

Smartys Eden Court

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY344031
Inspection date	19 June 2007
Inspector	Julie Mary Preston
Setting Address	225 Lichfield Road, Little Stoke, Stone Staffordshire, ST15 8QU
Telephone number	01785 288992
E-mail	
Registered person	Janet Skelton
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Smartys Eden Court is one of four settings operated by Smartys. It opened in 2007 and operates from part of a converted house in Stone, Staffordshire. A maximum of 24 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 for 52 weeks of the year with the exception of bank holidays. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 37 children aged from three to five years on roll. Of these, 29 children receive funding for early education.

The nursery employs four members of staff. Of these, three hold early years qualifications, one is working towards a qualification and one is working towards an additional qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy as staff have a good understanding of current health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures that they implement within their practice. For example, the group has an identified health and safety officer who regularly updates staff within meetings and has a range of policies and procedures in place, such as, a hygiene policy, no smoking policy, sickness policy and kitchen policy. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through effective routines and staff practice, for example, staff encourage good hand washing practices with children who attend. Staff promote good hygiene practices by providing children with individual flannels to wash their faces, individual paper towels to dry their hands and by maintaining cleanliness within the nursery environment and its resources.

The setting works in partnership with parents to meet individual dietary needs. Staff are aware of any special diets and children are offered alternative meals when required. Food is hygienically stored, prepared, cooked and served to children who attend, as the cook has attended food hygiene training and uses this knowledge to ensure appropriate procedures are implemented within his practice. A healthy balanced diet is encouraged by the nursery who provide four weekly menus and provide children with free access to drinks and fruit throughout the day. Children attending enjoy the range of meals, drinks and snacks available, with some requesting second helpings at lunch time. This ensures that children are not hungry or thirsty.

There is a high level of staff who hold a current first aid certificate within the group and a first aid box is available, this aims to ensure children's needs are met effectively in the event of an accident or illness. Appropriate records for accidents, medication and emergency treatment are in place and most are accurately completed and maintained. However, not all accident records have been signed by parents to acknowledge the entry, this means records are incomplete. Children have regular opportunities to be active both inside and outside the nursery. For example, children enjoy music and movement sessions provided daily and using the facilities in the outdoor play area. Opportunities for rest and sleep are provided according to children's individual needs. For example, as all children are over three and do not usually have a sleep, facilities for rest are provided on comfy chairs and settees. This means children have opportunities to rest and to be active within their normal daily routine.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery provides a warm, welcoming, child-friendly and well-organised environment that is clean and well maintained. Adequate space available both inside and outside within the outdoor play area and a variety of base rooms, including facilities such as the kitchen, the toilets and an office area that are maintained at a suitable temperature and adequately lit. Risk assessments are completed along with regular safety checks by staff and outside agencies to ensure children's safety. Children have access to a wide range of safe, good quality, age and stage appropriate toys and equipment. This ensures a stimulating range of activities and play opportunities by providing a range of toys that cover all aspects of learning and rotating them to provide a variety of opportunities.

Safety procedures in place aim to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. For example, security of the premises is maintained, appropriate fire safety procedures and

equipment are in place and nominated persons are identified for collection of children. Staff encourage children to learn to keep themselves safe in a variety of ways, such as, having room rules in place, practising fire evacuation drills and through general discussion undertaken within routine activities. Procedures for outings enable children to extend their experiences by visiting the group's other nursery sites and the local park. Children are also taken to and from the local school in nursery transport provided and written consent sought from parents. However, written consent is not sought for all journeys undertaken in nursery transport. This means children's safety is compromised.

The person in charge and her staff have a good understanding of child protection, as all staff have attended advanced training in this area. Designated members of staff have been identified to oversee child protection, they ensure all staff have a detailed knowledge and understanding of signs to be vigilant for and procedures to follow if concerns are identified. This aims to ensure children are protected from harm or neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and show enjoyment of their time within the nursery. For example, children eagerly participate in music and movement sessions and enjoy participating in registration activities undertaken. Children are secure as positive relationships are evident with their key workers and other staff within the nursery, as well as with their peers. Children are encouraged to relate well to each other by staff encouraging turn taking, playing together and having respect for each other. A wide range of activities and experiences are provided for children to promote development in all aspects of the learning and development that maintain children's interest and enjoyment. For example, children enjoy playing in the soil with the bugs and playing bingo. Staff take time to listen and value what children say, extending their learning and development through discussion and questioning. Children make choices and are involved in decision making by staff, such as, deciding which activity they wished to participate in next and deciding what colour they would like to paint their animals. Opportunities to explore and investigate include activities such as growing, cooking and sensory activities. Children form good relationships with other children and adults. They work as part of a group, take turns, share and work harmoniously as part of a small or large group.

