

Sunbeams Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	254296
Inspection date	18 May 2007
Inspector	Susan Smith
Setting Address	The Village Hall, Easthill Lane, Bramerton, Norwich, Norfolk, NR14 7EQ
Telephone number	01508 538438
E-mail	
Registered person	Sunbeams Pre-School
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?

Sunbeams Pre-School is managed by a voluntary management committee made up of parents of children at the pre-school and members of the local community. It was registered in 1997 and operates from the Bramerton Village Hall, which is in a rural part of Norfolk. A maximum of 18 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open from Monday to Friday during term time from 09.30 to 12.00 with an additional session from 12.30 until 15.00 on a Wednesday. All children share access to a small secure enclosed outdoor area.

There are currently 37 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 24 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local community and wider rural area.

The pre-school employs five staff. Of these, four, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well-organised routines and activities. They know to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet, using facilities that allow them to be independent. Children receive appropriate care if they are ill or have an accident because staff are aware of their individual health care needs. Most of the required documentation and consents are in place to support this. However, consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is not currently in place for all the children who attend the pre-school. This potentially compromises the treatment of these children in an emergency situation. Staff attend first aid and food hygiene training to ensure they are aware of the correct procedure to follow to maintain children's health and prevent the spread of infection. A well stocked first aid kit, the contents of which are checked regularly, is easily available in an emergency.

Children are learning about healthy eating through discussion and are supported effectively by staff to try new fruits at snack time, such as avocado pear and kiwi. Children choose from milk or water at snack time and have free access to drinking water throughout the session to ensure they are not thirsty.

Children participate in a range of activities which contributes to their physical health and fitness both inside and outside. Indoors, they enjoy taking part in a variety of games, such as the 'jellyfish' game. In fine weather they have access to an outdoor area where they can use ride on toys, climb on the climbing frame and enjoy the fresh air. Children know they have to put their coats on to keep themselves warm, showing some understanding of keeping themselves healthy. They demonstrate increasing control while using equipment such as scissors, a variety of mark making tools and construction sets to help them develop their hand-eye coordination. Children are able to rest or be more active according to their needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure indoor and outdoor environment where children cannot leave unsupervised and no unauthorised persons can gain access. The outer door is locked and parents and visitors are admitted by staff. Effective systems are in place to ensure children are only allowed to be collected by nominated people. Children and their parents and carers are made to feel welcome in the setting. They are greeted by staff on arrival and have access to displays of useful information about the group.

Staff create a very welcoming and stimulating environment. The building is attractively decorated with posters and examples of children's own artwork which they proudly point to. The layout of the premises provides children with space to move around freely and safely and encourages their independence, for example, children confidently access the toilet and hand washing facilities. There is a good range of high quality toys and equipment which are well maintained. Children are able to access these independently from tables, trays and boxes situated at their height. This enables children to make many of their own choices, increases their independence and helps them to organise their own play.

Well-implemented policies and procedures are effectively followed to promote children's safety in the setting and when on outings into the local community. Regular emergency evacuations of the premises are practised with the children and staff to ensure everyone concerned knows what to do in the event of a fire. Children are beginning to learn how to keep themselves safe with staff explaining some safe practices. For example, children are gently reminded by staff not to flick the sand as it may get into their eyes which will 'really hurt'.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff have a good knowledge of child protection procedures. They are aware of recording and reporting procedures and fully understand their responsibilities. The child protection policy has been recently reviewed and all staff know how to implement it if they had a concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children confidently enter the setting. They know the routine exceedingly well and self-register when they arrive. Children happily separate from their parents and carers at the beginning of the session. They form good relationships with each other, they eagerly greet their friends as they arrive and excitedly show them what they are doing. Children are confident and can play well on their own or with others. Staff are supportive and caring towards the children and take time to listen to them, this helps children develop a sense of self-worth as they know staff value their contributions. The organisation of activities and routines of the session encourages children to initiate their own play as they freely choose to spend their time engaged in activities that interest and motivate them.

Staff are developing their knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and consider the needs of younger children when planning activities. They skilfully adapt their practice to meet the needs of all children. Staff effectively monitor progress through observations of their play and record their achievements in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching provides realistic challenges for all children. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage which they use to provide a broad range of stimulating play and learning opportunities to help children make good progress. Planning covers the six areas of learning. Staff use a good range of teaching methods to motivate children so they are interested and keen to learn. They use effective questioning skills to extend children's learning and encourage them to solve problems for themselves. For example, staff respond to children's interest in giraffes by asking 'do they live in this country?' and when children tell the staff the sand wheel is not working, they reply 'why is it not working?'. This promotes children's thinking skills.

Staff are interested in what children say and do and manage children's behaviour well. Focused activities take place with identified learning intentions. However, staff do not effectively evaluate these activities against the intended learning outcome to monitor the nursery education provided. Although the staff do not currently record the child's starting point they do make valuable observations of the children's achievements and transfer them to the children's assessment records. These are used to identify the next steps in learning. Regular meetings enable the staff to share what they know about individual children's development. This ensures children's achievements are recognised and staff can offer appropriate challenges to children.

The use of time and resources are good. The sessions are balanced to enable children to experience group time, outside play and to pursue their own interests. Children cooperate with the routine, for example, they recognise the need to move to the carpet area when registration time is called.

