

# Bright Sparks Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	127047
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 July 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Sarah Morfett
<b>Setting Address</b>	Social Club Hall, Sycamore Drive, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7AY
<b>Telephone number</b>	07711814900
<b>E-mail</b>	nicholson3k@aol.com
<b>Registered person</b>	Bright Sparks Pre School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional care, Out of School 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 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?

Bright Sparks Pre-School is a privately owned group and offers breakfast, pre-school and after school care, as well as a holiday play scheme during the summer holidays. It opened in 1995 and operates from two rooms in the Child Centre in Swanley, Kent. A maximum of 40 children may attend the pre-school and after school club at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:15 until 11.45 and for afternoon sessions from 12:30 until 15:00 Monday, Thursday and Friday for 33 weeks of the year. The after school club is open from 15:30 to 18:30 each week night. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 64 children aged from two-and-a-half to under eight years on roll. Of these, 52 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a local catchment area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre-school employs 19 members of staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean and hygienic environment because staff follow effective cleaning routines. For example, tables are wiped with anti-bacterial spray, floors are swept and the toilets are checked regularly. Good personal hygiene practices are followed as children wash their hands before eating and after going to the toilet. Tissues are available for runny noses and the older children brush their teeth during each session. However, access to the toilets is not freely available and all children are escorted because of security reasons. Therefore, they are not fully able to manage this aspect of their own personal hygiene. Consequently, an important stage of development is not being promoted.

There are good systems in place to protect children's health. For example, accidents are recorded and signed by parents and a medication policy is in operation. A comprehensive health and safety policy ensures that children's welfare is protected. For example, all infectious children are excluded. Therefore, children's health needs are met.

Children are provided with good opportunities which promote their physical development. Each session challenging activities are planned for the outside area. For example, they can ride on bikes, kick balls and games, such as; throwing bean bags through different shapes helps them to develop large motor skills well. Small motor skills are promoted through the range of tools and equipment the children use during activities. Therefore, they learn to control their bodies.

Children learn to make healthy choices about what they eat. For example, each day at the snack bar they are offered a range of food which is healthy for them. They can choose from apples, bananas, pears, grapes and bread sticks. The variety helps them understand what foods are good for them. Children attending the after school club are also able to make choices about what they eat and twice a week they plan what will be for tea. They have access to fresh drinking water throughout the session and take a drink when they need to. Therefore, children develop a good understanding of healthy eating.

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

The provision is good.

Children play in a warm and welcoming environment. The staff make the most of the space available and put up pictures and posters to make the play areas child friendly and inviting. There is a good amount of furniture and equipment. This is appropriate for the age and stage of development of the children attending, in good condition and conforms to current safety standards. Rooms are laid out well. For example, the way toys and activities are set up enable children to move freely and make choices about what they play with. Therefore, children benefit from a stimulating environment.

There are strong systems in place to protect the children. For example, daily risk assessments ensure that the rooms are safe and secure, six monthly risk assessments ensure the premises are in good repair and each outing the children go on is risk assessed and potential hazards are identified to ensure they are safe whilst out of the group. Regular fire drills are carried out; therefore, they learn to keep themselves safe by following the good routines.

Children's welfare is thoroughly protected. For example, the group have developed a comprehensive policy regarding child protection which gives clear details about the procedure

to be followed should an allegation of abuse be made, explains where to go to refer a concern and contains guidance on how to record concerns. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the policy. Therefore, children's well-being is safeguarded during their time at the group.

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

The provision is good.

Children arrive with confidence. They are greeted warmly by the staff and settle well each morning. The environment is inviting and they quickly make choices about what they want to play with from the range of resources set out for them. For example, they can choose from role play, construction toys, a graphics area, maths toys, books, trains and malleable materials like sand and play dough. The broad range of activities covers all areas of development and provides them with balance and challenge.

Staff are warm and affectionate to the children. They look for support and reassurance from the staff and often sit close for a cuddle. Any child who is upset when they start is comforted and distracted by staff who draw their interest to the toys and activities. Therefore, they quickly forget they are upset and settle well. They feel comfortable and valued in the group as they are frequently praised and encouraged for their efforts. Children's self esteem and confidence is developed well.

The group caters for all ages of children. Younger children attending the pre-school benefit from planning which incorporates the Birth to Three matters framework, therefore, they are able to take part in activities which meet their stage of development. Older children who previously attended pre-school are able to come somewhere familiar after school as the group offer wrap around care in the form of a breakfast and after school club. They are provided with activities appropriate for their ages. Therefore, they can relax and have fun after school.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff develop the Foundation Stage well for all abilities of children attending, identify learning intentions for all the activities and work well with the children. Teaching methods are very effective. Staff use lots of open-ended questions when they are discussing topics with the children. For example, 'how', 'why' and 'what.' They use appropriate language to explain subjects at a level the children can understand and find interesting. Therefore, there are made to think for themselves and learning experiences are extended. Systems are in place to chart children's progress. For example, starting points are recorded and through regular observation the group can plan the next steps in children's learning. Well developed planning provides a broad range of activities which help to move the children forward through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals.

Children play well together. They seek out others to play with and enjoy 'lets pretend' games. They act out familiar situations in the role play area expressing feelings and working out situations for themselves. They are encouraged to be independent, make their own choices and manage most developmentally appropriate tasks. Children enjoy listening to stories and readily join in with familiar words and phrases. Older children discuss letters at circle time, they talk about which letters are in their names and sound them out. Therefore, linking sound to letters. They are provided with a good range of resources which promotes writing for a purpose. For example, they can utilise a well resourced graphics area and paper and pens are provided with other activities such as, the role play area. Therefore, they begin to ascribe meaning to marks.

