

SMILES PRE-SCHOOL

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	110034
Inspection date	25 May 2007
Inspector	Heidi Wilton

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Registered person	Carol Mason
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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?

Smiles Pre-school opened in 1992. It operates from a hall within The Norman Rodaway Pavilion, in the Hedge End area of Southampton. It serves the local area.

There are currently 67 children aged from two years nine months to five years on roll. This includes 51 funded three and four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The group opens five days a week, during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 to 12:00 daily, and 12:30 to 15:00 Tuesday and Thursday.

Seven staff work with the children. Six staff have early years qualifications to level 3 and one is embarking on training towards an early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean environment where they learn about good hygiene from the role models of the staff. They are familiar with routines for hand washing before meals and after using the toilet. Younger children are gently reminded by staff to use soap and water and are informed about the need to do so. Staff ensure children are protected from cross contamination as they wash their hands before preparing foods, wear disposable gloves and spray all work surfaces with antibacterial cleaner.

Staff care for children well if they have an accident as they apply a cold compress and reassure the child. The staff ensure medical supplies are replenished as necessary and the management ensure staff attend up-to-date first aid training. The pre-school have obtained written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment which ensures children are treated without delay. Parents are informed about the sick policy from the outset to ensure they are well informed about incubation periods if their child has a communicable disease.

The setting provide children with a healthy snack of fruit and a biscuit. Staff talk to the children about the fruit and the healthy benefits of eating these foods. Children's independence is limited at this time as staff pour their drinks and serve out the fruit. Parents are informed daily of the food being provided and staff have robust procedures in place to ensure children's allergies and dietary requirements are adhered to. Fresh water is not made readily available at child height for the children during the session.

Children benefit from physical exercise daily as they climb the steps of the frame and 'whiz' down the slide. They have fun as they throw balls down the skittle alley and become excited as they knock down the skittles. Children enjoy pushing themselves around in toy cars, riding tricycles and filling their vehicle with petrol from the toy petrol station. They play well together, catching and throwing balls and show a good sense of spatial awareness as they ride the bikes and run around. Children have fun crawling through pop-up tunnels as they move themselves along on their stomachs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a bright and welcoming environment. They explore the pre-school safely and independently as good risk assessments are carried out daily of the premises and equipment both indoors and out. Staff are deployed effectively to ensure children are protected, safe and their needs met. Children have an active role in helping to tidy up the pre-school which gives them responsibility and knowledge of how to keep themselves safe.

Staff ensure all doors are kept well secured when not in use and robust procedures ensure children are only collected by their designated person. The pre-school have a clear lost and uncollected child policy to ensure appropriate procedures are followed to keep children safe. Staff practise the fire drill with children on a regular basis to ensure they are fully knowledgeable about what to do in the event of a fire. Visitors are asked to sign into the building and staff check identification to ensure children are kept safe.

Staff keep children safe as they have a thorough awareness of child protection procedures and give top priority to safeguarding children's welfare. They are knowledgeable about recording signs and symptoms and have a good understanding of where to make referrals.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy at the pre-school and arrive excited to see what activities have been set up by the staff. There is lots of laughter and chatter amongst the children and this creates a relaxed and cheerful atmosphere. Children about to start at the pre-school receive a small welcoming postcard in the post stating how the pre-school are looking forward to seeing them on their first day. This is a wonderful tool in helping new children to feel a sense of belonging from the very beginning.

Children who become upset or distressed because 'mummy' has gone home are given a reassuring hug from a member of staff. They have opportunities for active play as they ride the tricycles and participate with music and movement. Children who become tired or want quiet time can relax on the large cushions in the book corner. They are engaged in their play and follow the routines of the setting confidently. Staff use the Birth to three matters framework to track children's development and communicate with parents to ensure they are well informed. Parents know they can access their child's records whenever they wish and discuss their child's developmental milestones with their key worker.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff who work with the funded children are experienced and well qualified. The team demonstrate a good understanding of the Foundation Stage framework and plan appropriate activities to stimulate the children. For example, staff plan and set up activities within the six areas of learning so children can explore, investigate and learn. The staff know the children well and extend and challenge them. They have a kind approach and enjoy the company of the children, creating a happy and relaxed atmosphere. The staff interact at child level and ask open questions to extend their play. Staff create play plans for all the children and make detailed observations to inform them of children's next steps of learning.