Children are involved and motivated, they are keen to offer their own ideas and respond well to challenges, such as writing the number of children present on the chalk board at registration. They are learning to care for others by taking on the responsibility of pouring drinks for each other at snack time. Games such as 'Days of the Week' helps children to learn about turn taking and sharing resources. Children are learning to take responsibility for their environment as they help to tidy the toys away and put discarded paper in the bin.

Children are developing their speaking and listening skills, staff encourage them to chat about their experiences and ask them questions, helping them to put their thoughts into words. They listen while staff read stories to the large group, becoming involved in the stories and confidentially offering comments. Children are learning how books work and share books together, turning the pages one at a time. They enjoy sharing books with staff and relish the close interaction and attention this affords them. Children use language in their play with others and involve each other in role play. They have opportunities to learn letter sounds and some children can sound out the letters in their name. Writing materials are available both indoors and out to motivate children to write and are sometimes available in the role play area to encourage the children to write for a purpose. Children freely and confidently ask question, such as 'where do kiwi's come from?' at snack time.

Children have lots of opportunities to count and use numbers, they discuss the date daily and children see and handle the written numbers. The staff support the children to count the bricks as they build towers, talking about shape, colour and patterns. Children take part in number rhymes and are developing an awareness of simple subtraction in songs such as 'Eight Fat Sausages'. Children confidently count up to 10 and beyond and they are encouraged by the staff to count how many children are present at registration. They use appropriate mathematical language during free play activities.

Valuable learning takes place when children explore the different properties of a range of play materials such as dough, sand and paint. Children are becoming aware of the wider world and their part in it through planned topics. They design and build using the train track, linking cogs and building bricks and have some opportunities to use a laptop computer and programmable toys.

Children enjoy role play, they dress up as doctors and nurses and iron their 'baby's' clothes. Children's musical awareness is developing as they sing familiar nursery rhymes and songs as a group and also to themselves during play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued by staff who respect their individuality which is helping them develop a sense of belonging. They have equal access to toys and equipment. They are developing a positive attitude to each other and gain an understanding of the wider world through displays and topic work. Effective procedures are in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the group works in partnership with parents and other professionals to ensure children's specific needs are met.

Children behave very well. Staff make expectations of behaviour clear and give reasons for requests, ensuring children understand why certain behaviour is not acceptable. Staff act as good role models, they are courteous in their approach, saying 'please' and 'thank you'. Children are encouraged to do the same. Children are confident in their relationship with the staff at the setting. They play happily together and with adults.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are developing confidence and self-esteem, behave well and are developing a good understanding of right and wrong. Children relate well to each other and staff. They are developing a good understanding of their community through discussions about their home lives and visits to the mobile library.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. All parents are kept fully informed about their children's time at the setting through daily verbal feedback, regular newsletters and displays on the notice board. Children's parents are encouraged to look at their children's assessment records. They have recently introduced the use of 'Home Books' to enable parents to take an active part in their child's early education. The setting works closely with parents to ensure children's needs are met. The warm relaxed environment encourages parents to stay and play with their children at the beginning of the session. This supports parents to gain an understanding of the activities their children enjoy at pre-school and helps children and parents settle. Parents comment positively about the setting. They value the stimulating range of activities that are on offer for their children and the approachability of the staff.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are relaxed and happy in the setting. They are safeguarded as recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well protected and cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child development. This ensures children are safe and secure. Children are well supported and staff awareness contributes to children's good health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting. Currently, staff are reviewing and updating their policies and procedures to ensure they reflect their good practice in supporting the welfare, care and learning of children.

The room is organised to allow children to move freely and safely and the routine of the session helps children to settle well. Staff are deployed effectively within the setting, spending the majority of their time interacting with the children to support their care, learning and play.

Leadership and management are good. The premises are very well organised and staff show a clear understanding of their role in supporting the children in their play and learning. Children are well grouped and the key worker system ensures appropriate support and care throughout the session. Children benefit as the staff are enthusiastic and committed in promoting an inclusive environment in which every child matters.

Annual staff appraisals take place to identify strengths and areas for professional development. Staff are actively encouraged to attend further training to update their knowledge and skills. This ensures they have good knowledge of current child care practices to support the care and learning of the children. The staff are a strong team who compliment each other's skills. Clear communication and guidance allows them to provide a stimulating well-balanced programme. The group have a good partnership with the local primary schools. They make regular visits with the children to the reception classes to ease children's transition into the school.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting agreed to ensure staff are fully familiar with the referral route for child protection issues. All staff have attended child protection training and the policy has been reviewed. Regular discussion at team meetings ensure the staff remain familiar with the procedure. The flow chart is always on display for parents and staff to refer to. This ensures the safety of the children.

At their previous nursery education inspection the group agreed to introduce: an effective system of monitoring children's assessment, appropriate challenges for the more able children and more opportunities for children to recreate numbers and letters. The setting has developed a good system where children's achievements are observed and recorded. However, they do not currently acknowledge the children's starting point to identify the appropriate learning. Planned activities offer good opportunities for children to practice writing letters and numbers. Staff use questioning effectively to provide appropriate challenges for children during the everyday routine activities.

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):

- ensure written parental permission is obtained to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for all children attending the provision.

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 further the systems for assessment and evaluation of children's progress to identify their starting point

- develop further the systems for evaluating focussed activities against the intended learning outcome.

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