff make observations on children during free play, but do not use their notes appropriately to assess children's achievements or to plan the next steps in each child's learning. Parents receive some written information on their child's progress through observations and staff are planning to increase opportunities for information sharing.

Children's independence is encouraged as they help to tidy up for snack time. Most children help to clean tables and take turns to collect plates and cups. They enjoy helping others by serving snacks for everyone on their table. Children are developing their skills by pouring their own drinks and are learning to dress and undress themselves with coats and shoes. Children explore the resources but do not concentrate for extended periods or persist with activities. They are beginning to learn to manage their own hygiene routines and wash their hands after messy play or using the toilet, with little prompting. Some children find separation from parents difficult, but staff show care and concern and use appropriate distraction strategies to make this process easier. Children take turns to go to the nearby shop with staff to buy the milk for the day. They enjoy the responsibility of carrying the money and return with the receipt and change, which they put into the cash tin. Everyday opportunities are in use, but nothing appears to be planned to challenge children. For example, children count the number of children at their table and plates and cups needed for each child at snack time. Although there are suitable resources to develop maths, no structured activities are planned to develop or extend children's understanding. Number lines are on display to help children to recognise numbers and relate number order and photographs show children floating and sinking objects in the water trough. Wooden magnetic letters are randomly displayed around the room, together with labels on resources help children to improve their recognition of letters and learn that marks have a variety of meanings.

Older children join in conversations with staff, which helps to develop their use of language and extend their vocabulary. Younger children with little language skills do not appear to receive any additional encouragement other than natural questioning about everyday experiences. Free use of writing resources gives children opportunities to practise their skills for handwriting, although there are no structured activities to develop these skills further. A wide range of fiction and non fiction books are freely available for children to handle and staff read stories throughout the session. There is limited use of name cards on arrival, with some children finding their own name. However, staff do not ask children to find their name or encourage them to do so.

Children have opportunities to explore the world around them outside with natural materials, such as compost, couscous and lentils. Photographs show children playing in shaving foam and the recent snowfall; digging and planting and preparing and cooking pastry. Children are able to use simple programmes on the computer to enhance their learning and to develop their keyboard and mouse skills. Staff provide resources to develop children's understanding of the countryside, such as laminated maps, but there is no structured activity provided to help children understand their uses and children just glance at the maps before moving away. Children have opportunities to use tools, such as tapping hammers with nails and wooden blocks, but there is no structure and little staff supervision. Children have opportunities to express their ideas through art and craft activities, role play and through singing action songs and rhymes. Children access a sensory room, where they can use a wide range of resources to promote their senses. They also develop their experiences of differing tastes, such as when trying varieties of bread and crackers at snacktime, making pastry or playing with jelly.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children become aware of our wider society, using a good range of resources which reflect their differences and encourage them to learn that other children live in different types of family or are from other countries. Children from many different cultures and backgrounds attend the nursery and toys, resources and equipment are carefully chosen to present positive images of the wider world. Disability is spoken about openly and children can play with appropriate resources, such as a child size wheelchair for children to use freely. Children feel a sense of belonging as they see displays of photographs around the room and have social times at lunch and snack times. Children make choices and take decisions in their play throughout the nursery. They are free to play with any of the toys, resources and equipment, which encourages children to explore their surroundings and increases their confidence.

Children receive appropriate support in their care and effective systems are in place to assess children who may have learning difficulties, although none currently attend. Children with English as an additional language are helped to understand English, with staff learning basic words in their language and using signs to help children understand. Asian staff work within the nursery and crèche and help staff to communicate with the Asian families attending. Children are aware of their own needs and the needs of others. Older children note any younger children who need help and alert staff or try to help them. For example, they often try to help each other with difficult coat fastenings, without staff prompting.

Children are beginning to understand responsible behaviour and most children behave well, although there is some disruptive behaviour. Staff apply appropriate strategies to manage children's behaviour, and records show that any difficult behaviour is monitored closely and discussions are take place with appropriate agencies and parents to assess any particular needs. Children are beginning to develop self-esteem and respect for others, with most children sharing and taking turns with the resources. They are learning to work amicably with others and some of the older children are developing small group friendships and playing together well. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive funding for nursery education is satisfactory. Parents talk freely to the supervisor on arrival and discuss any problems, such as requesting help with their child's language development problems. The supervisor is able to offer the appropriate advice and informs the parent of her child's language progress within the nursery. Other staff also make themselves available for parents to approach and offer reassurance, such as when confirming they will remind their child to use the toilet during toilet training. Parents receive good quality information on the care of their child and complete questionnaires with positive responses, showing they are happy with the nursery. Parents are involved in their child's learning through group activities and events at the centre. Child profile forms completed at registration help staff to understand each child's background and preferences. Parents receive a written report when their child leaves the nursery, giving them information on their child's achievements that are obtained through observations during play.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff caring for children have suitable qualifications and experience to care for them appropriately. Effective recruitment and vetting checks ensure children are well protected and cared for by staff with a suitable knowledge and understanding of child development. Policies

and procedures work in practice to promote children's health and safety and their enjoyment and achievement within the setting. All appropriate documentation is in place and children's records are stored securely. Written permissions are obtained from parents at registration for all required areas of their care.

Group sizes and staff deployment contribute towards children's good health, safety and their enjoyment within the setting. However, staff deployment is not always effective. Staff are often busy with small groups of children around the room and, as a result, they do not always notice what resources young children are exploring. For example, while staff are reading stories or tidying up craft resources, several young children are wandering around with scissors following art and craft activities, and are offered no direct supervision. Children using tapping hammers with nails and wooden blocks are unattended for long periods, including times when very young children are nearby.

Leadership and management are inadequate and do not contribute appropriately to children's progress towards the early learning goals. The supervisor and her staff have not received training in the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and as a result, children are not receiving sufficient teaching. The management team and the supervisor monitor and evaluate the provision for nursery education and are committed to improve the care and education for all children. They are beginning to take steps to improve their practice and are seeking guidance from the local authorities. There is insufficient planning to challenge children and evaluation is therefore not completed, which leads to inappropriate assessment of children's progress. Activities fail to build on children's current knowledge and skills and the children are often occupied rather than being questioned and challenged. There are no structured activities in place, although tables are set up with resources to allow children to express themselves, rather than follow a direction within the planned areas of learning. Staff are uncertain about what children are to learn from an activity and are unable to talk about how they develop each area of learning and fit in with the stepping stones, as they have little knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage.

Therefore the provision does not meet the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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.

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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):

- ensure staff are deployed appropriately throughout the session at all times

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- devise and implement an effective system of planning and evaluating activities to ensure all children make progress across all areas of learning
- implement an appropriate system to monitor and evaluate the provision of nursery education

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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