

# Sunbeams Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	253627
<b>Inspection date</b>	02 July 2007
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<b>Registered person</b>	Sunbeams Playgroup Committee
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Sunbeams Pre-school is a committee run provision in Sutton Bridge, Lincolnshire. The group has been operating for approximately 17 years, and operates from a portal-cabin in the grounds of the local primary school. The group have access to an enclosed outdoor play area within the school grounds.

A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open between the hours of 09.00 and 15:00 Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and between 09.00 and 12.30 on Tuesday and Thursday. The group operates during term-time only. They are in the initial stages of working with the local authority in offering the child care provision for the proposed Sure Start children's centre in Sutton Bridge.

There are currently 42 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 36 children receive funding for early education. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Three full-time and two part-time members of staff work with the children. Four staff are suitably qualified, two are working towards a level 4, and one is working towards a level 3. The group is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in an environment that is clean and hygienic. Children's health is being promoted by staff who encourage them to wash their hands after they use the toilet and after handling animals. Staff discuss why they need to wash their hands and children of all ages respond automatically during the sessions once they have been reminded once. Children are keen to independently carry out tasks, and most children can pour their own drinks at snack time with good control. Routines and procedures are carried out by staff to protect children's health and prevent cross-infection. For example, staff use gloves for nappy changing, they use disposable paper towels, and a sick children's policy is in place.

The staff have all the relevant information from parents about their children's health. There is effective recording of accidents and administration of medication. This ensures children receive appropriate treatment and that there is continuity of care between home and pre-school. Staff are first aid trained which means children receive the correct emergency care if they have an accident.

Children enjoy their social snack time, where they can choose their own snacks, and sit with their friends in a small group. The staff offer children healthy snacks and they enthusiastically choose what they want, such as banana, apple, carrot, red pepper, and raisins. Children's likes and dislikes are respected and children are offered alternatives. If children try new foods they are praised and rewarded with stickers. Staff talk about what is healthy which encourages children to experience new tastes and textures, this help them to develop healthy eating practices.

Staff use their experience of young children to support their integration into the pre-school. They offer them time and a good settling in process which helps them feel safe and secure. Children receive warmth and affection which helps them to build trusting relationships with staff. They are offered healthy choices and supported in their decision making as staff present choices of toys, equipment and snacks to the children.

Outdoor play opportunities are offered daily where children can practise their physical skills, such as co-ordination and balance. Children are benefiting from the physical play, as they are offered resources and space that enables them to explore and practise with large and small equipment. Children are confident as they move with ease around the garden. Children climb, run around, and regularly use small tools to promote all areas of their physical development.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a colourful, warm and welcoming environment, where they move about the setting independently without fear of harm or hurting themselves. Children make choices about what they play with from a sufficient and suitable selection of age appropriate toys and equipment. Children's safety is promoted because staff are vigilant, and are aware of safety

measures that need to be in place. Daily risk assessments are undertaken including checks on the environment, toys and equipment. Children are cared for in a secure environment and procedures are in place to check visitors identity. Good regard is given to fire safety and children practise fire drills regularly.

Children are protected from harm and neglect as staff have participated in child protection training. They are aware of the signs, indicators and procedures that alert them to the possibility of child protection issues. They have a policy and procedure in place, and staff are aware of the contents. Staff would record concerns and take the appropriate action to safeguard children.

The policy clearly sets out the responsibility of the staff and the provision to safeguard children, and this policy is available to parents.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Young children play in an environment where they can independently access a range of toys and equipment. This helps them make decisions about their play and be able to focus on what they find interesting. Children are given attention by staff who support the children's desire to learn. They sit together, building up positive relationships and share time talking about the activity. This helps the young children share their knowledge and feelings about what they are doing. Children are offered praise and encouragement when they succeed or try new things. For example when children try new foods they are awarded stickers, which they like to have, and beam with pride and pleasure. Consequently children develop confidence. Young children are offered opportunities to use their senses and explore their environment.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff demonstrate a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how children learn. Because of this children are offered a selection of resources and activities that support their learning, which help them to make progress towards the early learning goals. Observations done on the children help the staff to identify where children are at in relation to the stepping stones. The six areas of learning are included into the planning. There is a balance between focus activities and child-led play, helping children to be able to learn at their own pace and consolidate their learning. Children are offered a selection of indoor and outside play, and a variety of practical activities. For example the 'live eggs' project which engages their interest and helps to extend their experiences.

Children are keen and motivated to take part in activities and respond readily to staff. They build relationships with adults and each other and work well in small and large groups. Children have daily opportunities to develop personal independence through selecting toys, pouring their own drinks and washing their snacks bowls. Children are sufficiently challenged as staff draw on their existing knowledge and build on new information. For example, children understand that food comes from different countries, and staff showed children where pizza comes from on a large wall map, a child commented 'Italy is a long way away'.

Children are able to sustain their concentration during whole group activities, they listen well and take turns to speak. Children talk happily about their home life, about their brothers and sisters and how many dogs they have. Children are comfortable and confident communicators and express what they want clearly to staff and visitors. Most children are able to recognise

their names, but they are not confident writers. Children have regular structured writing activities during the day but few children can independently write their name. Most children can hold pencils and paint brushes, but the organisation of writing materials and mark making resources across the curriculum is not available, and children are not offered opportunities to see the different purposes of writing. This hinders children's experiences and development of early writing skills.

