

The Greenery Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	110079
Inspection date	24 May 2007
Inspector	Anne Gunston
Setting Address	Paterson Centre, Church Road, Swanmore, Southampton, Hampshire, SO32 2PA
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Registered person	Pauline Amanda Didymus
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Greenery Nursery School opened in 1997 and is privately owned. It operates from the Paterson Centre in the village of Swanmore, Hampshire. The group has the use of two rooms and is registered for a total of 38 children aged between 18 months and five years. Children under two years meet as a separate, pre-nursery group in the smaller room during some of the sessions, currently Tuesday and Thursday.

There are currently 62 children from 18 months to five years on roll. This includes 43 children who are in receipt of funding for nursery education. Children come from the village and surrounding area and attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery support children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The nursery opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 until 12:00 Monday to Friday and on a Monday and Wednesday the session is extended to enable the children to bring their lunch and stay until 15:00. The nursery is able to use the adjoining vicarage garden for outdoor play.

The owner and eight staff work with the children; four staff members have relevant child care qualifications and four staff are currently on training programmes.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a variety of healthy snacks at nursery, which they often enjoy preparing for themselves with the assistance of staff. For example, children enjoy helping to prepare pineapple, pears, apple and banana for fruit salad, or take part in making sandwiches with nutritious fillings. Children learn about the importance of eating a balanced diet through discussions with staff. They have regular access to cool drinks and are encouraged to drink milk at snack time. Children who choose to enjoy their packed lunch at the nursery benefit from sitting at a table to enjoy conversation with others and staff. However, at snack time all children are required to sit on the floor, so many who attend do not benefit from this experience. Staff keep records of any allergies to ensure children are only offered foods which comply with their individual dietary requirements.

All children enjoy daily exercise, in the church lobby, or in the vicarage garden where they climb and slide on equipment in the shelter of trees. They are able to be physically active and learn the benefits of exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle. They balance on stilts, take part in team games such as sack races, use ride-on toys and weave around obstacle courses.

Children's health is protected appropriately should accidents occur. More than adequate numbers of staff hold valid first aid qualifications, and a first aid box is stored accessibly in the kitchen. The nursery have a sickness policy to ensure the exclusion of sick children, to reduce the spread of infection. The staff take appropriate action to maintain a clean, hygienic environment. Food preparation areas are frequently cleaned, and nappies changed for younger children are disposed of safely. Children are learning how to protect their own health. For example, they realise that sunhats must be worn when playing outdoors in the sun and independently wash their hands before snacks. However, children are expected to wash their hands in a sink of water used by others, and share towels, which puts them at risk of illness or infection.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from having plenty of space for play in all rooms. Children attending nursery move freely and safely around the large hall and side room. Their access to play materials is safe as staff prepare the environment well in advance of their arrival, and rotate the resources depending on the activities which are planned. The hall is a welcoming, bright, clean environment where children's work is displayed and posters are used innovatively on storage units to provide interest. Children attending the pre-nursery also have sufficient space for play, although staff are unable to make this room as welcoming, as it is often needed by other users of the building. Children in pre-nursery are supervised appropriately by staff who recognise the room's limitations, so display most larger toys and books at floor level. However, smaller items such as puzzles are stored in an open cupboard which is poorly organised. Children are not able to select toys from this safely.

Staff complete visual checks of the premises and equipment, to ensure this is maintained in a suitable state of repair and cleanliness for children's use. They ensure that the premises are secure and visitors to the building are monitored, to keep children safe. Children benefit from good levels of supervision, particularly as they transfer to the vicarage garden for play. Younger

children who are unsteady on their feet are carried, and staff make sure they closely monitor how many children are in their care at all times.

The nursery's child protection policy protects children from risk of harm. Staff show understanding of procedures to follow to safeguard children; they are aware of the signs and symptoms which may indicate a child is at risk and would take advice from the appropriate agency.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young children who attend the pre-nursery group enjoy a good variety of activities and experiences. Staff are beginning to use the Birth to three matters framework to monitor that these activities are developmentally appropriate for children in their care. Staff have secure knowledge of each child's routine as this is discussed as they arrive. Children quickly adapt to parting from their parents and settle well, as they are distracted by the exciting play opportunities on offer. Children are happily engaged in looking at books, posting shapes, rolling and cutting dough and attempting puzzles. Children are learning to communicate and play together; they are given good support by staff who sit close to them to engage them in conversation, praise their efforts and offer reassurance.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The nursery owner and staff work together to plan the Foundation Stage curriculum; all have a sound knowledge of how children learn through play. They monitor the general effectiveness of each planned and incidental experience, to ensure that children continue to benefit from all opportunities. The nursery owner takes responsibility for monitoring the quality of each child's learning overall. All staff show extensive knowledge of each child's capabilities and share information verbally with her, and each other, throughout the session. They note children's progress and work together to plan new goals for each child. The staff team are consistent, work co-operatively and are all very willing to be involved in all aspects of children's learning.

