

Sunnyside Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	220082
Inspection date	25 May 2007
Inspector	Andrea Ewer
Setting Address	Reynard Way, Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN2 8QS
Telephone number	01604 820082
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Registered person	Sunnyside Pre-school Playgroup
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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Sunnyside Pre-school Playgroup opened in 1988 and is registered to care for a maximum of 26 children from two to four years old. There are currently 65 children from two years to four years on the register. This includes 33 funded four year olds. Children attend a variety of sessions.

The playgroup operates from a portakabin within the grounds of Sunnyside Primary School and serves the local community in Kingsthorpe, Northampton.

The playgroup is able to support children who have learning difficulties and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week, during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 to 11:55 and 13:00 until 15:25. Six part-time staff work with the children. Four have early years qualifications and one is on a training programme. The playgroup receives support from a local authority advisory teacher and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Good attention is given to helping children stay healthy. They benefit from nutritious snacks that promote their healthy growth and development. Children enjoy a range of fresh fruits and choose either milk, water or squash to drink. Information about children is obtained from parents and shared between staff which ensures the good health of children is not compromised.

Children are developing a very good understanding of the importance of simple good hygiene practices. They readily wash their hands independently at appropriate times such as, before eating and after visiting the toilet. Regular hygiene procedures are carried out by staff as part of everyday routines. Tables are cleaned with antibacterial cleaners before and after food is served and floors are cleared of any food debris after snacks. This effectively prevents the spread of infection. Most staff hold an up-to-date first aid qualification and procedures are in place which ensures children receive appropriate care in the event of minor accidents or illness. Records that support staff to maintain children's good health are well kept. Written consent to seek emergency medical treatment or advice and apply sun cream is obtained and accident records are signed by parents.

Children become confident in their own abilities as they participate in a range of physical activities. They move with confidence around the nursery and negotiate space well outdoors. Children have fun as they climb the large apparatus, jump vigorously on the trampoline and ride on wheeled toys with increasing agility and control.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a bright and stimulating environment that is organised to ensure their safety and well-being are promoted at all times. Attractive displays of their artwork and photographs of children, help them feel a strong sense of belonging. Storage is well-organised and allows children to independently select further resources from the low-level shelving, to develop their play and ideas. For example children take paper and pencils to the telephone booth to write messages for each other.

Active steps are taken to minimise hazards and prevent accidents. Staff are well deployed and are vigilant about ensuring children are supervised at all times. The premises are secure with access closely monitored by staff, fire safety equipment including smoke alarms, fire extinguishers and a fire blanket are placed appropriately around the building and fire drills are carried out regularly.

Although staff understand the signs and symptoms of child abuse their understanding of the correct procedure to follow is limited. The designated person has not attended updated training that takes account of changes in guidelines, to ensure procedures are carried out correctly. This potentially compromises children's welfare and safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the playgroup confidently, are happy, settled and spend their time purposefully. They have warm and friendly relationships with staff who know them well and daily routines are consistent which helps children feel secure. New children are sensitively supported to settle into playgroup life by their key-worker, who offers regular comfort and reassurance. Children benefit from a broad and exciting range of activities and play experiences that meets their physical, emotional, social and intellectual needs very well. They play co-operatively, learn to share and respect one another. Children make their own decisions about which activities to join and overall staff support them well to extend their learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is satisfactory. Children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals because most staff have secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. Some staff lack confidence in promoting and extending children's learning and at times do not provide sufficient challenge for older more able children. Although staff know each child well, observation and assessment records and planning the next steps for children is not sufficiently linked to the stepping stones to show children's progress towards the early learning goals. At times this results in inconsistencies for the expectations of children. Activities are evaluated regularly to show where they have been successful in promoting children's learning or how they could be improved and are regularly repeated to secure children's learning.

Children are motivated and make good links in their learning as they actively participate in a broad and stimulating variety of activities that captures their imagination and are planned around the six areas of learning. They eagerly join in adult-led activities where they re-enact going on holiday and talk about the items they need to take with them. Children are forming friendships with each other, eagerly seeking out their special friends to share experiences. For example they play happily for sustained periods of time with their friends in the home corner. They are gaining a good understanding of their own needs as they choose whether to play indoors or outside, visit the toilet independently and readily wash their hands. Children are making very good progress in communication, language and literacy. They have excellent opportunities for mark making as writing equipment is available at all times in various areas of the playgroup. Children start to understand that writing can be used for various purposes. They have fun writing postcards to themselves, taking them to the post box and eagerly wait for the postal worker to deliver them to their home address. Older children write their name competently and most younger children write and recognise at least the first letter of their name. Children enjoy listening to stories and often choose to look at books. The use of self registration at snack time helps children to recognise their own and at times the names of others. Children speak confidently in groups and to express themselves generally. They explain to the group that they are going swimming and that they will be wearing armbands and contribute to stories by talking about familiar aspects of the story lines and answering questions.

Children gain a secure understanding of numbers and mathematical concepts during everyday activities. They regularly participate in number songs and rhymes where they count, and start to learn simple calculation as they add some and take away. Children competently design and make models with a range of materials and learn about shapes as they complete puzzles and talk about the shapes in their pictures. For example, they trace pictures of transport and correctly

identify what shape the windows and wheels are. Children learn about volume and capacity during simple cooking activities and while pouring sand and water into various sized containers.