Parents provide information about their child's development when they first begin at the pre-school. This serves as useful guidance for staff giving them some understanding about the child and the tools needed to help them settle. Children are able to progress successfully because staff already know what stage of development they have reached and can plan their future learning.

Children enjoy listening to books and stories and demonstrate good listening skills as they confidently reflect on the bear story remembering what happened. Children who can write their names do so but those who cannot are not encouraged to write their name or make their mark on their work. They show a good understanding of number as staff encourage them to count during their everyday play. Staff extend children's learning of measure as they encourage children to measure themselves against the tower of bricks and to predict who is going to be shortest or longest.

Children have lots of opportunities to explore and independently investigate their environment. They become fascinated as they look at the small spider through a magnifying glass and one

child informed the visitor 'this makes all the things look BIG'. Children have fun operating simple equipment such as battery operated trains, shop tills and calculators. Children engage in many lovely structured art and craft activities although the freedom to choose free art is limited. They enjoy painting their arms with coloured paints and giggle stating 'it feels cold and wet'. They have fun twirling ribbons as they make shapes in the air to familiar music and successfully complete the actions to the 'Grand Old Duke of York' using positional language such as 'up' and 'down'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The staff team all have a thorough understanding of promoting equal opportunities and diversity within society. The management are responsible for ensuring the whole team have an extremely clear understanding of the policy and that they gain appropriate training and skills to promote diversity with all the children. Children are extremely valued and respected as individuals and different cultural backgrounds are highly acknowledged and celebrated. Children's needs are extremely well met as the staff all have an excellent understanding of their individual needs. The setting have strong links with a nursery school in Kenya. The children foster a very good understanding of different cultures as they look at photographs of children from Kenya and watch a video of these children singing 'I'm a little teapot' in their own language. Staff discuss the different ways of life for these children, talking to them about the homes they live in and clothes they wear.

The children all have access to vast amount of multicultural activities and resources. They have many stimulating and interesting opportunities to explore different festivals as they make models from junk modelling, explore multicultural artefacts and dress up in a wide range of colourful cultural outfits. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The learning disabilities and/or difficulties co-ordinator shows an extremely clear dedication to working with the children and a thorough understanding of her role. She and the whole staff team work purposefully together to create an environment where all children are included and learn at their own stages of development. The setting significantly enhance children's experiences at the pre-school as they adapt the environment, activities and routine to meet their individual needs. Children benefit hugely from the partnership between their parents, staff and outside agencies as strategies and action plans are implemented to gain high levels of consistency in their everyday lives.

Children demonstrate strong relationships with each other as they share toys and take turns in their play. They understand what behaviour is expected as staff use high quality behaviour strategies. Staff adopt a positive approach and highly effectively support children in reminding them about sharing and taking turns. Highly skilled staff form strong bonds with parents and communicate effectively with them about their child's behaviour. Staff use comprehensive observation sheets to track children's behaviour and use these to identify any patterns of unacceptable behaviour. The setting actively seek advice from outside agencies, working in conjunction with them and parents to gain strategies to achieve high levels of consistency for the children.

Children benefit immensely from the strong relationships between the staff and their parents. Parents feel the setting is 'fantastic' and 'impressive' and enthusiastically inform the inspector about their extremely good experiences as parents at the setting. They welcome the open door policy and staff make themselves available to parents at anytime to give extremely detailed

feedback about their child. Parents with children who have additional needs complemented the setting on the exemplary practise they have demonstrated and the dedication of the team to seek advice to help their children. Parents are extremely happy as they feel involved with every aspect of their child's learning.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Dedicated, skilled staff ensure parents are extremely well informed about their child's learning and their progress through the developmental milestones. Parents are given extremely clear verbal and written information from the outset about the Foundation Stage framework and the stepping stones. Parents demonstrate high levels of understanding of the stepping stones and early learning goals and welcome the high quality communications they gain from the staff. They are extremely well informed as staff clearly display medium term plans showing links to the six areas of learning. Parents have access to sessional day plans which show clear, detailed links to the stepping stones. This ensures parents are highly knowledgeable about what their child is learning and what stepping stones they are working towards. In addition, staff have created wonderful, informative scrap books for each area of learning showing photographs and detailed comments about the range of activities covered within the areas of learning. Staff actively show parents their child's developmental records and individual play plans on an extremely regular basis. Parents are welcomed to take these records home to ensure they are fully knowledgeable about what their child is learning and stages of their development. Parents can arrange meetings with the staff team at anytime to discuss their child's development or to contribute to their child's individual play plan.