Children play with a good range of equipment which promotes their maths skills. For example, there are number puzzles, matching games, threading and shape sorting games. Staff support these experiences by interacting well with the children. For example, during a play dough activity the staff introduce the concept of addition and subtraction whilst making eggs for an egg box, saying 'how many more will fill the box?' Older children are challenged by being asked to count how many children are present today, then counting backwards. Therefore, children's mathematical development is promoted well.

Children have good opportunities to explore and investigate as they are provided with a range of resources such as, magnifying glasses and mini beast activity where they study insects, showing curiosity and asking questions, they extend this by taking the magnifying glass outside and examining the environment around them. The outside area is well developed to encourage them to use their senses for example, by smelling the herbs and feeling their textures. They develop their early IT skills as a good range of equipment is provided to support their learning. For example, they have access to a computer with relevant programmes to support their learning as well as calculators and tills.

Children's creative development is promoted through role play, music and art and craft. They really enjoy music sessions banging and shaking their musical instruments, learning about rhythm and beat. They are taught how to use tools well. For example, they are using scissors to cut out circles for an activity. Staff support them with this task showing them how to hold the scissors and cut. However, there is a significant amount of adult directed activities and opportunities for children to freely express themselves through a variety of materials and media is limited. Overall, the pre-school plan and provide a good range of experiences and play opportunities which help to prepare the children for school.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy coming to the pre-school and are treated as individuals. Staff record and up-date children's information regularly. For example, details of their medical needs, dietary requirements and religion means that staff can cater for children's individual needs. They have access to a good range of toys and resources which reflect positive images of diversity. For example, they can look at books, dress up and complete puzzles which show reflections of other cultures. They take part in many multi-cultural activities such as, making and eating food from around the world, dressing up in traditional costumes and playing musical instruments such as a didgeridoo. Therefore, they gain a wide view of the world around them.

The group have a strong commitment to including children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) is well trained and is able to work with the children to provide individual educational plans to help them progress. The group have a strong inclusion policy and use a graduated approach to identifying children's needs. Parents are involved in every step of the plan and effective monitoring means that children move forward well. Children behave well at the pre-school. Appropriate strategies are used to manage their behaviour. Staff are consistent in their approach and frequent praise and encouragement means that children's confidence and self esteem are promoted well.

Parents are provided with a good range of information. When they first start they receive a prospectus detailing the aims for the children, a newsletter keeps them up-to-date with topics, term dates and information about the pre-school. Policies and procedures are readily available for parents to read. Parents are encouraged to give feedback via a questionnaire where they

are able to make comments and suggestions. The group are pro-active and act upon the constructive feedback. For example, recently they have developed a parent's information book which makes day to day information easier to read.

The partnership with parents is good. The pre-school display information about the Foundation Stage curriculum which means parents can become involved in their children's education. Parents are invited into the group twice a year to formally discuss their children's development. They take progress records home beforehand to go through the assessment records; at the meeting they are able to discuss their children's progress. Through written feedback parents report that they are very happy with the progress the children are making. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well through the range of activities provided for them and through discussion with staff. Children are given good opportunities to make a positive contribution.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are comfortable and settled in the well-organised environment. They have ample space to move around in. Toys and resources are well laid out, inviting and challenging and provide them with good learning opportunities. Staff are deployed well, therefore, the children benefit from good support. All adults who work with the children are appropriately vetted and good systems are in place to protect them from people who are not vetted. Over half the team hold appropriate childcare qualifications and most of the staff are first aid trained.

A wide range of policies, procedures and information listed under the outcomes for children make up the group's operational plan. Policies on lost or uncollected children and recording of complaints are particularly clear and ensure staff are fully informed of what to do in this situation. All required documentation is in place and maintained to a good standard. For example, the registration certificate is displayed and the attendance register records children's arrival and departure times. Therefore, the children's health, safety and well-being are thoroughly promoted.

Leadership and management is good. The group work together strongly as a team. Clear aims are in place for the progress of all children and regular meetings are held where the next steps in their learning are discussed and included in the planning. Therefore, children move forward well. All planning, monitoring and evaluation is discussed at these meetings, therefore, the effectiveness of the Foundation Stage is reviewed regularly. The group are committed to constantly improving the service they provide and have completed two modules of an accreditation course.

Staff are well supported and offered ample training and personal development opportunities through a yearly appraisal system. They are confident to approach the managers for support and feel valued as they are fully involved in the running of the group. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last nursery education inspection the group were asked to develop their outside area to promote physical development and to develop communication language and literacy, paying particular attention to writing. They were also asked to provide resources to promote children's imagination. They have developed the outside play area which means that the children are able

to use a good range of equipment which builds their gross motor skills and helps them learn to control their bodies. Opportunities for children to write for a purpose are good and they have good access to well resourced role play areas which means that they can express themselves through imagination.

Recommendations were also made to ensure medical records are maintained confidentially and to obtain written permission for administering medication. The group have implemented a system which means the medical records are now confidential and prior written permission has been obtained from parents. Therefore, the children's health needs are thoroughly protected.

### **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 that children have free access to the toilets to enable them to manage their own personal hygiene.

#### **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 the opportunities for children to freely express themselves through a varied range of media 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)