Children settle very well and part from their parents confidently. They are fully aware of the nursery routines; staff give clear direction and encouragement to each child to be independent and self-sufficient. Children show a great deal of consideration for others. They hold each other's hands and offer support to each other to run in the garden. At registration time children whisper conversations so the speaker is not disturbed. Staff promote this caring attitude as they always speak respectfully to children and use affectionate language when speaking to them. Children develop good levels of self-esteem and show pride in their own achievements. They have a positive approach to completing their chosen activity to their satisfaction. Children describe how well they have folded dressing up clothes when tidying away, and are secure in stating to staff that they would like to finish a piece of work before moving to another activity.

Children are using language confidently to express themselves and engage in meaningful conversations with each other and adults, for example, during role play. They listen attentively to stories and enjoy reading books independently; children often choose to re-read books previously read to them. Staff read books and narrate stories in an expressive, exciting manner and encourage children to join in with action stories. Children giggle with enjoyment as they 'stamp' up the stairs and pretend to put on pyjamas. Many children have advanced reading skills; staff recognise when it is appropriate to introduce word tins and a reading scheme to

ensure children's interest is maintained and extended. Children are willingly attempting to write their name, many children are very competent in this area. Staff use good judgement in assessing when children are ready to move from the simple tracing of their name using dot-to-dot techniques, to constructing letters free-hand.

Children take part in imaginative activities to promote their mathematical understanding. They make number and shape biscuits from raw ingredients, with staff in attendance who talk about the quantities needed, the consistency and the shapes created. Children learn the concepts of addition and subtraction, as staff plan activities using innovative resources such as compare bears. Children enjoy counting and can confidently count how many children are present each day. Children can use the computer daily for matching and pairing games. Children are competent in using the mouse and many move quickly to more advanced educational programmes. Staff recognise when children have mastered the basic level and move them quickly to the next challenge to extend the child's learning. Children use a good selection of programmable toys and equipment throughout the nursery. They are well supported by staff and helpers who use probing questions. For example, when using BeeBot programmable bees, children are asked to think about which direction they want the bee to follow, so which arrow should they push to ensure this happens.

Children have many opportunities to use their senses and explore the world around them. They stop to wonder at rainwater droplets on plant leaves in the vicarage garden, and are given time by staff to enjoy this experience. Children are developing a secure sense of time and place, through the experiences they are offered and in discussion with staff. Children benefit from trips to the local school to watch Morris dancers and enjoy telling adults about their forthcoming birthday. Children enjoy discussing the important people in their lives. Staff provide many chances for them to do so, for example, during registration children describe photos of themselves taken at their Christening. Children discuss their families and are reassured by staff that all families are different.

Children's physical development is progressing soundly. They have good spatial awareness and manage their bodies well. They enthusiastically take part in wiggling their bodies to the Good Morning song, stretching and pointing to the ceiling. They run, climb, and twist when using the large equipment in the garden. Children's fine motor skills are well developed, they have good pencil control and use more difficult equipment such as sharp knives competently. Staff are always on hand to promote the safe use of such tools, yet ensure children achieve satisfaction with the finished result. Children demonstrate good control over their bodies during outdoor play. They receive clear advice and instruction from staff. When trying to balance a quoit on their heads, children are advised to hold their head up, look straight ahead and walk slowly to achieve success.

