

Southampton University Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY258679
Inspection date	21 September 2007
Inspector	Alison Large / Susan Mann
Setting Address	Building 41, University Road, Southampton, Hampshire, SO17 1BJ
Telephone number	
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Registered person	Southampton University
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of 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?

Southampton University Day Nursery is owned by The University of Southampton. It opened in 1976 and operates from a building in the Highfield area of Southampton. It provides a service for staff, students and the local community. A maximum of 108 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 127 children from four months to five years on roll. Of these, 48 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area and are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 39 full and part time members of staff. Most of these hold appropriate early years qualifications and the remaining are also working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop a good understanding of personal health and hygiene practices, as these are promoted by staff throughout the day. For instance, older children know when to wash their hands and do so with guidance from staff if necessary. Younger children benefit from gentle support from staff to wash their hands and faces before and after eating. Children are protected from the spread of infection due to most procedures followed by staff and documentation ensures accidents are recorded. However, the medication records are not always completed as required by the nursery's procedure for administration of medication, which affects the good sharing of information with parents. Babies emotional well-being is nurtured by staff who manage their individual routines well.

Children enjoy a good range of healthy and nutritious meals, that are freshly prepared, including a weaning menu and vegan menu. Children's individual dietary needs are well met and the variety of menus increases children's understanding of the importance of eating a healthy balanced diet. Staff support the younger children in developing their independence, for example, by helping them learn to feed themselves.

Children have opportunities to develop their large muscle skills, for example, riding tricycles and sit and ride toys in the garden. They enjoy their time in the outside area when they can access a range of equipment which enables them to practice skills, such as climbing, peddling and crawling and also have use of soft play equipment indoors. Babies are also able to access the outside area, where they enjoy the fresh air and change of scenery. However, the daily routines do not allow free access to the garden throughout the day, which limits children's use of the outside area. Children move around the nursery freely and confidently, negotiating space well. They learn why they need to put their coats on when going outside and many of the older children manage this task on their own. Children confidently use a good range of small equipment to increase their manipulative skills, such as scissors and pencils and are gaining in control and co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a safe and secure, child centred environment. The available space both inside and out enables children to move freely, but safely, accessing good quality toys and play materials. The displays of children's work, provide an attractive and stimulating environment for both children and parents. Babies and toddlers are monitored while they sleep and records of their routines are shared with parents. Children are effectively involved in protecting themselves from harm and staff implement good safety procedures within the setting, for example, the systems to ensure that children are safe whilst visitors enter the setting are clearly understood by staff and effectively implemented. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own safety when using the garden and are spoken to about keeping safe before they go out to play. However, the emergency evacuation procedure, is not practised regularly, which means not all children are familiar with what to do should an emergency situation arise.

Children are well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection procedures and their roles and responsibilities. A policy is shared with all new staff during their

induction process and parents can access information about the day nursery's child protection policy from the policies folder. Staff also regularly share information about accidents and incidents with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery, they mostly arrive happy and are keen to join in the activities, through their familiarity with the consistent routines and good relationships with one another and the staff. Babies and toddlers benefit from the provision of a good range of resources and activities, they build strong relationships with the staff and enjoy the range of activities and experiences offered to them. Staff are attentive and responsive to the younger children, talking to them and encouraging them to use their voices. Babies benefit from the interaction of staff, who spend time gently soothing and talking to the children, particularly when babies are preparing to sleep.

All children benefit from the resources and a wide range of accessible toys and equipment. They have frequent opportunities to enjoy sensory experiences. Babies and toddlers explore sound and texture with toys such as activity centres and natural materials. The Birth to three matters framework is used well to plan activities to support younger children's development and assess their progress. Children make positive relationships with staff and each other when playing or sitting together at meal times. Their individual needs are incorporated into the daily routines well, so they have time for rest, sleep and play.

Nursery Education

The quality of Nursery education is satisfactory. Children are making reasonable progress towards the early learning goals. They enjoy learning in a well organised environment. This is designed to provide them with opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge in all areas of learning. They are able to select activities from low level storage and this develops their independence and helps them to become self assured. Pictures and displays adorn the walls, producing colourful surroundings where children's efforts are valued.

Children follow a daily routine that enables them to use different areas of the nursery. They enjoy snack and messy play in the kitchen, and they use the outdoor area each day. However, some children are inactive for long periods of time during parts of the routine and are not always purposefully engaged. For example, children line up once they have washed their hands prior to snack time. They must then wait before being accompanied downstairs to the kitchen. At these times, children become bored and they are missing valuable opportunities to play and learn.

Children's learning is supported appropriately by a planned curriculum that is linked to their individual development. This means that children's next steps of learning are identified and accommodated which helps them to progress at their own pace. Children's stage of development is known when they join the pre-school group because staff see the assessment records from the Toddler group. Keyworkers use this starting point of children's learning to effectively measure their progress. Basic planning of activities and resources provides children with sufficient variety to maintain their interest and enjoyment. The system of observation and assessment is suitably robust to chart children's progress through the stepping stones. Children's opportunities for learning are evaluated to check that the curriculum is meeting their needs.

Children make progress in most aspects of the Foundation Stage. They learn about number and shape by singing rhymes, counting objects, and talking about shape as they play. However, they have few opportunities to develop their calculating skills. They are not encouraged to consider simple number problems as a regular part of their play. This limits their ability to develop an interest in thinking about numbers in a practical sense. Children enjoy using the computers and many are competent at operating them to complete appropriate programs. They show curiosity when exploring different objects, and are encouraged to talk about this by the supporting staff member. For example, several children play with ice cubes. They feel them and comment on their cold and slippery properties before observing them melt in the water tray.