Staff encourage children to be confident, independent and to develop self-esteem, for example, by offering children praise and encouragement for their achievements and by providing a range of stickers and certificates as rewards. Staff ensure children's individual needs are well met by seeking information from parents on admission and by undertaking regular observations and assessments of children. A balanced range of activities are available that include opportunities for active play and relaxing activities within free choice and planned activities provided.

Early Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a detailed knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage that is reflected within plans, opportunities and activities provided. For example, the base rooms have areas identified that reflect the areas of learning and allow children to access resources for these within free choice activities, as well as within adult focused activities. However, plans do not provide any differentiation of activities for the more or less able child. This means opportunities for the more or less able child are potentially compromised. Activities and experiences provided reflect where the community children come from and the wider world, as well as being interesting for children, enabling them to be focused and to persist

with activities for some time. Staff continually support and extend children's learning in positive ways through activities, discussions and individual attitudes that provide methods to support children to achieve as much as they can. Although no children currently attend the group with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the group has appropriate systems in place if required. Staff manage children's behaviour well implementing a variety of methods to encourage good behaviour, for example, providing stickers and certificates as rewards. Planning and assessment records provided are linked to the stepping stones, with plans encouraging children to make progress towards the early learning goals.

Children are interested, excited and motivated to learn. They are confident, share ideas and speak in a familiar group. For example, children happily share experiences they have had with their families at home with nursery staff. Children respond to significant experiences, showing a range of feelings where appropriate, such as, when staff arrive for the day providing them with a warm greeting and showing pleasure that they are here with them. Children have a developing awareness of their own needs, views and feelings and are sensitive to those of others. They have a developing respect for their own cultures and beliefs and are developing an understanding of those of other people through the range of activities and experiences provided. For example, children find out things about other countries by listening to stories, trying different foods and celebrating festivals from other countries and cultures. Children form good relationships with other children and adults, working well as part of a group, taking turns and sharing. Staff encourage children to be independent and be responsible for their own personal care needs. For example, self selecting activities and attending to their own toileting needs. Children enjoy chatting with staff and each other, they speak clearly and show awareness of the listener. They listen and respond with enjoyment to stories, songs and rhymes, making up their own stories within role play and enjoy exploring the sounds of letters within phonic activities. Children understand that print carries meaning and is read from left to right, showing an understanding of the elements of stories. They explore a range of words and texts, know how to use books for enjoyment and to locate information. Children attempt writing for a variety of purposes, with many children writing their own names clearly with correctly formed letters as labels on their work.

Children investigate objects and materials, using all their senses, they find out about and identify features of living things, objects and events they observe. They look closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change. For example, children enjoy cooking, growing activities and using things within the nursery's discovery area. Children build and construct with a wide range of objects, they select appropriate resources and tools to shape, assemble and join materials. For example, children enjoy making towers of bricks of the same colour. Children know about the uses of everyday technology and use Information, Communication and Technology, and programmable toys to support their learning. For example, they use the nursery computer and electronic toys to extend learning. Children find out about past and present events in their own lives and those of their families and other people they know through planned activities and discussions undertaken. Children observe, find out about and identify features in the place they live and the natural world. They find out about their environment and talk about those features they see. For example, children find out about the different seasons, looking at the changes that occur. Children say and use numbers in familiar contexts; they count reliably up to 10 everyday objects and beyond. They recognise numerals, and use developing mathematical ideas to solve problems. For example, staff counted with children how many children were going outside and counted them back in to check they had all returned. Children use numbers for calculating, such as identifying how many more dinners they need at lunchtime to ensure all children at a specific table have a meal. Children use language to describe and compare shape, position, size and quantity. They talk about, recognise and recreate simple patterns and

they use developing mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems. For example, looking at a variety of books with information on shapes and identifying shapes within shape recognition cards.