Children enjoy a story at the end of the session, they sit quietly and listen intently. However, they are not offered the opportunity to independently share and enjoy a range of stories, books, poems. The book corner is poorly organised, free access to books is made difficult and it does not reflect the importance and value of books. Children do not handle books, and they show little interest in looking at books and reading, limiting their use and enjoyment. Children can count up to 10 reliably, and confidently count when looking at the live chicks, and puzzles pieces. Children have numbers all around them on the walls. They can see their birthdays and the days date on the white board, so children are becoming familiar with numbers. Children and staff discuss numbers and count each day during the session in their general play and games. Basic mathematical concepts are developed into the children's everyday play with the children being aware of space, shape and design. For example, children design patterns and use play dough cutters to form shapes.

Staff offer the children opportunities to use their senses to investigate and explore, and children benefit from experiences brought into the setting. The 'live chick' project is ongoing and is helping children understand nature and nature's processes. Children are fully involved as they watch the eggs hatch into chicks. They are encouraged to handle, stroke and watch them as they chirp and move about scratching and attempting to flap their wings. Children are curious and interested as staff ask open ended questions, and make children think. Children are developing a sense and making a meaning of real life and nature. Information technology equipment is readily available, and children use the computer confidently, they understand the mouse and keyboard controls and use them with ease.

Although children are offered opportunities to explore different role play, for example a home corner, a travel agent and a school, the environments set up are uninspiring. There is a lack of suitable resources to support the role play, for example the travel agent was placed on a table with a few laminated tickets and travel brochures. Available resources are not organised to encourage children to use their imagination fully and creatively and extend their play. Children enjoy making their own music as they spontaneously use home corner equipment to drum. Children have learnt a wide range of songs and enthusiastically sing along to 'you are my sunshine' at the end of the session.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by staff who understand the needs of the children very well. They treat children as individuals and respect their differences. Staff and children have a positive approach to diversity as children participate in fun activities such as, food tasting, dressing up, role play and festivals. This extends their curiosity, knowledge and understanding about people being different, and introduces them to other cultures and countries.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are particularly well supported by staff. Children benefit greatly due to the care and enthusiasm that the staff show in their work, and the passion for the children they care for. There are good systems in place to facilitate good

team work between the setting and other agencies, such as the school, local authority and health teams. Parents are very involved with the children's learning and regular meetings keep them up to date with their child's progress and development. Individual educational plans are used effectively to monitor children's development and identify how to help them to progress.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children have opportunities to learn about different ways of life and experience different foods and clothing in their role play. Children listen to music while they tidy the toys and understand this is done quietly and calmly. Simple routines and ground rules help children to manage their own behaviour, for example, they share and take turns in games and they listen and respect each other. They are co-operative and kind and show concern for each other, they seek out their peers to work with and show them things that interest them. Staff manage children's behaviour through distraction and simple explanations that are appropriate to the age and understanding of the child.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Staff offer parents a friendly and supportive relationship, and welcome them into the setting. They are encouraged to share and exchange information about children's individual progress and development, and they are aware they can see their children's folders at any time. They are offered verbal information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and nursery education grant at the beginning of the school year. Staff speak to parents informally on a daily basis and strive to keep parents up to date with any events and changes. Newsletters and questionnaires are given to parents to help staff keep parents up to date and look at ways of developing their provision and service to parents.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the qualified and experienced staff who are very caring. The staff are committed to attending further training and development courses. This means that suitable, experienced and qualified staff look after the children. They work well as a team, and their routines and plans allow them to get on with their daily activities helping children to feel safe and secure. They provide an organised room that enables children to have access to a variety of suitable resources and activities.

Leadership and Management are satisfactory. The person in charge has a level 3 qualification and updates her knowledge by attending child care courses. This ensures she has sufficient knowledge of current childcare practices to support the staff and children. The manager, staff and committee have a vision that is, children are safe, happy and well stimulated, and the manager is committed to improvement. She is monitoring the quality of nursery education, care and planning through staff appraisals and meetings, and is working with the local authority advisor to improve the quality of care and education. Although planning is in place and assessment systems have been implemented and monitored, some areas of the children's learning, for example the use of books and creativity in role play, is limited and hinders some areas of the children's development.

Policies and procedures are used to promote the welfare, care and learning of children, and the required documentation is in place which supports the safe and efficient management of the pre-school. Individual information regarding the children is up to date, well organised, and stored with awareness to confidentiality. Consequently promoting the care and welfare of the children with consideration to their individual needs and parents wishes.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provider was asked to address issues relating to children's development through the stepping stones. This has been resolved as records show that children's needs are being met and they are progressing through the stepping stones. Staff have changed their practice to support children's listening skills and interest at story time and in singing sessions. They use small groups and one to one sessions to read stories and participate in group work. This helps new and young children get used to these new experiences, and develop the skills needed to listen and participate fully in these activities.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection 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 satisfactory. 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 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 children have access to a creative and interesting book area whereby developing a healthy interest in books and stories (also applies to nursery education)

### **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):

- offer children consistent opportunities to explore mark-making and develop early writing skills in everyday play opportunities
- support children's creative development and imagination through the provision of appropriate resources and materials.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)