Children are able to create their own designs and select colours or materials during art and craft, in addition to completing art with some pre-determined shapes. They select materials such as feathers, buttons and fabric from a selection organised by staff. Children are able to express themselves freely as the painting easel is set up each day. They proudly show adults the finished design. In role play children create their own stories and pretend that objects, such as the calculators are telephones. They imagine that they are in the jungle and use these 'telephones' to ring their friends. Children benefit from using a wide range of musical instruments and enjoy singing rhyming songs, such as My Hat it has Three Corners. Children experiment with sounds, raising and lowering their voices during the story of the Great Big Buffalo. They boom the loud voices and speak the tiny voices, encouraged by expressive and animated staff who involve the children at all times.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children play an active part in the nursery routines, they develop a firm sense of belonging. They willingly help staff with tidying up at the end of the session, and often help with preparation of snacks. Staff encourage this participation, listen closely to what children have to say and value the contributions they make. For example, the nursery owner involves older children in choosing the theme for the week. Children are enabled to share their experiences throughout the day. At daily registration children proudly talk about their family members and important events in their lives. Staff make sure each child is included in the discussion and give time for each child to have a say. The nursery expect that children wear a uniform, which promotes a sense of ownership for all children. An equal opportunities policy is in place and a good range of activities take place which raise children's awareness of other cultures.

The nursery welcome all children and have a particularly strong commitment to including children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff give good support to the children and parents; they work closely with other professionals involved in the children's care. Individual education plans are in place and regularly reviewed. This ensures that specialist equipment is provided, and activities planned, so children are fully integrated and included in all aspects of nursery life.

Children behave well at nursery. They know what is expected of them as staff act as a team to calmly but firmly reinforce the rules when necessary. Staff have high expectations of children, and expect them to behave politely and respectfully at all times. Children respond positively to the praise they receive from staff, for example, for waiting quietly before speaking and not interrupting. They blossom when they are rewarded with a sticker, then praised in front of other children and staff for the consideration they have shown. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. All children benefit from the staff's support such as when settling them into nursery routine. Parents value the opportunity to discuss their child's progress at the half-termly coffee mornings and know that they are able to request a one-to-one meeting to speak in confidence to the owner. Parents are able to be involved to some extent in their child's learning, as they are told of the theme of the week, and invited to send in relevant items. The nursery offer suggestions and work closely with parents of individual children who require additional help in specific areas. The owner seeks basic information on the child's abilities when they begin at nursery, but as yet does not ask parents for detailed guidance on what children can already do.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The nursery staff team work well together under the direct guidance and leadership of the owner. There are acceptable systems in place which ensure that suitably vetted staff are employed to work in close proximity to the children. Training is supported and encouraged; currently half of the staff hold relevant child care qualifications and others are undertaking training to increase their expertise. Staff organise space and resources appropriately, allowing children to access a good selection of activities during the sessions. All essential documentation is in place and most is up-to-date with current legislation. However, the complaints policy does not inform parents of their right to view the complaints log at any time.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. The owner takes a lead on the delivery of nursery education to children in receipt of government funding. She involves staff in the planning of activities, and monitors their assessment of children's achievements. All staff have high expectations for children's progress; they complete relevant observations on children throughout each session. These are used by the owner to inform the verbal and written reports to parents, and enable her to plan activities to promote each child's learning. The nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care and nursery education.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the nursery were asked to obtain written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for each child, and ensure that all accident records are confidentially maintained. They were also asked to include all children's dietary needs on registration forms, to improve the quality of care provided. The nursery have systems in place to obtain written consent from parents for seeking emergency medical treatment, which ensures the care of children is consistent with parent's wishes. Accident records are comprehensively completed, and maintain the confidentiality of each child as separate pages are used for each incident. Children's dietary needs are recorded and known by staff.

With regard to the quality of nursery education, the nursery were asked to improve the systems of assessment to ensure they indicate the progress each child makes towards the early learning goals. They were also asked to increase opportunities for children to develop climbing and balancing skills, and be creative in art and craft with materials of their choice. In addition, parents should have received more information about the nursery's policies and procedures. A folder containing all policies and procedures is now displayed for parents during operating hours. The nursery quickly purchased climbing equipment which children use very frequently in the garden. Children are able to use balance beams and can select their own materials for craft activities. The nursery have increased opportunities for children to create their own art forms, in addition to the use of pre-printed templates. The nursery use colour-coded records of assessment, which are updated each half-term to clearly show the progress of individual 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.

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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):

- improve methods of hand washing to further protect children from risk of infection
- ensure all children benefit from being able to sit comfortably, in groups supported by staff, at snack time
- improve organisation of resources for children under two years and nine months to ensure they can access these safely
- ensure the complaints policy is amended to reflect new legislation

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):

- further develop opportunities for parents to be involved in children's learning with particular reference to increasing information sought on children's starting points and offering suggestions for extending nursery activities at home.

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