Children move confidently, imaginatively and safely exhibiting control and co-ordination. They have opportunities to travel around, under, over and through climbing equipment. They show an awareness of space, themselves and others as they enjoy music and movement sessions, incorporated into their daily routine. Children develop an understanding of the importance of staying healthy and begin to recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active. For example, information is displayed and information is shared with children such as, discussions on germs and how we stop them by washing our hands. Children use a range of small and large equipment such as, the climbing frame, construction toys and outdoor play equipment. They handle a range of tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control, identifying a variety of shapes, textures and forms. For example, children enjoy discovering and creating when undertaking sand play, soil play, dough, cooking and sensory activities. Children recognise and explore how sounds can be changed and sing simple songs from memory. They recognise repeated sounds, sound patterns and match movements to music. For example, during the registration session children undertook a phonics activity that included singing songs and completing actions to music relating to specific letters. Children use their imagination within art and craft, music and movement, role play and stories. For example, children have opportunities to use the role play area that is changed regularly to reflect a different theme, such as a travel agency or a market stall. Children respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, taste, touch and feel. They express and communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings by using a widening range of materials, tools, imaginative play, movement, songs and musical instruments. For example, the staff use 'feely' bags with children, containing a variety of different textures provided for children to feel, such as, in the autumn, feeling the different textures of leaves, conkers and acorns.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff have a good understanding of equal opportunities which is reflected within their practice, policies, activities and resources. For example, positive images of diversity are provided within a variety of resources such as, books, dressing up, dolls, puppets and play people. Children enjoy positive relationships with staff and each other. They are valued and respected as individuals who are provided with opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of equality, diversity and the wider society. For example, by celebrating festivals for a variety of different cultures and by having visitors in to discuss their roles within society. Children are encouraged to develop self-esteem and respect for others by giving children individual roles and responsibilities, and offering them praise and encouragement. For example, helpers are identified each day and children receive stickers and certificates as rewards for achievements. There are currently no children who attend the nursery with English as an additional language or any children with identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, the group has identified procedures to be followed if a child is identified within the nursery or begins to attend in order to promote inclusion and provide appropriate support. Children are well behaved and respond well to staff management of their behaviour. Written policies and procedures are implemented well by staff to reinforce positive behaviour, making children aware of staff expectations through discussion, explanation and by abiding by the room rules identified.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. Staff work in partnership with parents to provide a consistent approach. Children's

spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. All children benefit from the effective relationships staff have developed with parents. Discussions and settling in arrangements are identified for any new children to ensure a gradual introduction that enables parents and children to feel happy within this new environment. Information is then shared daily with parents to keep them well informed about their child and their experiences and achievements. For example, a daily diary sheet is provided and verbal discussions undertaken with parents when they drop off and collect their children. In addition to this, the group provides a parents notice board, information on policies and procedures, send out regular newsletters, hold parents evenings, provide information on future topics to be covered and information about activities parents can do at home with their child to support learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The manager and registered person ensure a continually suitable staff team is in place by implementing their personnel policy, undertaking rigorous recruitment and induction procedures, and by undertaking regular staff reviews. Staff have regular opportunities to develop their practice through staff meetings and by attending training. There is a good level of qualified staff who work with children and all staff hold a first aid qualification. There are appropriate systems in place for the recording of attendance and the adult to child ratio is maintained at all times. The nursery is well-organised to meet the needs of the children, with identified key workers in place for each child. This enables staff to monitor and assess individual children's progress and liaise more effectively with parents of children in their key group. Staff are caring and attentive to children, offering them a sense of security, support and comfort when required. They continually extend children's learning through discussion and questioning, as well as through the wide range of activities provided. Consequently, children are happy, settled and enjoy their time at nursery. The management and staff work well as part of a team, with the management actively valuing their staff's input, which is evident in the very low turnover of staff.

Leadership and management of the setting for children receiving funding for early education is good. Staff are well managed and there are effective systems in place to provide clear direction and support. For example, staff appraisals and regular staff meetings are undertaken. The manager and nursery owner have a clear vision for the nursery with a strong focus on the personal development and achievement of all children. For example, by seeking views of parents, encouraging staff to continually update their practice by attending training and by operating an open door policy. Staff implement effective teaching methods to ensure the continued development and progression of children. They receive guidance and support from the early years team to ensure that their educational provision is delivered appropriately. Regular staff meetings and parents evenings take place to help ensure the provision meets the needs of everyone who attends.

A wide range of written policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of children, such as, the medication policy, the sickness policy and the child protection policy. Policies and procedures are shared with parents to keep them well informed regarding the groups practice. This contributes to continuity in the children's care. Most required documentation is in place, stored securely and available for inspection. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration 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):

- obtain written parental permission and provide details for parents of all instances where children are to be transported in a vehicle
- ensure all records of accidents occurring on the premises are signed by parents to acknowledge awareness of the entry.

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):

- extend short term plans to include details of how activities can be adapted to meet the needs of the more able and less able child.

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