Staff have formed excellent links with the local primary schools and display their prospectus highly effectively in the front entrance of the setting. This allows parents to gain additional information about the schools in the area helping them to make highly informed decisions about the school they choose for their child. Well detailed and concisely written newsletters are given to parents giving them up-to-date information about events and topics. This gives parents high levels of understanding about what their child is doing at pre-school and learning can be continued at home. Parents are extremely welcomed by staff and invited to help during the sessions. The staff display notices about events and theme days to inspire parents to attend and have lots of fun with their child. This forms very strong links between the pre-school and home as parents can see the things their child is learning and continue these in the home environment. Parents all value the pre-school and the staff, praising their highly approachable manner, friendly disposition, extremely caring attitude and excellent understanding.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff know the children well and work effectively together to ensure the children are well cared for. They demonstrate a clear understanding of their job roles and responsibilities, helping each other as necessary. The staff team have a good knowledge of the policies and procedures as these form part of the robust induction process to ensure children receive consistent care. Good vetting procedures are used to ensure staff are suitable to be alongside the children. The management have obtained required information about the children and they ensure all documentation is stored away confidentially.

Children are cared for by trained and well qualified staff. Their care is supported by the good organisation and nursery routines. The indoor and outdoor space is laid out to maximise the play opportunities for the children. Staff effectively plan a good range of age and stage

appropriate activities to allow all children to explore and develop at their own pace. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management are good. The staff team are well established, supportive and work well as a team. The manager supports the staff on a day to day basis, monitoring their practice and gives them feedback about any concerns or achievements. In addition, staff have annual appraisals where concerns, achievements and training needs are identified. The management continue to improve their expertise by continually reflecting upon their practice and through attending regular training to update and enhance their expertise. The staff team evaluate their working practice through regular meetings and through promoting individual development. A shared understanding and dedication to early years is clearly demonstrated and the team show a united approach to the children and their work.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last education inspection the setting were asked to improve the management of sessions, to ensure that children obtain maximum benefit from the learning opportunities available particularly relating to interaction with each other and appreciation of their environment. The setting now ensure children have access to all areas of learning on a day to day basis and differentiate the planned activities so all children can use them at their own level of development. Children have many opportunities to interact with each other. They giggle and chat at snack times, communicate during role-play, laugh together as they paint their arms and converse with each other as they crawl through pop-up tunnels. Children appreciate their environment as they look at bugs through magnifying glasses, go on walks to see the baby lambs and learn to keep their environment tidy.

At the last care inspection the setting were asked to ensure registration systems record the times of arrival and departure of all children and staff. The setting now ensure children and staff are recorded at the times of arrival and departure to make sure everyone is accounted for in an emergency.

The setting were asked to expand the late collection of child policy to include the procedure if a child is not collected. They have now included the procedure if a child is not collected ensuring staff and parents are knowledgeable about the procedure.

The setting were asked to ensure all accidents are countersigned by the parents and ensure medication records have a signed acknowledgement from parents once medicines have been administered. The setting record all accidents and obtain written acknowledgement from the parents. They do not administer medicines but have a form in place should they need to do so and demonstrate a clear understanding of completing the medication forms.

The setting were asked to ensure children are given regular opportunities to use the resources which promote diversity. The children now have frequent access to resources promoting diversity such as multicultural bowls, cutlery, costumes, posters and many artefacts. This ensures children are fostering an awareness of the wider community and other cultures.

The setting were asked to implement the use of an incident book to record significant issues. The pre-school have a confidential incident book in place to ensure the welfare of children is safeguarded.

The setting were asked to ensure the complaints procedure is updated to include the name, address and phone number of Ofsted. The complaints procedure now includes Ofsted's name,

address and phone number ensuring parents and staff are knowledgeable about how to contact Ofsted.

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.

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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):

- develop all children's independence at snack times and ensure fresh water is readily available at child height throughout the session.

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):

- develop opportunities for children to engage in free arts and crafts and for all children to make their mark on their own work.

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