Children enjoy a range of songs and rhymes, and are confident to sing the words enthusiastically. Some children give meaning to the marks they make, such as making lists and writing notes in the role play area. Older children can recognise several letters correctly, and some readily identify the initial sound of a word. Children have daily opportunities to listen to stories read by members of staff. However, sometimes these are not sufficiently well planned to ensure they are effectively delivered. This means that children's interest is not always supported at story time, and their enthusiasm for listening to and enjoying stories may be diminished.

Staff support children's learning reasonably well. They demonstrate friendly relationships with them and children enjoy their attention and company. For example, a member of staff supports a group of boys in the role play room. They have great fun developing their imaginative play as they create a scenario of travelling on an aeroplane. They are encouraged by suggestions made by the staff member. This helps them sustain their play for a long period of time to their great satisfaction. Children enjoy one another's company as they play. For example, a group of five children talk with one another as they paint together on a large sheet of paper. They giggle as they paint their hands to make hand prints, and proudly tell the member of staff what they have been doing.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are looked after in an environment where they are valued, treated with respect and equal concern. Children settle well into the nursery, they are secure and familiar with the daily routines. Children with identified special needs are well supported by staff, to ensure they are fully supported. Children behave well in the calm and caring environment; their individual contributions are valued and they receive regular praise and encouragement from staff. Children develop a sense of community and a positive understanding and appreciation of different cultures through a wide range of interesting and enjoyable activities. Parents of babies and young children feel that they are kept well informed of their child's daily experiences and routines through daily discussion with staff.

Partnership with parents with regard to the provision of nursery education is satisfactory. Parents are welcomed to participate in their child's learning and this is valued by the nursery. Children's assessment records are freely available for parents to view. Parents' meetings provide planned opportunities for parents to view these folders and discuss them with their child's keyworker. Parents may speak to staff each day about their child's welfare and learning. Some parents are able to join in the provision by coming into the nursery to offer activities such as cooking. These occasions enhance children's learning and experience.

The nursery provides parents with in depth information about the curriculum. Information about topics and curriculum planning is displayed on the notice board. Further information is provided in a detailed booklet produced by the nursery to explain the Foundation stage to parents. However, parents would benefit from a clear overview of how children learn through play based activities in all areas of learning.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children are fully included and happy in the well organised nursery environment. They are cared for in bright and welcoming premises where staff are appropriately checked and well qualified. Staff work directly with the children, providing good support where required. They are particularly good at providing the appropriate support and encouragement to enable the new children to settle and become familiar with the nursery routines. They are well deployed, have clear roles and responsibilities, and ensure that children's individual needs are met. Children feel at ease within the environment, space is used well most of the time, ensuring that children are free to play freely and safely whilst being continually supervised and supported.

Staff get to know the children well through the use of information obtained on the children's registration forms and through daily communication with parents. Staff complete daily registers for children, staff and visitors and a comprehensive range of policies and procedures, are shared with both staff and parents.

The staff team are suitably experienced to work with children, with a high level of staff being fully qualified; they are fully committed to updating and furthering their knowledge and skills. Effective procedures for the appointment of staff and an induction programme are in place. All required documentation is in place, and is stored securely thus maintaining confidentiality.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a clear organisation of management and responsibility with regard to the provision of nursery education. The provision is evaluated regularly and improvements and changes are planned through a detailed development plan. However, this monitoring process is not wholly effective as the recommendations of the previous inspection of educational provision have not been fully addressed. The required systems are in place to ensure that adults providing the curriculum are given appropriate support. New staff are given a structured induction to allow them to learn their roles and responsibilities. Existing staff are supported through an efficient appraisal system to ensure they continue to be effective and their own well being is promoted.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, an action was raised to ensure a balanced choice of activities and a range of stimulating toys and equipment are provided, to promote all children's learning in all areas at all times. Recommendations were given to develop staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour, taking into account age and stage of development; to ensure that the medication records and storage of the medication are in line with current guidance; to ensure that the register shows times of attendance; and to organise meal and snack time to ensure children are encouraged to be independent, and learn from this enjoyable time. Since the last inspection the resources and activities provided

throughout the nursery have been improved to provide a balanced choice for the children, all staff have attended behaviour management training and registers throughout the nursery are kept up to date and show the times of arrival and departure of the children. Meal and snack times have all been re-organised to ensure the children enjoy the social time and they are encouraged to become independent. Medicines are stored in line with current guidance, however the records are not being completed in line with nursery policy which means parents are not being kept fully informed.

At the previous inspection, the provider was asked to consider three recommendations with regard to the provision of nursery education. The first concerned consistent implementation of the existing behaviour policy and this has been suitably addressed. Children now benefit from the consistent practice of staff in promoting positive behaviour. The other recommendations have been mostly dealt with. One concerned children's opportunities to progress their mathematical development. Children now have frequent opportunities to count and they become familiar with numerals through wall displays and books. However, they have few opportunities to calculate objects because they are not encouraged to develop their confidence in number problems. The final recommendation concerned children's development in listening and recognising the sounds of letters. Some children demonstrate an interest in the initial sounds of words. Most children listen well at circle time. Children have frequent opportunities to listen to stories in small and large groups. However, sometimes these are not sufficiently well organised to maintain the children's interest. This means that some children lose their concentration before the story has ended.

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.

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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):

- ensure the emergency evacuation procedure is practised regularly to ensure staff and children are familiar with the procedure to follow in the event of an emergency

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):

- review existing routines to ensure children are appropriately occupied throughout the day, so they enjoy further opportunities to play and learn
- provide opportunities for children to develop their calculating skills through providing play based opportunities to develop interest in number problems
- ensure that all children are encouraged to develop their interest in books and stories through providing well organised story times

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