Children are gaining a good understanding of their own community and the wider world. They go for local walks where they talk about and observe things of interest such as the types of shops, post boxes and houses. They start to make sense of the world as they take on roles and act out real life situations in the well equipped home corner and understand tools are used for a purpose as they saw and hammer the train. Children use their imagination well during a range of creative activities. They explore colour and texture using their senses as they print with sweet peppers and apples. They move to various types of music such as orchestra, military band and Irish folk. At times children use scarves to make floaty movements and carry their baskets as they sing about going shopping. This helps to develop their creative skills. Children enthusiastically play in the post office where they make passports and use a range of tools and materials such as hole punches, staplers, sticky tape and sticky labels which helps to develop children's small muscles.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children enter the nursery happily and are welcomed warmly by staff. They feel secure because they share caring relationships with consistent staff who know them well. Individual children's needs are met well because staff generally work effectively with parents. Parents and children complete an 'All about me' booklet which, along with other useful information from parents ensures appropriate care is given that meets children's individual needs.

Children develop a positive self-image as they play with toys and use resources that positively represents themselves and people of other cultures, races, abilities and religions. They play with dolls of various colours, puzzles that show people from around the world, small world people including some who have a disability and books. At times, parents and staff bring in musical instruments such as Indian drums, cornet and guitar and children show off their Irish dancing skills to the group. This helps children feel valued, appreciate our similarities and differences and gain a healthy respect for each other.

Children respond very well to the regular praise and high expectations for their behaviour. They use very good manners, share, take turns and play co-operatively together. Although there are no children currently attending who have learning difficulties, staff demonstrated sufficiently well during discussion, how children would be fully included and any additional care requirements incorporated into the daily routine. They understand the importance of working with parents and outside agencies to promote children's welfare. The special educational needs co-ordinator however, has not continued to attend training to support her to help children reach their full potential.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents provide information about their children which enables staff to plan and provide activities and learning experiences that meets their play and development needs effectively. Parents receive useful information about the Foundation Stage and displays around the nursery relating to each area of learning helps them to understand how and what their children are learning. Information about the current theme is displayed, with activities to be provided and monthly newsletters given. Generally this enables parents to contribute positively to their children's learning at home. Although parents have access to their children's progress records, arrangements are informal and some parents have

limited access because children are bought and collected by carers. This restricts the opportunities for staff and some parents to share information about their children's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children's welfare, care and safety are promoted well because overall space, staff and resources are organised effectively and allows children to play and develop their ideas in a safe, stimulating environment. Children are cared for by adults who have undergone effective recruitment and vetting procedures that ensure they are suitable to work with children and promotes their safety. This includes training for newly appointed, unqualified staff which informs them of their role and responsibilities in meeting children's needs. Sufficient staff are deployed effectively to ensure children are well supervised and appropriate care is given. Although there is a designated person identified for Safeguarding Children, behaviour management and Special Educational Needs, staff have not continued to attend training to equip them to support other staff and subsequently children.

Clearly written policies and procedures that staff understand and implement consistently, underpin the day-to-day practices in the nursery and contribute to the welfare, care and safety of all children. Children's records are well maintained and include all required written consents and information from parents that enables appropriate care to be given.

The leadership and management of the nursery is satisfactory. Children benefit from the clear aim to provide good quality care and nursery education for all children. The manager provides a good role model for staff and the recent introduction of staff appraisals ensure staff know what is expected of them and subsequently children's needs are met. Planning and staff meetings include all staff and ensure children are provided with an extensive range of play and learning experiences that promotes their learning in all six areas. Overall the use of evaluation is effective in monitoring the quality of care, teaching and children's progress towards the early learning goals.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last care inspection recommended that the playgroup devise an equal opportunities policy that is consistent with current legislation and ensure it is shared with parents and to ensure that the child protection procedure includes procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. Children's welfare and safety are now promoted more effectively because the playgroup has adopted policies and procedures from the pre-school learning alliance, including an equal opportunities policy and child protection policy that includes the procedure to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer. These policies form part of the operational plan and comply with current legislation. The operational plan is placed in the reception area for parents' information. The playgroup also agreed to request written consent to seek emergency medical treatment or advice. Written consent is now obtained for all children as part of their records and ensures children's good health is promoted.

The last nursery education inspection recommended that the playgroup provide opportunities for children to link letters to sounds, develop strategies to ensure parents can contribute to children's progress records and have regular opportunities to discuss their children's progress and develop children's progress records to show the next steps for children's learning and use

this information to inform planning. Some progress has been made. Children now have better opportunities to develop their early reading skills as link letters to sounds staff include activities such as sounds lotto into the planning. There are still limited opportunities for parents to contribute to children's progress records and for sharing information about children's progress with their parents. Although staff identify the next steps for children's learning during planning and evaluations this is not linked closely enough to the stepping stones and is therefore not clear. At times this results in inconsistencies in the expectations of children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints that required Ofsted or the provider to take any action. 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):

- develop staff knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and ensure the designated person for child protection has up-to-date training and understanding of the local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines in order to promote children's safety more effectively.
- ensure there is an identified member of staff designated for behaviour management and special educational needs and that they have relevant training and experience to support other staff.

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 staff's understanding of the Foundation Stage
- develop children's progress records to show the next steps by linking more clearly to the stepping stones
- develop the opportunities to share children's progress records with parents and for parents to contribute to them by sharing what their children can do.

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